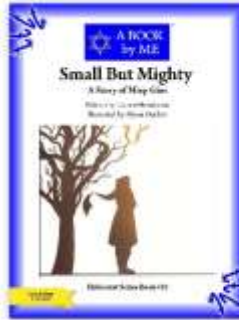


Catholic Connections

Real People who Triumphed over Adversity



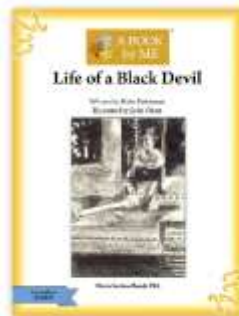
A Dutch woman named Miep Gies helped to hide Anne Frank's family before they were captured during WWII. After liberation, Otto Frank returned from a concentration camp only to discover the rest of his family had been murdered by the Nazis. Earlier, Miep had found Anne's diary, so she brought it to Otto upon his return and encouraged him to publish it. This Catholic woman, who later received honors as a Righteous Gentile, insisted, "I am not a hero. I don't want attention. I did what any decent person would have done."

#austria#courag#heroism#netherlands



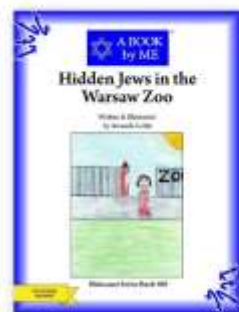
Irena Sendler, using the code name "Jolanta," saved the lives of Jewish children while working in the Polish Underground Resistance during WWII. Secretly, she took the young children out of the Warsaw Ghetto and hid them with strangers. Her Catholic father told her when she was seven years old, "If you see someone drowning you must try to rescue them, even if you can't swim." So, with a network of brave Poles, mostly women, she smuggled 2,500 children out of the ghetto into safety.

#empathy#courag#antisemitism#poland



Casey Celske was a Catholic boy who served as a mechanic in Italy during WWII. He was in awe witnessing the Pope praying from his window at Vatican City. When the first Special Service Force came looking for replacements Casey volunteered. He saw an opportunity for more excitement, and this is how he joined a fearless group the enemy called "The Black Devils."

#wisconsin#valor#honor#illinois



Catholic zookeepers in Poland risked their lives by hiding Jews in the Warsaw Zoo. Some Jews went into cages and covered themselves with animal fur, some were kept in underground tunnels that led to the animal enclosures, and others were hidden in closets in the zookeepers' home on the zoo grounds. By not allowing themselves to be paralyzed with fear, the husband and wife animal keepers taught their young son to "do what is right, no matter what."

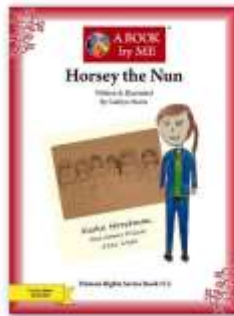
#inspiration#courag#compassion#poland



A high-school exchange student from Italy, who came to America, learned that the residents of a monastery in Assisi, Italy risked their lives to hide Jews during WWII. He went back home and met a Jewish survivor named Graziella Viterbi, whose family owes their lives to the monks. As a young girl, she remembered her family risked everything to travel to Assisi during the war, hoping the story of the Catholic Church saving Jewish lives was true.

#faith#compassion#antisemitism#italy





During WWII there were no young men to play baseball at Wrigley Field in Chicago, so talent scouts went out to find young women to play on the All American Girls Professional Baseball League. Catherine Horstman, nicknamed "Horsey", was chosen to play in the league. She was a great player for many years. After the war, she dedicated her life to the Catholic Church by becoming a nun and working in private schools to make sports available to girls.

#womanpioneer#faith#girlssports#ohio



A Catholic family hid one-year-old Michelle Trop, and her mother on their farm in France when the Nazis invaded their country. Michelle's father Jacob left them and became part of the French resistance. Six years later, when her father came to claim his family, young Michelle found out that they were Jewish. The Trop family resumed their lives in their original home and eventually found a sponsor so they could move to America, the "Land of Opportunity."

#france#antisemitism#survival#illinois



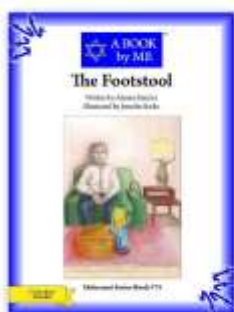
When Jenő Berta was six years old, his Hungarian parents decided to help a Jewish family survive by hiding them. During the last days of WWII, Jenő's job each day was to take food from the house to the barn for them. If the Nazis had found out, it would have meant death for their family as well as the Jewish family. Jenő, now an American, told his young author that life was still hard after the war when Russians brought them Communism and locked the door of their Catholic Church.

#hungary#courag#conviction#iowa



Veteran Richard Leahy was in the Navy during WWII. Young Richard went willingly into military service because of love for his country. Being aboard ship during a kamikaze attack made him more determined to win the war. Students who wrote and illustrated this book learned that living in America is not free; it has been bought with a high price. The illustrator attends Costa Catholic School in Galesburg, Illinois (a stop on the Underground Railroad and home of a Lincoln-Douglas debate).

#courag#patriotism#excellence#illinois



Nazis forced the Polish Catholic family of Jozef Kodrya to serve as slave laborers in a concentration camp in Germany. Jozef's young daughter was blonde-haired and blue eyed, and one day after kindergarten they were told she was dead. The family feared since she was "Aryan-looking," she was taken for experimentation. After the war, the family immigrated to America with their sons, but never forgot about the daughter they lost.

#poland#victim#antibullying#iowa

