

Saturday Sleep and Sunday Smiles

By Miche Barbosa

Based on a true story

"I always have a happy feeling when I go to church"

(Children's Songbook, 157).

Mara loved making people smile. She made her schoolteacher smile when she raised her hand to ask questions. She made her sister, Marcella, smile when she said nice things to her.

Then Mara would smile too. It felt good to help other people be happy.

But there was one time each week when Mara hardly ever smiled. That time was early Sunday morning. That's when

Mara and Marcella were always the most tired. Rushing around to get ready for church made them extra grumpy. Then there was the long walk to church. It was more than a mile away! Mara and Marcella often got



there late. They would miss the first part of Primary.

"We miss you when you're not here on time," Sister Lima said one day. She was the Primary president of their ward in Brazil.

Mara knew she should get to church on time. But how? Then Mara got an idea. The next Saturday night, Mara decided to try something new.

Instead of sneaking bedtime snacks after dinner, Mara brushed her teeth. Most days Mama had to remind the girls to turn off the TV and go to bed. Even then they would play and whisper under their covers until late at night. Sometimes they stayed up so long they could hardly keep their eyes open. They had to wiggle to keep from falling asleep.

Tonight Mara put on pajamas and hopped right into bed. Mama didn't even have to remind her. She started looking

at the pictures in the front of her Book of Mormon.

"What are you doing?" Marcella asked.

"A test," Mara said. Her mind was full of happy thoughts. Plus she was already feeling sleepy.

The next thing Mara knew, the sun was peeking through her window. It was almost time to get ready for church. Instead of feeling yucky, Mara felt great. Her head didn't feel

fuzzy. Her body didn't feel tired.

She got to Primary even before some of the leaders.

"Thank you for being such a good example to the other children," Sister Lima said.

Now it was Mara's turn to smile. She decided she would always go to bed early on Saturday. That way she would be able to spread smiles all Sunday long. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

