



By Elder Jörg Klebingat

Of the Seventy

# Soccer and Sundays



In Germany, soccer is the most popular sport. My dad signed me up for a soccer club when I was five. We practiced three or four times a week. Games were mostly on Saturdays and Sundays. When I wasn't playing soccer for the club team, I played soccer with my friends. We played soccer almost every day until the sun went down.

When I was 15, I started playing for a team in a bigger city. Soccer became more serious. We practiced more often. We traveled to more places. We played against more teams. Soccer was my life.

Then, when I was almost 18, I was at a concert. I saw a boy about my age. He stuck out. He wasn't drinking, smoking, or swearing. I wanted to know why. I found out he was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His example made me want to learn more. Later I joined the Church.

After I was baptized, I learned two things. First, I

shouldn't be playing soccer on the Sabbath. I should go to church. Second, Heavenly Father expected me to serve a mission. But I was pretty good at soccer. I had a friend I had played soccer with all growing up. We each got an offer to play on a professional team. My friend took the offer. I chose to leave soccer behind and go on a mission instead. It was not a hard choice because I knew the Church was true.

But my choice was difficult for my family and friends. They didn't understand what I was doing. My parents sent me newspaper clippings of my friend playing soccer. That was not easy for me. But I never ever regretted serving a mission.

Heavenly Father has blessed me every day because I chose to serve a mission. He has blessed me with peace. I felt the good feeling that comes from making the right choice. ●