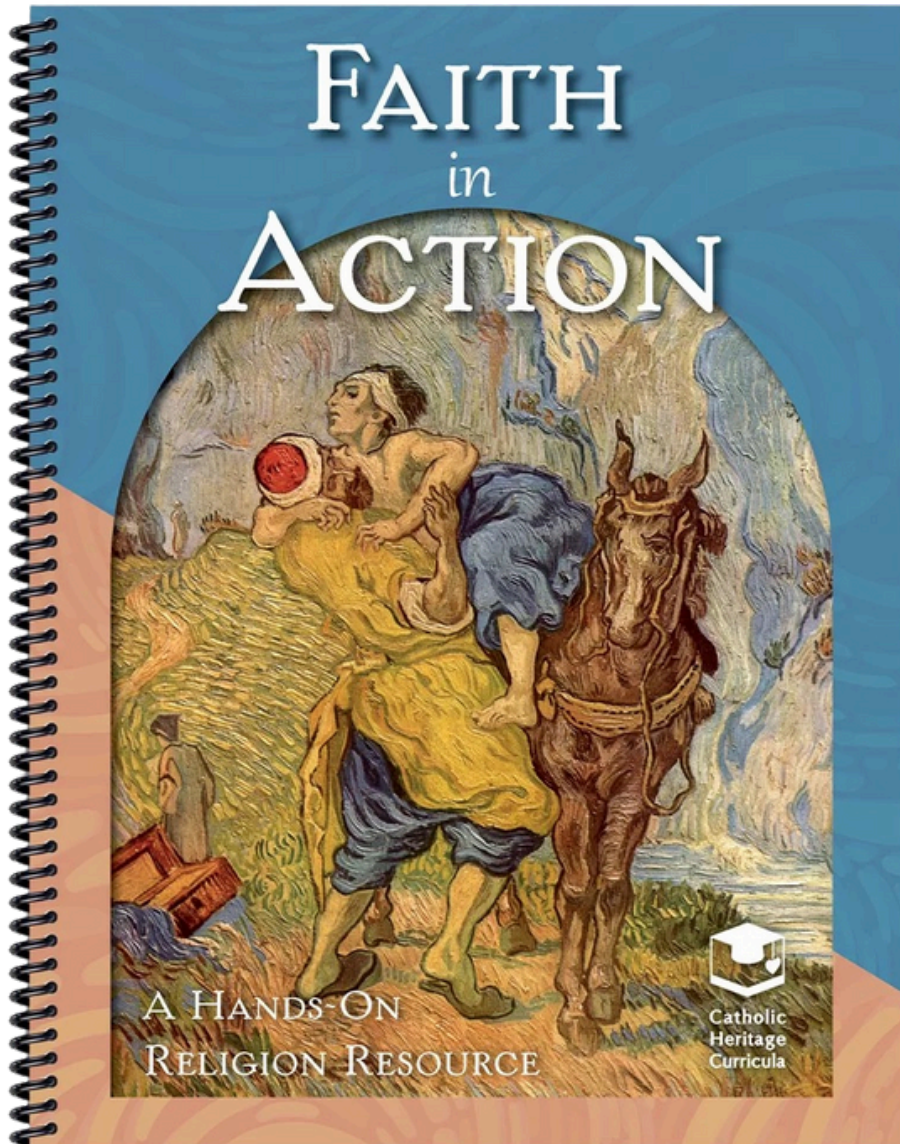


Harry's Riches

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Catholic Heritage Curricula

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What is contentment? It is happiness in having whatever God sends, doing whatever God wants, and not worrying if others have more than we do. We would not wish for what others have if we stopped to think of all God has given us. This little story helps us remember how rich in blessings we are. As the old saying tells us, "Count your blessings!"

Harry's Riches

One day, our little Harry spent the morning with his young playmate, Johnny Crane, who lived in a fine house, and on Sundays rode to church in the grandest carriage to be seen in all the country round.

When Harry returned home, he said to me, "Mother, Johnny has money in both pockets!"

"Has he, dear?"

"Yes, ma'am; and he says he could get ever so much more if he wanted it."

"Well, now, that's very pleasant for him," I returned cheerfully, as a reply was plainly expected. "Very pleasant; don't you think so?"

