

Use “The Scene” to introduce “The Blessings of Obedience” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for May 7, 2017. The lesson is found on page 63 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



She was the last living person known to have been born in the 1800s. And she credited a diet of three raw eggs a day and cookies as part of the reason for her long life.

Emma Morano, an Italian woman, passed away just a few weeks ago. Until then she had held the Guinness World Record titles for oldest living person and oldest living female, titles passed on to her in 2016. She was 117, born on November 29, 1899, the eldest of eight children in her family.

She lived through an abusive marriage, which she ended in 1938, and the death of a six-month-old child. For about forty years, she supported herself by working in a local factory, sewing sacks for potatoes. She also worked as a cafeteria lady for a college nearby. She lived in a two-room apartment in Verbania, Italy, where she was visited often by friends and relatives, and which she did not leave the last fifteen years of her life, even though she could still walk fairly well. She was found there, of course, when she died, at peace in her armchair.

As a young woman, she would sneak out of the house to go dancing (and later received birch-stick beatings on her legs from her mother when she would catch her) and dreamed of a singing career. Her doctor was quoted as saying that she “was always very decisive.” She liked cookies so much, she would often hide them under a pillow so no one else would get them. And she told the *The New York Times* in a 2015 interview, speaking about the end of her marriage, “I didn’t want to be dominated by anyone.”

Friends say her life was built and centered on three things: her Catholic faith, her love of family, and her belief in herself. And it was those three things that surrounded and supported her in her last years of a long, long life.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above article to read. Then discuss it in this way:

What do you find interesting about people who live a very long life?

Emma Morano had lived through a lot. Who in your life has lived a long time? Have you ever talked with them about the history they have witnessed?

In the Bible, we find out that honoring parents is potentially a way to live a long life. What do you think about that? What are the benefits of living a long life?

We may not all want to live until we are 117, but there are many rewards that come from honoring one’s parents. Let’s look at three rewards that come from being obedient children.