

# AMERICAN CARDINAL READERS

*For Catholic Parochial Schools*

## BOOK THREE

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## GOD'S PROVIDENCE

God gives so many lovely things!  
He gives the bird his feathery wings,  
The butterfly its colors fair,  
The bee a velvet coat to wear.

He gives the garden all its flowers,  
And sun to make them grow, and showers;  
Red apples for the old bent tree,  
Wheat in the meadow blowing free;

Cool grass upon the summer hills,  
And silvery streams to turn the mills.  
He gives the shining day, and then  
The quiet starry night again.



He gives my home—a place to stay,  
And laugh, and dream, and work, and play,  
The pleasant rooms and windows wide,  
And cozy, rosy fireside;

And books to read and folks to love me,  
And His good care to watch above me.  
It's like a song a person sings—  
God gives so many happy things!







### THE LITTLE WEED

“You’re nothing but a weed,” said the children in the fall. The little weed hung its head in sorrow. No one seemed to think that a weed was of any use.

By and by the snow came and the cold winds

blew. There were many hungry little birds hunting for food.

“Twit! Twit! Twee!

See! See! See!”

sang a merry little bird one cold morning.

“Here is a lovely weed full of nice brown seeds!” And he made a good meal from those seeds that morning. Then three other little birds came to share the feast.

The little weed was so happy that she held her head up straight and tall again.

“That is what I was meant for,” she said. “I am good for something. Four hungry little birds had as many seeds as they wished for their breakfast. Next year I’ll grow as many seeds as I can to feed many more hungry little birds. Good-by, little birds,” she called out to the little feathery friends. “Come again next year. I’ll have another dinner for you.”

“Good-by, little weed,” sang the birds. “We thank you for the fine meal we have had. You’ll

see us again next year. It is so hard to get enough to eat during the cold weather. We are grateful to you for holding your seeds for us.”

“It’s nice to find that one is of some use after all, isn’t it?” called out the little weed to her neighbor in the next field.



## THE BROWN BIRDS

The brown birds are flying  
Like leaves through the sky,  
The flowerets are calling,  
“Dear birdlings, good-by!”

The bird voices falling,  
So soft from the sky,  
Are answering the flowerets,  
“Dear playmates, good-by.”



## THE PIED PIPER

Brave Piper October, what tune do you blow  
That the leaves are bewitched and wherever  
    you go  
They flutter and follow, agleam and aglow?  
From oak tree and bramble, from high tree  
    and low,  
They flock to the sound of the piping they know,  
And down from the tall trees of heaven, O ho!  
Come dancing and glancing the white leaves  
    of snow.

## THE DARNING NEEDLE

Once there was a darning needle who forgot how coarse and thick she was. She was always telling the fingers, when they held her, to be careful to treat her with respect.

One day the cook used her to sew her old slipper.

“How dare she give me such dirty work to do!” the needle cried to the fingers. “I am much too fine for such work. There! I knew it. I broke.”

“Let’s drop her on the floor,” Mr. Thumb said to his brothers. “She thinks she is so fine that no one will see her.”

“No,” First Finger said; “the cook is going to fix her.” So the fingers held her while the cook put some sealing wax on the broken needle. Then she stuck the darning needle in her dress.

“This is much better,” the darning needle said. “I have been raised to a better place in the world.”

“You may not stay there very long,” Mr. Thumb laughed. “You are much too fine.”

Soon his words came true; for, as the cook was washing dishes, the darning needle dropped into the sink.

“Well, well,” she said, as she felt herself in the water, “I’m really going on a journey. I knew I was fine. All fine people go on journeys.”

Soon the darning needle found herself in the gutter. She was still very proud, even though she had to look up at the things that floated over her.

“Look at that common piece of wood!” she said. “How little of the great world it knows! See that bit of paper! Once it was a page in a book. What is it now?”

The darning needle lay in the gutter for several days. She was not alone, but she thought



herself so much above the other things there, that she spoke to no one.

At last, part of a broken bottle was thrown into the gutter. The darning needle thought it was a diamond as it lay sparkling.

“Here, now,” she thought, “is some one that I should know. He is not quite so fine as I, but he is not like the other common people that are here.”

“Pardon me,” she began; “you are a diamond, are you not?”

The glass knew better, but it was just as proud as the darning needle, and wanted people to think well of him.

“Oh, yes,” he replied.

“My home was a lady’s box,” the darning needle said. “The lady had five fingers whose only work in the world was to take me out and put me back into the box.”

“Were the fingers of a fine family, too?” asked the glass.

“No,” replied the darning needle. “Mr. Thumb was short and fat and rude. He was always laughing at my fine manners. But he didn’t know the world. He had been hardly any place outside the kitchen.

“Mr. First Finger was common, too. He pushed me into a coarse slipper one day, but I was too fine, and broke.

“Mr. Middle Finger wasn’t much better. He helped Mr. First Finger, and laughed when I broke.

“Mr. Ring Finger was the best one of that family, but that isn’t saying much for him.

