

# The Sleepover

A Love of God Story

"Oh, please, Mom, can I please?" Maggie pleaded. "Can I please spend the night at Annie's house?" Annie lived two doors down and was always so busy with various school activities, she never had a chance to play, let alone have a sleepover. Maggie really liked her, too. She was so fun and interesting. Plus, she didn't have little brothers and sisters that hung around bothering them while they played.

"Maggie, you know today is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception," her mother reminded. "We are going to Mass tonight. It is a Holy Day of Obligation."

"Well, I can go with Annie's family," Maggie said. "They are Catholic, too. I'm sure they'll be going to Mass."

Mother looked skeptical. "I don't know."

"Oh, please? Annie and I were working on a new video and this is our first chance to finish it. I never get to go over there anymore because she's so busy. All fall she was in track and marching band. This is the first time we've been able to spend any time together in months! Please?"

"Are you sure her parents will take you to Mass?" Mother asked.

"Of course they will. They go every Sunday, don't they? We just don't see them because they go to the parish across town. I'm sure they wouldn't miss it." Maggie could feel her mother's opposition begin to weaken. "I'll call Annie and ask her, if you want."

"Why don't you do that," Mom responded.

Maggie grabbed the phone and called Annie.

"Can you come over?" Annie asked.

"I can," responded Maggie, "As long as your family is going to Mass tonight."

"Why would we go to Mass?" Annie asked.

"Because it is a Holy Day of Obligation," Maggie said.

"It is? Well, then I guess we're going," Annie said.

"Great! Then I'll be right over," Maggie was bubbling over with excitement. "Mom, mom! They are going to Mass! Can I spend the night?"

"Okay," Mom relented. "But make sure you get enough sleep. I don't want a cranky girl on my hands tomorrow."

Maggie took the steps two at a time to her bedroom to pack an overnight bag. She had to bring the video camera, too. She couldn't forget the script she was working on. Maggie and Annie loved to pretend they were talk show hosts interviewing each other and making a TV show out of it. They would even write commercials for the show. It was such fun!

She lugged her bags downstairs and grabbed her coat. "I'm leaving now, Mom," she called as she headed out the door.

"Be back by eleven!" Mom called after her.

"I will!" Maggie called out as she went out the front door.

Annie and Maggie could hardly wait to start their talk show taping. First, though, they had to set up their stage. They arranged two chairs with a table between them. Then they made a sign out of poster board that they could hold up in front of the camera before they began to film. Then they had to get their wardrobes together. Annie was pretending to be a famous movie star that Maggie would interview. Annie had to dress up in her most outrageous outfit, complete with sunglasses and hair going in all different directions. Maggie dressed in a business suit. She carried a notebook to take notes in and wore stylish wire-rimmed glasses that actually were just old frames, the lenses were taken out and given to the Lions' Club to recycle.

Then they had to work on their scripts and practice them. They were working so hard, they didn't notice how the time had flown by. Before they knew it, Annie's mom was calling them for dinner.

"Yum! Meatloaf!" Maggie said as they came to the table. Annie's mom, Mrs. Kent, made the best meatloaf.

"I know you like it, Maggie, so I thought I'd make it for you."

"I sure do," Maggie said. After they said grace, Maggie remembered about Mass.

"What time is Mass?" she asked after they started eating.

Mr. and Mrs. Kent looked at each their forks half-way to their mouths. It was obvious to Maggie that they had forgotten about the Holy Day.

"Mass?" Mrs. Kent started.

"Oh, I completely forgot. It's December 8th," Mr. Kent said.

"It is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception," Maggie offered. "Is Mass at 7 pm?"

"I don't know," Mrs. Kent said. "I don't remember what time Holy Day Masses are."

"This is the first family dinner we've had in ages," Mr. Kent said. "It would be a shame to have to hurry up and eat and run out to church."

"We could always go tomorrow. It is Saturday and we can go then," Mrs. Kent said.

"Let's do that," Mr. Kent said. "I'm sure it will be fine."

Maggie was uncomfortable. She knew that she was supposed to go to Mass on Holy Days, not on just any other day. She promised her mother she would go to Mass tonight. She knew her mother would ask her about it tomorrow. But she didn't want to make her hosts uncomfortable. She ate the rest of her delicious meal in silence. After dinner, she helped clean up. Now it was decision time. She still had time to run home and go to Mass with her family and then come back later, or, she could go with Annie and her parents to Mass in the morning. Her mother would never know. After all, she would have gone to Mass, just not on the *exact* day she was supposed to. The Kents went to another parish. What difference did a couple of hours make? Wasn't it still going to Mass? Maggie was wrestling these things around in her mind when something came to her that they had talked about in Little Flowers. *If you love me, you will keep my commandment.* Christ said this to his followers. Maggie knew that this didn't just mean the ten commandments, but also the laws of the Church, including going to Mass on Holy Days of Obligation. Her mother called the requirement of going to Mass on Holy Days a "precept of the Church," and explained that it was a law of the Church that, as baptized Catholics, they were bound to obey. Did she love Christ? Of course she did! And if she loved Christ, she would keep all of His commandments.

"Annie, I'm going to have to go home and catch my family before they head off to church," Maggie said.

"But my family is going in the morning. Isn't that good enough?" Annie looked confused.

"Well, tomorrow isn't the Holy Day. Today is. Besides, I promised my mother that I would go to Mass tonight," Maggie grabbed her coat to head out the door. "Is it okay if I leave my stuff here and come back after Mass?"

Annie looked confused. She couldn't believe her friend would leave the first sleepover they've had in months to go to church. Did Maggie really think that church was more important than the sleepover? Was it?

"Wait, Maggie, I'll go with you," Annie said as she grabbed her coat. "Mom, can I go with Maggie to church?"

"What?" her mother called from the kitchen. "Now? I thought we decided to go in the morning."

"Well, I don't want to have to get up early," Annie said. "And Maggie's family is going tonight so I can just go with them."

"Well, okay, dear, if you'd like to."

"C'mon, Maggie, before your family leaves," Annie grabbed her arm as they headed out the door. "If we go to Mass now, we'll have all night to put on our talk show!"

The two girls left arm in arm grinning from ear to ear.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Maggie's mother make sure that Maggie went to Mass for the Holy Day?
2. How did Maggie respond when she found out that Annie's parents hadn't planned on going to Mass for the Holy Day?
3. How did going to Mass for the Holy Day show Love of God?
4. What is a precept of the Church and can you name another precept of the Church?
5. How did everything work out in the end?
6. Have you ever been in a situation where you had to choose what was right when your friends were doing something else?