"Yes, ma'am; only—"

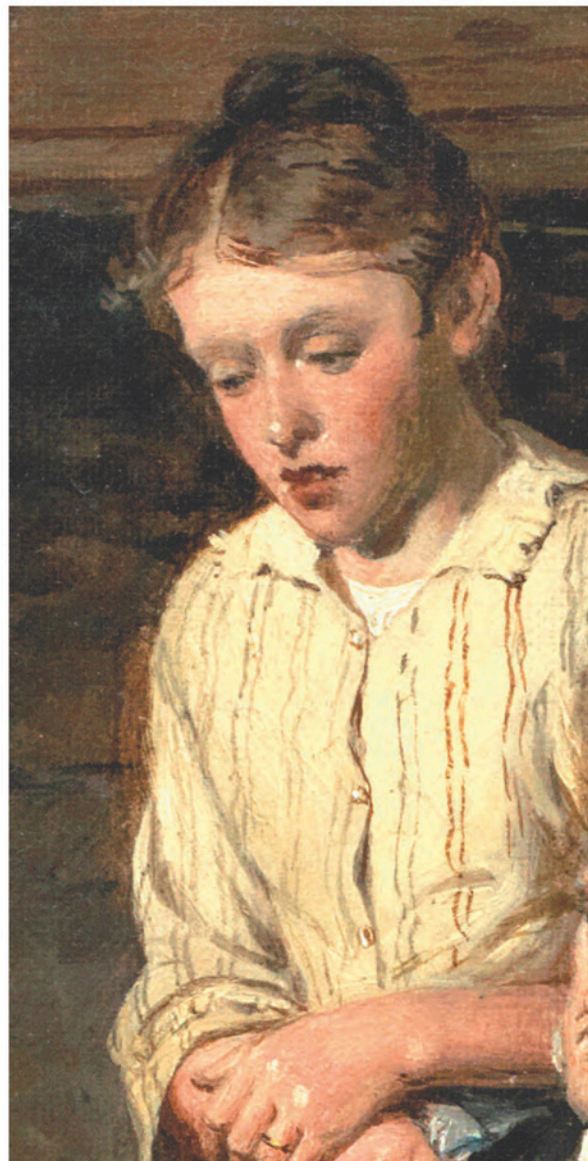
"Only what, Harry?"

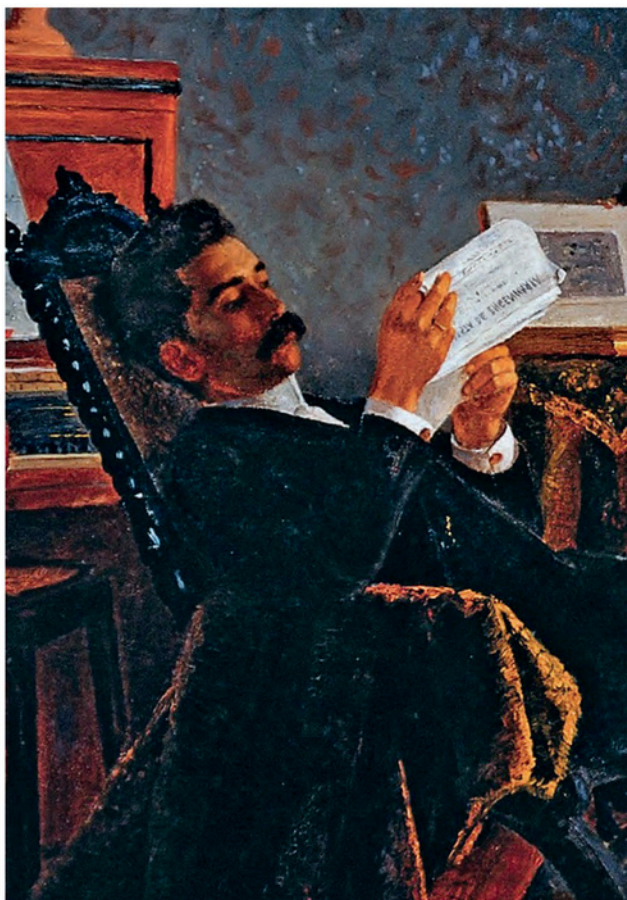
"Why, he has a big popgun, and a watch, and a hobbyhorse, and lots of things." And Harry looked up at my face with a disconsolate stare.

