



## MISERABLE TO THE END OF THE STREET

**F**or one family home evening, my dad wanted to take advantage of a pause in the rainy weather to go on a walk around the neighborhood. I grumbled and complained that it was too wet and muddy to go walking. I used the excuse that I had a ballet recital that week and didn't want to sprain an ankle, but my dad didn't buy it. He insisted that it was going to be the activity for the evening. I murmured a bit more about the unfairness and my recital, but we left on the walk anyway.

As I glumly stomped outside for the walk with my family, I was determined not to smile or be happy. I succeeded in feeling miserable until

we reached the end of the street. Then we turned the corner and I saw, in full force, nature's beauty and wonder. Before me was a gorgeous sunset, and opposite it was a rainbow arching above our neighborhood rooftops. I immediately forgot all about being miserable and looked around in awe.

On the way home I said a prayer of gratitude, thanking God for the beauty of His creations. I later thanked my dad for choosing the activity and for allowing us to enjoy nature for that family home evening.

**Jennie H., North Carolina, USA**

## FORGIVING MY FRIENDS

**A**s the only member of the Church in my peer group, I've experienced some instances when my friends have offended me. Sometimes they judge and criticize my religion. I feel so alone, yet I'm thankful I know the standards of the Church.

If my friends offend me, I try to humble myself and avoid contention, because I know contention is evil. When they start discussing some matters about the Church, I just testify of my belief in the gospel.

I always forgive my friends with or without their apology. Forgiving is not just about saying, "Apology accepted," or, "It's OK," because forgiveness has a deep meaning: Jesus Christ atoned for our sins so that Heavenly Father can forgive us.

Even though my friends don't understand my faith now, I know that I can be God's instrument to teach them the gospel. I am helping them, and at the same time I am helping myself to grow spiritually and prepare to serve a mission.

*Joshua V., Philippines*

## A DIFFICULT DECISION

**A**s volleyball tryouts approached for my senior year in high school, I couldn't believe the thought that was running through my head: I wasn't supposed to play volleyball. I'd played volleyball since seventh grade—why should this year be any different?

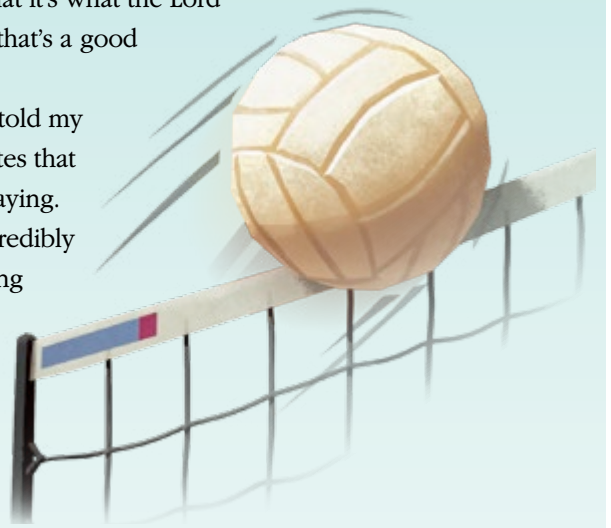
Not seeing the sense in quitting, I ignored the feeling and continued to participate in summer volleyball events. After a while the feeling came back, so I decided that if I really wasn't supposed to be on the team, my coach would just cut me during tryouts.

Then one night at the gym, I couldn't focus on the game at all. I felt terrible and restless inside. I came home frustrated with my team and with myself. I sat next to my mom and sister and cried. I told them how confused I was, and my mom told me to pray and ask Heavenly Father what He wanted me to do. I went up to my room and began to pray. I told Heavenly Father how I felt, then I asked Him to help me feel peace if I was not supposed to continue playing volleyball. I felt His peace in my heart and knew that I needed to quit.

I'm still not sure all the reasons why that was the right decision, but I know that it's what the Lord wanted me to do, and that's a good enough reason for me.

The next morning I told my coach and my teammates that I wasn't going to be playing. Even though it was incredibly hard, I knew I was doing the right thing.

*Klaire B., Arizona, USA*



## STANDARDS AND FRIENDS

**S**ince I've been in school, I've had friends who haven't understood the moral standards of our religion. At first it was difficult, but over time my friends have become used to the idea of my being morally clean. I made a goal in my life to be clean and pure, and it's worked out well, both for me and for those who used to criticize me. Over time, respect, peace, and joy have become a part of our loving circle of friends.

*Vitória M., Brazil*