

First Dog

By
Patricia Quinn Hays

Introduction by
Bishop John M. Quinn

Illustrations by
Julie Victor



saint mary's press

The publishing team included Jerry Ruff, development editor; Brian Holzworth, designer; and John Vitek, publisher. Prepress and manufacturing coordinated by the production departments of Saint Mary's Press.

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Introduction

What a special joy for me to introduce my sister's book, *First Dog*, which is a Christmas story about wanting to belong and hoping to have a family.

The Feast of Christmas is about the Incarnation, an event of love in which the Father sends his only Son, born of a Virgin, whose name is Mary. Christmas is about the overflowing love of God and how that love opens our hearts to others.

There are many stories and legends that retell the message of the overflowing love of God for us in the Incarnation. All of us have a favorite. Perhaps you remember the story of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, about a lame little boy who meets up with the Magi and is healed when he comes to the manger. I treasure *A Christmas Carol*, in which Scrooge is changed into a loving man after he awakens on Christmas morning from dreams that show him his past. Another favorite is the legend of the *Little Drummer Boy*, who had nothing to bring to the Baby Jesus as a gift, so he played his drum and the Child Jesus smiled at him. Now you will read another story about Christmas, and I hope it helps you to live a faith-filled and generous life all year long.

This book honors our parents, George and Mary Quinn, and all the proceeds will go to the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Winona, Minnesota.

Most Reverend John M. Quinn
Bishop of Winona, Minnesota
May 2012

A very long time ago in a far-away city called Nazareth, there lived a carpenter, Joseph, and his wife, Mary. While they were eagerly awaiting the birth of Mary's baby, Joseph received some difficult news.

"Mary," said Joseph. "We must travel to Bethlehem. It will be a long journey."

A decree had come from Caesar Augustus that all persons must be counted for the census. Since Joseph's family came from Bethlehem, he and Mary had to travel there to be enrolled. Joseph and Mary set out for Bethlehem. Joseph walked and Mary rode a donkey. They knew that the baby could be born at any time and the journey to Bethlehem was very long.

