



## “What happened to the Dog?”

RE-SOURCE #1 — February 2, 2023

Over the years, many SHCJ teachers of young children have told the heart-rending story of the accidental death of Cornelia’s little boy, John Henry who fell into a vat of boiling sugar while playing with a Newfoundland dog. He died of his burns on the feast of the Presentation. The teachers observed that the story often evoked the same question from the children — “What happened to the dog?”

Mary Hamilton, SHCJ took up the children’s question and imagined this answer to it in her poem:

Running, jumping, laughing, boundless energy contained in a loving heart and a wagging tail.  
In a flash turned to sorrow and pain.  
He stayed with the mother and son, shedding his own tears.  
He followed the sad procession to where they laid him.  
He remained there and daily visits the place.  
No blame cast upon him; his own heart forever changed.



France White, SHCJ created these illustrations for *A Generous Love*, the story of Cornelia written for children in 2012.



From Cornelia’s own reflections on this tragedy we know that it was a turning point for her; she saw it as a “sword of sorrow” that joined her intimately with Mary, the sorrowful mother of Jesus.

Theologian, Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ cites a journalist: “Repeating the question of the lawyer who challenged Jesus, Brian Patrick asks, “Who is my neighbor?” His answer: “The Samaritan? The outcast? The enemy? Yes, yes, of course. But it is also the whale, the bird, and the rain forest. Our neighbor is the entire community of life. We must love it all as our very self.” *Deep Incarnation: Prepare to Be Astonished*, address by Johnson to the VI International UNIFAS Conference, Rio de Janeiro, July 4-7, 2010