"Well, Harry, what of that?"

"Nothing, Mother," and the telltale tears sprang to his eyes, "only I guess we are very poor, aren't we?"

"No, indeed, Harry, we are very far from being poor. We are not so rich as Mr. Crane's family, if that is what you mean."





“O Mother!” insisted the little fellow, “I do think we are very poor; anyhow, I am!”

“O Harry!” I exclaimed.

“Yes, ma’am, I am,” he sobbed; “I have scarcely anything—I mean anything that’s worth money—except things to eat and wear, and I’d have to have them anyway.”

“Have to have them?” I echoed, at the same time laying my sewing upon the table, so that I might reason with him on that point; “do you not know, my son—”

Just then Uncle Ben looked up from the paper he had been reading: “Harry,” said he, “I want to find out something about eyes; so, if you will let me have yours, I will give you a dollar apiece for them.”

“For my eyes!” exclaimed Harry, very much astonished.

“Yes,” resumed Uncle Ben, quietly, “for your eyes. I will give you chloroform, so it will not hurt you in the least, and you shall have a beautiful glass pair for nothing, to wear in their place. Come, a dollar apiece, cash down! What do you say? I will take them out as quick as a wink.”

“Give you my eyes, Uncle!” cried Harry, looking wild at the very thought, “I think not.” And the startled little fellow shook his head defiantly.

“Well, five, ten, twenty dollars, then.” Harry shook his head at every offer.

“No, sir! I wouldn’t let you have them for a thousand dollars! What could I do without my eyes? I couldn’t see mother, or the baby, or the flowers, or the horses, or anything,” added Harry, growing angrier.

“I will give you two thousand,” urged Uncle Ben, taking a roll of bank notes out of his pocket. Harry, standing at a safe distance, shouted that he never would do any such thing.

“Very well,” continued Uncle Ben, with a serious air, at the same time writing something in his notebook, “I can’t afford to give you more than two thousand dollars, so I shall have to do without your eyes; but,” he added, “I will tell you what I will do, I will give you twenty dollars if you will let me put a few drops from this bottle in your ears. It will not hurt, but it will make you deaf. I want to try some experiments with deafness, you see. Come quickly, now! Here are the twenty dollars all ready for you.”

“Make me deaf!” shouted Harry, without even looking at the gold pieces temptingly displayed upon the table. “I guess you will not do that, either. Why, I couldn’t hear a single word if I were deaf, could I?”

“Probably not,” replied Uncle Ben. So, of course, Harry refused again. He would never give up his hearing, he said, “no, not for three thousand dollars.”

Uncle Ben made another note in his book, and then came out with large bids for “a right arm,” then “left arm,” “hands,” “feet,” “nose,” finally ending with an offer of ten thousand dollars for “Mother,” and five thousand for “the baby.”

To all of these offers Harry shook his head, his eyes flashing, and exclamations of surprise and indignation bursting from his lips. At last, Uncle Ben said he must give up his experiments, for Harry’s prices were entirely too high.

“Ha! ha!” laughed little Harry, exultingly, and he folded his dimpled arms and looked as if to say, “I’d like to see the man who could pay them!”

“Why, Harry, look here!” exclaimed Uncle Ben, peeping into his notebook, “here is a big addition sum, I tell you!” He added the numbers, and they amounted to thirty-two thousand dollars.

“There, Harry,” said Uncle Ben, “don’t you think you are foolish not to accept some of my offers?”



“No, sir, I don’t,” answered Harry, resolutely.

“Then,” said Uncle Ben, “you talk of being poor, and by your own showing you have treasures for which you will not take thirty-two thousand dollars. What do you say to that?”

Harry didn’t know exactly what to say. So he blushed for a second, and just then tears came rolling down his cheeks, and he threw his chubby arms around my neck. “Mother,” he whispered, “isn’t God good to make everybody so rich?”

*O give thanks to the Lord, call on His name, make known His deeds among the peoples!
Sing to Him, sing praises to Him, tell of all His wonderful works!
Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!
(1 Chronicles 16:8–10)*