

# Praying for Alejandro

*“Does Jesus know what it feels like to have cancer?” Gerardo asked.*

**By Rebekah Jakeman**  
(Based on a true story)

*This story happened in El Salvador.*

Gerardo roller-skated to the front steps of his house. Mamá’s car was in the driveway. That meant she and his older brother, Alejandro, were back from the doctor. Gerardo pulled off his skates and raced inside.

“Gerardo?” Mamá called. “We’re in here!”

Gerardo walked into the family room. Alejandro was lying on the couch. Mamá sat next to him. She looked worried.

Gerardo was worried too. Last week, they found out that Alejandro had cancer. He was very sick.

But Alejandro sat up and smiled when Gerardo came in. “Hi! Did you have a good day?”

“Yes, but how was the doctor’s?” Gerardo asked.

“He says I’ll have to get surgery,” Alejandro said.

Mamá nodded. “But the best doctors to help him are at the children’s hospital. Since Alejandro is 14, he’s too old to get care there. We’ll have to find somewhere else.”

Gerardo’s stomach tightened. If they couldn’t get help for Alejandro, what would happen? Would Alejandro’s cancer get worse?

Gerardo went to his room. He needed to think.

In Primary, Gerardo learned that Heavenly Father would always hear him. Gerardo knew he could always ask Him for help.

So he knelt by his bed and folded his arms. “Dear

Heavenly Father, please help Alejandro,” he prayed. “Please help us find doctors that can do the surgery.”

Soon Mamá called him for dinner. She had made pupusas, Gerardo’s favorite. He took a big bite of the thick, grilled tortilla filled with cheese and beans. But he still felt worried about his brother.

Alejandro only took a few bites of his pupusa. He was frowning and moving very slowly.

Mamá must have noticed too. “Why don’t we watch a Church video?” she asked. They liked watching videos about Jesus Christ when they felt sad.

“OK.” Gerardo cleared the dishes while Mamá got the video ready. Then they all sat down to watch.

In the video, Jesus Christ prayed in a garden by a tree. Gerardo knew this story. It was when Jesus suffered before He died on the cross.

When the video ended, Gerardo felt quiet and peaceful. But he had a question. “Why did Jesus have to hurt so much?” he asked.

Mamá held him and Alejandro close. “Jesus chose to feel the hurt because He loves us. He felt all the pain we go through.”

Gerardo looked at Alejandro. “Does Jesus know what it feels like to have cancer?”

“Yes, He does,” said Mamá. “He knows how hard it is. And because He knows what it feels like, He knows how to help us.”



Gerardo felt warm inside, like he was wrapped in a big blanket. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ knew and loved his family. They knew how to help Alejandro.

When Gerardo got home from school the next day, he found Mamá packing a bag.

“Good news!” she said. “I talked to the doctor at the children’s hospital. They are going to help Alejandro. He will have surgery tomorrow.”

Gerardo gave Mamá a big hug. “Heavenly Father is helping us! Can we pray and thank Him?”

“Great idea,” said Mamá. “Let’s get Alejandro.”

As they prayed together, Gerardo felt peaceful. Heavenly Father had heard his prayer! Now Alejandro would get the surgery he needed. Gerardo knew Jesus Christ understood what they were going through. And He would always help them through their trials. ●

**“You and I in a moment of weakness may cry out, ‘No one understands. No one knows.’ No human being, perhaps, knows. But the Son of God perfectly knows and understands, for He felt and bore our burdens before we ever did.”**

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,  
“The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2012, 19.

