
AMERICAN CARDINAL READERS

For Catholic Parochial Schools

BOOK ONE

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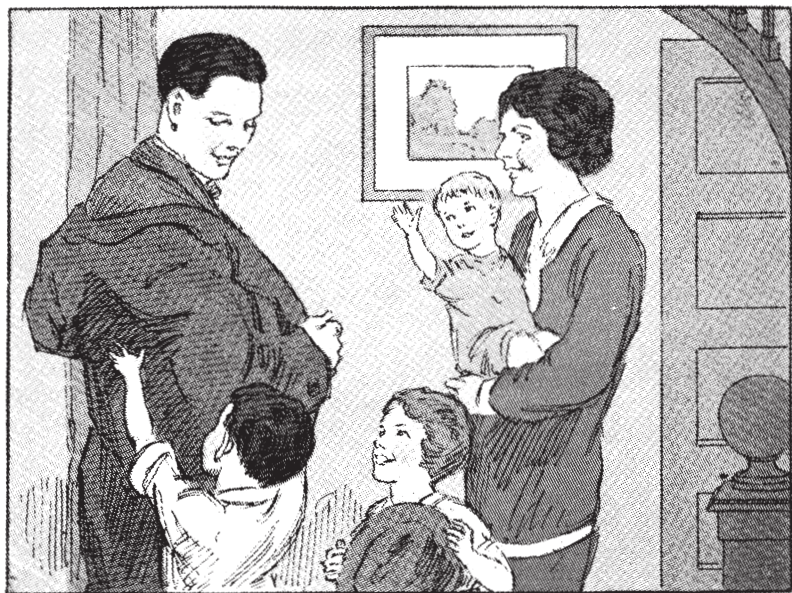
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JEAN'S SURPRISE

It was morning. It was time for Father to go to his work.

Mother and the children were at the door with Father. They were saying "Good-by" to him.

As Father started off, Jean said,
“When you come home to-night,
I shall have a surprise for you.
Mother and John are helping me
to get it ready for you, Father.”

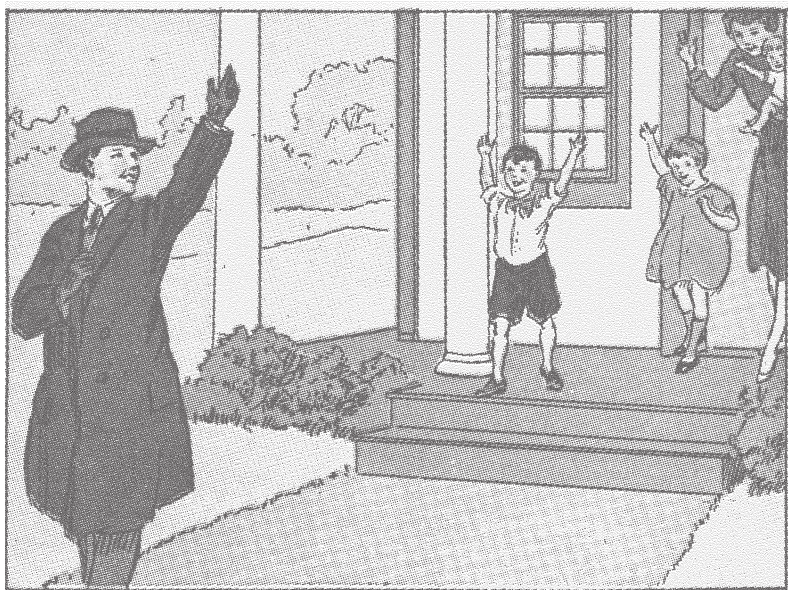
Father said, “That will be fine, Jean.
I shall be glad to see it to-night.”

“O Father,” said Jean, “it is not
a surprise for you to see.
It is something for you to hear.”

“I can guess that,” said Father.
“You are going to sing for me.”

John said, “That is not it, Father.”

