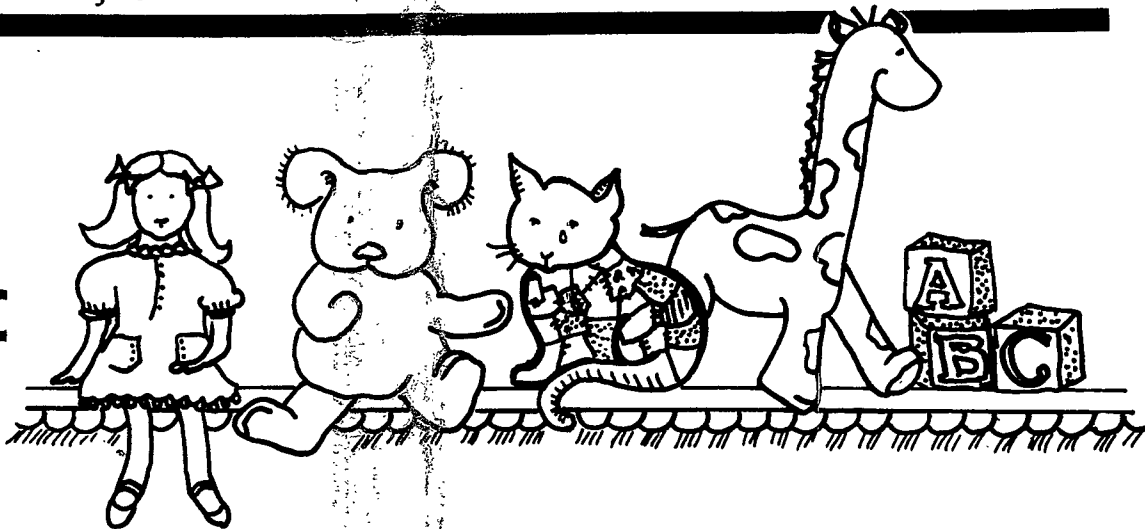


CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

Kitty the calico cat



By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

"I feel so useless," said Teddy, the big brown bear.

"Me, too," agreed Kitty, the colorful calico cat. "I must be very ugly. Sally never holds me or plays with me."

"You're not ugly at all," Teddy said, trying to cheer her up. "I think you're the prettiest of us all."

"Thanks," Kitty replied.

The two were silent for a long time. The closet was dark and stuffy. The other dolls sat silently on the five shelves.

"These are all my dolls!" Sally said loudly. She switched on the closet light. Kitty woke up with a start.

"I've never seen so many dolls!" Sally's new friend said, a little enviously.

"Here's my favorite," Sally said.

She pulled down a big doll with long yellow hair and a deep blue dress.

"Can I hold her?" Sally's friend asked.

"Oh, no!" Sally replied. "She only likes me to hold her."

Sally turned off the light and closed the door and it was dark again inside.

"Did you hear that, Teddy?"

Kitty asked. "I knew she didn't like me. What good am I if I can't make some boy or girl happy?" The calico cat began to cry.

"Don't cry," Teddy said softly. "Someday you will make somebody very happy. You're special."

Kitty and Teddy sat on the shelf for a long time. The days got shorter and cold drafts whistled through the closet.

"Soon it will be Christmas,"

Kitty said sadly. "Then there will be more dolls filling the closet. And I'll be forgotten forever."

"No, you won't," Teddy reassured her.

Just then the light snapped on again. Sally and her mother came in.

"The church has asked for a doll for a child who has almost none. Why don't you give one of yours?" her mother asked.

"No," Sally objected. "These are mine."

"But you have so many," her mother insisted. "Surely you can give up one."

Sally finally agreed. She looked from one doll to another. "Here's one I can give away," Sally told her mother as she pulled the calico cat from the shelf.

"Goodbye, Teddy!" Kitty cried. "Goodbye Kitty!" answered the

big bear.

Sally and her mother wrapped Kitty up in a box with a big red ribbon, as Kitty wondered what her new home would be like.

On Christmas Eve Kitty heard laughter and carols. She began to get nervous. Then she felt eager hands tearing off the ribbon and pulling the box open.

"Oh Mommy! Look at the beautiful cat! I love it!" The girl held Kitty very close to her. She danced around the room. "I've never had such a pretty doll!"

Kitty felt warm and happy inside. "Teddy was right. This girl likes me. Now at last I can make someone happy."

(Ms. Manternach is the author of catechetical works, scripture stories and original stories for children.)

Hidden Words

Find the words hidden in the puzzle below. They can be vertical horizontal or diagonal. All the words are in this week's children's story.

A	E	M	C	A	R	O	L	S	S
I	S	T	Y	H	C	B	X	L	L
N	A	A	O	I	G	N	L	R	H
C	Z	I	L	P	Q	O	K	S	D
J	L	A	K	L	D	F	I	X	R
S	C	O	R	V	Y	W	T	Y	I
O	L	A	S	V	W	Z	T	C	B
J	U	M	T	E	D	D	Y	D	B
F	P	V	T	A	T	Q	U	E	O
B	H	A	P	P	Y	G	K	C	N

CALICO CAT KITTY TEDDY SALLY
CAROLS CLOSET HAPPY RIBBON DOLLS

HOW ABOUT YOU?

Do you think it would be hard to give one of your toys to a child who needs a toy? Why would it be a good thing to do?

Children's Reading Corner

"The Sign of the Beaver" is a story by Elizabeth George Speare. Children and adults might enjoy reading it aloud together. In the story Matt is left at home to guard the cabin while his father goes to get the rest of the family. Many unexpected things happen to Matt while he waits. Best of all he makes a friend. But more weeks go by than are supposed to and Matt fears that his father and mother might never return. At the point when he is sure something has happened to his family, they arrive just in time for Christmas. (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. 02107. 1983. Hardback, \$8.95.)



Love

Making the warmth of God's love manifest to terminally ill patients is important to the ministry of Sister Rosella Molitor, D.C. With funding from the Catholic Church Extension Society she serves the spiritual needs of those living in eastern Oklahoma's home mission territory.

Sister Molitor is one of a team of home missionaries who, in partnership with Extension, pursue the vital and urgent task of evangelization here in the United States. But the team is too small to do its job without help. It

needs new members. It needs you.

Join us. Become a member of the Extension team. Although you won't be present in the home missions personally, your impact will be felt in this holy effort. Together we will bring Christ to those living in the home missions.

Write for a free subscription to Extension magazine today and discover the difference you can make. Together, and with God's grace, we can achieve His missionary goals here in our own beloved country.



The Catholic Church
EXTENSION Society

35 East Wacker Drive • Chicago, Illinois 60601