

**By Shirley Espada-Richey**

(Based on a true story)

"Some say that heaven is far away, but I feel it close around me as I pray" (*Children's Songbook*, 12).

Allie threw a few pencils in her backpack and zipped it up. She was sliding it off her bed when Mom poked her head through the door.

"Is your backpack ready for school tomorrow?" Mom asked.

"Check," Allie said.

"Brush your teeth?"

Allie smiled wide. "Check."

"Say your prayers?"

Allie looked up at the ceiling. "Umm . . . Not check."

Mom smiled. "I can pray with you if you want." She knelt by Allie's bed. After a moment, Allie knelt down beside her.

"Mom, do I *have* to pray?" Allie whispered. "I feel so silly. It's like I'm talking to myself."

Mom nodded. "I've felt that way before too. Whenever I feel like I'm just talking to myself, I imagine Heavenly Father next to me. Then it's like I'm talking with someone in the same room."

Allie scrunched her mouth into a frown. Was it really that easy?

"It's hard that we can't see Heavenly Father. But I know He's always listening," Mom said.

Allie folded her arms and listened to Mom pray. She tried hard to feel that Heavenly Father was next to her. Was He really listening?

On Sunday, Sister Oscar put a big mirror in front of the Primary room. Allie tried to get a better look, but she couldn't see past a kid making funny faces in the mirror.

Then Sister Oscar stood up. Everyone watched as she pulled a cloth out of a bag.

"We're going to do an activity today," she said. "I need everyone to make a line from the mirror to the back of the room."

# Even If You Can't See Him

All the kids stood up and got in line. Allie stood at the end, and she could see Sister Oscar talking to kids in the front. The line got shorter and shorter until it was finally her turn. Allie stepped up to the mirror.

"What do you see?" Sister Oscar asked. Allie blinked her eyes. The eyes in the mirror blinked too.

"I see me," she said.

"That's right. You see your reflection."

Then Sister Oscar tied the cloth around Allie's head like a blindfold. Allie couldn't see anything.

"Can you see your reflection now?" she asked.

"No," said Allie.

"Is it still there?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?" asked Sister Oscar.

"Because I'm still in front of the mirror," Allie said. "I know it's still there." Allie went back to her seat. Sister Oscar stood up at the front of the room.

"Just like your reflection in the mirror, Heavenly Father is with us even when we can't see Him," Sister Oscar said.

"He is always near us. And the best part is that we can always feel Him close."

Allie's arms tingled. Happiness filled her as she realized that what Sister Oscar said was true!

That night Allie was brushing her hair in the bathroom. Mom knocked on the door.

"Are you almost ready for family prayer?" she asked. "It's your turn to say it."

Allie looked at herself in the mirror. She imagined Heavenly Father smiling back at her.

"Check!" Allie said. ♦

The author lives in California, USA.

ILLUSTRATION BY JANA CHRISTY