

“I belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I know who I am. I know God’s plan”
(Children’s Songbook, 77).

Easton’s first Church meeting in Germany had just ended. He thought it would be really different, but it was a lot like church where he used to live in the United

States. Only here he got to wear headphones to listen to the talks being translated into English.

Mom and Dad had started talking to the family sitting behind them. It looked like they had a boy his age!

“These are the Finottos,” Mom told Easton. “GianMarco will be in your class at school.”

Standing Up for Church

By Tracie Carter and
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Based on a true story

ILLUSTRATION BY KAVELA LARSEN

“Cool!” Easton smiled at GianMarco. His name sounded kind of like “John” and “Mark” squished together—with an “o” at the end. “So where are you from?”

GianMarco smiled back. “We’re from Italy. But we just moved here from China.”

“Wow!” said Easton. “I’ve never been to China.”

The next day Easton went to his new school. He was a little nervous. But then he saw GianMarco waving at him from across the classroom. At least he had one friend already. There were kids from all over the world in his class. Maybe he would like this school.

“Good morning!” The teacher smiled at everyone. “I’m Ms. Albano. To start off, can anyone tell me what *identity* means?”

A girl raised her hand. “It means who you are. What’s most important to you.”

“Exactly!” said Ms. Albano. “So let’s get to know each other. What are some things that are part of your identity? What things make you *you*?”

“I like video games!” said a girl in the front row. Ms. Albano smiled and wrote *hobbies* on the board. “What else?”

GianMarco raised his hand. “I’m from Italy.” Ms. Albano nodded and wrote down *country*.

Easton tried to think of something to say. “I go to church,” said a boy in the back.

“That’s a good one!” Easton thought. “I should’ve said that.”

Someone laughed. And then a lot of kids were laughing. Easton looked at GianMarco, confused. GianMarco looked confused too. Why would they laugh?

When he got home, Easton told Mom what happened.

Mom frowned. “Some people don’t understand why church is important. They think it’s silly.”

“Oh,” said Easton. He didn’t think church was silly at all.

A few weeks later, Ms. Albano asked the students to do a presentation with a parent about their family’s identity.

“What should our project be?” Mom asked as they set the table for dinner.

Easton thought about how the class had laughed. “I think we should do it about the Church,” Easton said.

Mom smiled. “That’s a great idea.”

“And could GianMarco and Sister Finotto do it with us?”
“Great idea. I’ll call them after dinner.”

The next day GianMarco and Sister Finotto came over. First they all talked about what they thought was most important about the Church. Mom wrote down all their ideas in a notebook. Then they got poster boards and found pictures of Jesus and prophets and temples to glue on.

Finally it was time for the presentation. Easton stood with GianMarco and their moms at the front of the

class. He took a deep breath.

“We are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” he began. They each took turns explaining things

about the Church. GianMarco talked about scriptures. Mom talked about prophets. Sister Finotto talked about family home evening. Easton talked

about baptism. It was really cool!

Easton felt pretty good when they were done.

Nobody laughed—the kids actually seemed to like it! He was glad he could share something so important with his class. He smiled. He knew his identity. He was a child of God! ■

The authors live in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, and Utah, USA.

I am a child of God

I believe in Jesus Christ

I am part of a family



CHILDREN OF GOD

“How do you discover your *identity*? First, remember that you are children of God.”

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Identity, Priority, and Blessings,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2001, 11.