



Courtney was sad a lot.
Was there any way Elena
could help?

A Butterfly for Courtney

By Jane McBride Choate

(Based on a true story)

"Succor those that stand in need of your succor"
(Mosiah 4:16).

Elena sat back on her heels and looked at what she and Grandma had done in the backyard. "It looks good," Elena said, admiring the newly cleaned out garden beds.

Elena loved spending time with her grandma. Grandma could always make her laugh, even when Elena was feeling down. Sometimes Grandma made up silly poems or stories.

"Let's go inside." Grandma started toward the back door. "I have a surprise for you."

She handed Elena an envelope with some money inside.

"You don't have to pay me, Grandma!" Elena said.

But Grandma shook her head. "You help me so much. I want to give you something. Please take it."

"Thank you!" Elena gave Grandma a big hug.

Elena thought of some jeans and a shirt she'd seen at the store. With what Grandma had paid her and what Elena had saved, she'd have just enough money to buy them after paying her tithing.

The next day was Sunday. Elena and her family got to

church a few minutes before sacrament meeting began. She couldn't wait to tell her friend Courtney about earning money for the clothes.

But when she saw Courtney sitting in the foyer, she noticed that her friend looked really sad.

Elena sat down next to her.

"Are you all right?" Elena asked quietly.

"I'm fine," Courtney said, but she didn't look Elena in the eye.

Elena knew her friend wasn't fine. Courtney struggled with depression and got really sad sometimes.

"How can I help?" Elena asked.

"There's nothing anyone can do," Courtney said and turned away. Elena saw a tear slide down her cheek.

Elena felt like crying herself. She sat with Courtney until sacrament meeting started and it was time for them to join their families.

For the rest of the day, Elena felt an idea grow inside her. She thought about Courtney. She thought about the money she'd earned. Buying new clothes didn't seem very important any more. After praying about her idea, Elena knew what she wanted to do.

On Monday after school, Elena asked her mom to take her to the store.

"Sure," Mom said. "Are you going to get those jeans you were telling me about?"

Elena shook her head. "I decided I don't really need more clothes. I'm going to get something else."

Mom looked surprised. "OK."

At the store, Elena showed her mom a necklace with a butterfly pendant.

"Courtney loves butterflies," Elena explained. "She's having a really hard time right now. She's failing one of her

classes. She tries so hard, but sometimes she can't study when she's feeling down."

Mom nodded. "I know. Her mom is worried about her." She smiled at Elena. "I'm proud of you for being so thoughtful."

Before school the next day, Elena handed the gift to her friend. When Courtney pulled the necklace out, a smile spread across her face.

"Wow. Thank you! It's perfect," she said, slipping the necklace over her head. The butterfly's wings sparkled in the sunlight. Courtney gave Elena a hug. "I'm so lucky to have you for a friend."

Elena hugged her back. "We're lucky to have each other." ♦

The author lives in Colorado, USA.



Do you know anyone who feels really sad? Do you feel sad a lot? There is hope! Turn the page for help.