



By Jane McBride  
(Based on a true story)

# Prayers for Tessa

*"Nobody wants me on their team," Tessa said.*



*"Who's on the Lord side? Who? Now is the time to show"* (Hymns, no. 260).

Tessa stared down at her shoes. It was time for gym class. Kids were picking teams to play kickball. She knew she would get picked last. She always did.

Soon no one else was left but Tessa. "I guess we're stuck with *her* again," the team captain whispered to his friend. Both of them snickered.

Tessa pretended she hadn't heard.

A few minutes into the game, a girl on the other team kicked the ball. It was coming right at Tessa!

*I'll show them I can play!* Tessa thought. She lunged forward to catch the ball. But it hit her arms and bounced to the ground.

"Can't you do anything right?" the team captain said.

Tessa spun around to face him. "Fine! You don't have to be stuck with me anymore!" She stomped over to the ball and kicked it hard.

Tessa's best friend, Shondra, ran after her. "Hey, it's all right," Shondra said. "Anybody can drop a ball."

"Yeah? Then how come nobody wants me on their team?" Tessa said.

"Maybe it's because you get so mad," Shondra said. She walked back to where the other kids were waiting.

Tessa sat on a bench in the corner of the playground. Her eyes stung with tears. She didn't want the school to call her parents again. They had already called before. The principal said Tessa had trouble getting along with other kids.

Tessa didn't know why she acted the way she did.

She didn't *want* to cause trouble. She just felt so angry and sad sometimes, and she had a hard time keeping it in.

Tessa sighed. "I'll never fit in," she said to herself.

When school ended, Tessa hurried outside. Mom was there to pick her up. She listened as Tessa told about her day.

"They never choose me to be on their team," Tessa said. "I feel like no one is ever on my side."

"I'm sorry, sweetheart," Mom said. "Sometimes people are unkind. But Heavenly Father is always on your side. And so is your family." She gave Tessa a hug. "Let's go home now. I have a surprise for you."

When they got home, Grandma was there! Tessa always loved her visits.

"I want to know everything that's going on in your life," Grandma said. "How's school?"

Tessa looked down. "Not very good."

"Your mom said you were having a hard time," Grandma said. "You know that she and your dad are praying for you, right?"

"Yeah."

"And you know that Grandpa and I pray for you, right?"

Tessa nodded.

"Well, now you have a lot of other people praying for you too!"

"What do you mean?" Tessa asked.

"I put your name on the prayer roll in the temple," Grandma said. "That



way, lots of people are praying for you—even people who don't know you."

"So, it's kind of like they're on the same team as me?" Tessa said.

"Sure, you could look at it that way," Grandma said. "Heavenly Father is always cheering you on! And now, so are all those people who are praying for you."

"Thank you, Grandma!" Tessa gave Grandma a big hug.

The next time Tessa felt upset at school, she closed her eyes and took a deep breath. She remembered all of the people who were praying for her. That helped her feel a little better. Then she bowed her head to say a prayer of her own.

*Thank you, Heavenly Father, she prayed. Thank you for cheering me on.* ●

*The author lives in Colorado, USA.*



## WHAT IS THE PRAYER ROLL?

Jesus Christ taught us to pray for others. The temple prayer roll is a list of people who need extra help. They might be sick or be struggling with some other problem. Church members who go to the temple pray for those whose names are put on the prayer roll.

● See *Come, Follow Me* for Doctrine and Covenants 121–123.



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