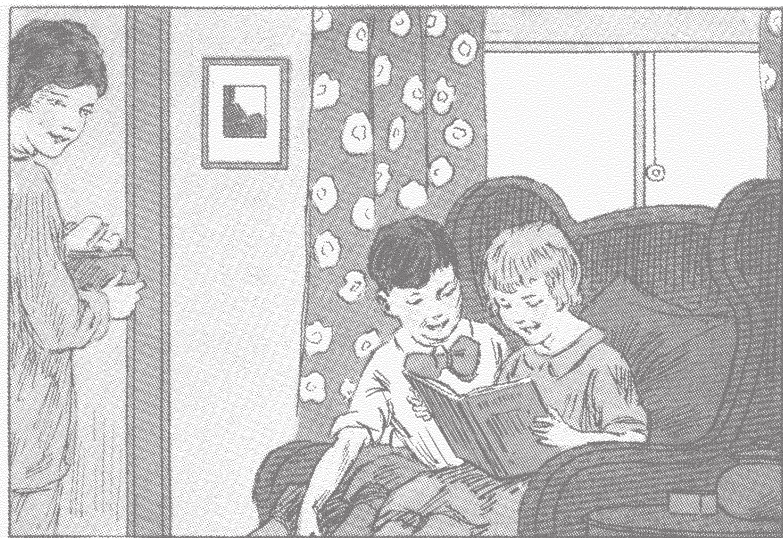
Jean said, “You did not guess it
that time, Father.”



Then Father laughed and said,
“I could guess it if I had time,
but I must go now, Jean.
Good-by, and God bless you all.”

“Good-by, Father,”
said the children.

“God bless you, too,” said Mother,
as Father walked away.



Jean worked hard that day
getting the surprise ready.

John helped her all he could.
Sometimes Mother had to help her.

When Father came home that night
the fine surprise was ready,
as Jean said it would be.

Mother had told Jean the best time for the surprise was after dinner.

It was hard for her to wait so long, but she did.

As soon as dinner was over, Mother said, "Jean, it is time for Father's surprise now."

"The book is in the next room. I shall run and get it," said Jean. Mother said, "Wait for us, Jean. We are all going into that room."

As Father walked with Jean, he said, "You are too little to read, Jean. Why do you need a book?"

"My surprise is in a book, Father," said Jean with a kind smile.

Jean waited for Father, Mother
and John to take chairs.

Then she went over to a table
and took up the book she needed.

She said, "Father, this is the book
Grandmother and Grandfather
gave to John and me.
At first I could not read
the story in it, but I can now.
That is my surprise for you."

Then Jean began to read her story.
It was about the shepherds
who went to Bethlehem
the night Jesus was born.



Jean's surprise pleased Father.

He said, "Jean, I am so glad you can read that beautiful story I know you have worked hard to give me this surprise. Thank you for it, Jean dear."

Jean said, "Mother and John worked hard on the surprise, too. They had to help me with the story over and over again, Father."

Father smiled at Mother and John. He looked so kind as he said, "You have all made me happy. Thank you for the beautiful story."

Mother said, "We are all glad you liked Jean's surprise, Father."



WHAT JOHN WANTED TO KNOW

Father liked to read the paper at night, after his dinner.
John liked to be Father's paper boy.

So when Jean's story was over, John ran out of the room. Before long, he came back with the paper for Father.

As Father took the paper, he said, "You are a fine paper boy, John. You bring the paper to me, just when I am ready to read."

John said, "May I ask you something before you begin to read, Father?"

"Yes, you may, John," said Father.



John asked, "Did the angel tell anyone but the shepherds where Jesus was born?"

"No, John. The angel went only to the shepherds," said Father.

"Then the shepherds must have been the only people who went to Bethlehem," said John.

Father said,
"No, John, they were not.
Some other good men went there,
to find dear little Jesus.
God did not send an angel
to tell them where Jesus was.
He let them know in another way."

"O Father, please tell us about it,"
said John and Jean.



Father looked at his watch.

“It is near your bedtime, now. I shall have to tell you the story to-morrow night,” he said.

“Thank you, Father,” said Jean. John said, “I shall be glad when to-morrow night comes.”

Then the children ran off to get ready for bed.

The next night Father told the children the story. It is the next story in this book.