

The Dinner Guest

Johne was excited to learn about another Apostle.



By Diana Evelyn Nielson
(Based on a true story)

This story took place in Guam.

Johne watched his foster mom set the table. She taped a photo of Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf to an extra chair, along with a cartoon picture of an airplane.

"Time for dinner!" Mom called.

Johne's foster sister, Lydia, jumped up from the couch. "I'm so hungry!"

"Me too," Johne said.

Mom pushed Johne's wheelchair up to the table and sat next to him. Dad and Lydia sat down at the table too. Johne loved it when they were all home for dinner.

Dad said the prayer on the food, and Mom passed around the chicken and rice. "We're going to learn about one of the Apostles tonight," she said. She pointed to the photo on the chair. "Does anyone know who he is?"

"That's Elder Uchtdorf," Johne said.

Dad nodded. "I chose him to be tonight's guest."

"Can I choose tomorrow?" Lydia asked.

"Sure," Mom said.

Johne was excited to learn about Elder Uchtdorf. General conference was in two weeks, and Johne's foster family had a great tradition to prepare for it. Each night, they chose an Apostle to learn about. Mom taped a picture of the Apostle to a chair. Then she told the family facts about him and stories about his childhood.

"What do you know about Elder Uchtdorf?" Dad asked.

"Oh, I know!" Lydia said. "He flew airplanes!" She pointed to the airplane picture on the chair.

"That's right," Mom said. "Before he was called as an Apostle, he was an airplane pilot in Germany."

Johne made a flying motion with his hand and made an airplane noise. "Fwoosh!"

"Elder Uchtdorf joined the Church when he was a child," Dad said. "Just like you did, Johne."

Johne looked at the photo. It was hard to imagine Elder Uchtdorf as a kid just like him!

"And he had a special job at church on Sundays," Mom said. "The organ needed to have air pumped into it so it could work. During the songs, he helped pump the air for the organ to play the hymns."

"I bet it was hard work," Dad said. "But he loved the music. His favorite song was 'Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam.'"

Lydia grinned. "That's my favorite song too!"

"Elder Uchtdorf is a lot like us," Mom said. "And in just a few weeks, we'll get to listen to him speak to the whole Church. He'll share a message that Jesus Christ wants us all to hear!"

After dinner, Mom took the photo off the chair. She taped it onto the wall next to the photos of the other Apostles. They would leave the photos up until general conference to help them recognize the speakers.

Johne helped Dad with the dishes. Dad washed them, and Johne dried them. As he worked, he smiled at the pictures on the wall.

Johne loved learning about the Apostles! He couldn't wait to hear from them at conference. ●

WHAT ARE FOSTER FAMILIES?

When children don't have parents who can care for them, they sometimes live with another family called a foster family. Foster families take care of the children and help them feel loved.