“Mr. Little Finger was too small to have any manners. But I fear if he lives with his brothers, his manners will be as coarse as theirs.”

“You must be thankful that you have left that rude family behind you,” replied the piece of glass.

“Indeed, yes,” said the darning needle. “That was why I took this journey.”

Just then a stream of water came into the gutter, so that the gutter flowed over, and the glass was carried away.

“So he is going away, too,” the darning needle said. “I shall stay. I am too fine to go with that crowd. Sometimes I think that the sun is looking for me. Well, I shall not ask him, but if he wants me for a sunbeam, I shall go with him gladly.”

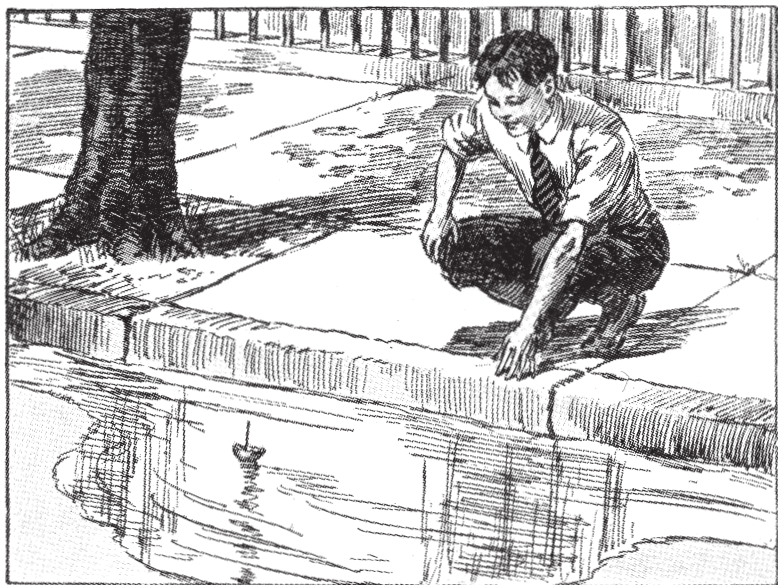
One day a boy, who was looking for his marble in the gutter, stuck his finger with the darning needle.

“Well,” he said, as he picked up the needle, “what are you doing in the gutter?”

“You are rude, too. How dare you speak to a young lady like that!” the darning needle said; but the boy didn’t hear her.

Then the boy saw an egg-shell sailing along down the gutter, and he put the darning needle into the shell.

“This is a pleasant change,” the darning needle



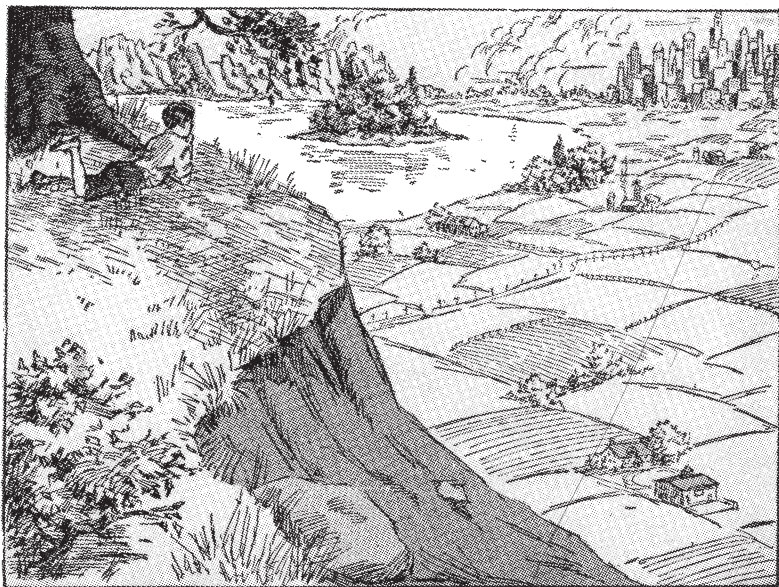
said. "No fear of being seasick either, for I have a stomach of steel."

At that moment, a big wagon ran over the egg-shell.

"What is that?" thought the darning needle. "Am I seasick? Oh, I am breaking!"

The wagon crushed the egg-shell, but the darning needle did not break. She was lying there right on the ground, and she is lying there still for all I know.\*

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## THE WONDERFUL WORLD

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World  
With the wonderful water around you curled,  
And the wonderful grass upon your breast,  
World, you are beautifully dressed.

The wonderful air is over me,  
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree—  
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,  
And talks to itself on the top of the hills.

You friendly Earth, how far do you go,  
With the wheat fields that nod, and the rivers  
that flow,  
With cities and gardens and cliffs and isles,  
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah! you are so great, and I am so small,  
I hardly can think of you, World, at all;  
And yet, when I said my prayers to-day,  
My mother kissed me, and said, quite gay,

“If the wonderful World is great to you,  
And great to Father and Mother, too,  
“You are more than the Earth, though you are  
such a dot!  
You can love and think, and the Earth cannot!”