

Sabbath and Infidelity

DOMINICA | July 6

Ursula Leslie



This week's mission story features Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Primary School in Roseau, the capital of Dominica. The school, which opened in 1976, consistently ranks in the top 10 list of the 62 elementary schools on the island. But the school building is crowded with 160 children from kindergarten to fourth grade. Several blocks away, 40 fifth and sixth graders study in a makeshift classroom in another building. More parents want to send their children to the school, but there simply isn't room. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help construct a new, larger school.

This is the story of two students.

Suzanne did well in kindergarten at Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Primary School. Her parents brought her back to the school for first grade, second grade, and third grade.

But when she was in the fourth grade, her father called the principal. He wasn't happy.

"I have a problem," he said.

The previous weekend, he had asked 9-year-old Suzanne to wash the dishes, but she had refused.

"I'm not washing dishes today because it is

the Sabbath," she said.

Father was taken aback, and he repeated his request in no uncertain terms.

But Suzanne refused again.

"I can wash the dishes after sunset," she said.

She explained that at school she had learned the fourth commandment, which says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter ..." (Exodus 20:8-10, NKJV). She saw herself as the daughter mentioned in God's law. She viewed the chore of washing dishes as work, and she wanted to keep the Sabbath by refraining from work.

Father wasn't pleased, and he called the principal on Monday morning to complain.

"I don't want two religions in my home," he told the principal. "I didn't send her to a Seventh-day Adventist school to make her an Adventist."

With that, he transferred her to another school.

Jack also entered Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Primary School as a kindergartener. But he arrived in the middle of the school year. The teacher was teaching the Ten Commandments to the children when Jack showed up, and his attention was caught by the seventh commandment, which says, "You shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14).

"Some people live in the same house



together, and they are not married,” the teacher said. “This is not the way that it is supposed to be because God says the two should get married and become one flesh and live together. They should not live together when they are boyfriend and girlfriend. They should be married.”

Jack went home and said, “Mommy, are you married to Daddy?”

“No,” Mother said.

“Mommy, you’re living in sin,” Jack said. “Teacher says you should not live in sin. You should be married.”

Mother was shocked. She didn’t know what to say. She began to think about the decisions that she had made in her life. Then she had an idea. “Jack,” she said, “when Daddy comes home, tell him the same thing that you told me.”

When Father arrived home, Jack asked, “Daddy, are you married to Mommy?”

Father was surprised and said, “No, why do you ask?”

“In class today, Teacher said a man should not live with a woman without being married,” Jack said. “Daddy, you’re living in sin. You should be married.”

Father decided to have a heart-to-heart talk with Mother. Not long after that, the two were married.

Mother later related the story to the school principal. She said Jack’s words had led the couple to get married.

The principal, Ursula Leslie, said that the school has a mission to share the Bible with all children. What happens next is the work of the Holy Spirit.

“Parents sometimes oppose the students’ decision when they choose to follow Christ all the way,” she said. “That is one of the challenges that we have. Some students want to be baptized, but parents just want them to learn good values and nothing more.”

But there also are heartwarming stories about parents who accept the Bible truths that their children bring home. Only eternity will reveal the results of the seeds planted in the hearts of children and their parents. 🌍

Story Tips

- Show Dominica on the map. Then show Dominica’s capital, Roseau, where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help construct an elementary school building.
- Watch a short YouTube video of principal Ursula Leslie: bit.ly/Ursula-IAD.
- Download photos for this story from Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Share Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Inter-American Division: bit.ly/iad-2024.
- Know that this mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into Spirit-filled lives”; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 6, “To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults”; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, “To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Mission Post

- In 1901, two Sabbath-keepers from Antigua took up residence in Dominica and raised up a small company of Sabbath-believers.
- The presence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is felt throughout Dominica. There are 23 churches and five companies, three elementary schools (Ebenezer SDA Primary, Western District SDA Primary, and Temple SDA Primary), and two secondary schools (Dominica Seventh-day Adventist Secondary School and Arthur Walden SDA Academy).

Pray for Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Primary School, that seeds planted in the hearts of children and parents will bear fruit. Thank you for planning a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the school.

By Andrew McChesney