

# A Special “Auntie”

With a big yawn, Nora sits up in bed. “Mom!” she calls. No answer. She crawls out of bed and clomps down the stairs. “Mom?” Still no answer. She wanders into the kitchen and finds auntie Bernice standing at the stove putting a pile of steaming pancakes on a plate next to her.

“Good morning, Nora! Did you sleep well?” Bernice asks with a hug.

“Where is mom?” Nora asks.

“She went to the hospital this morning to have her baby. I’ll be staying with you kids for a few days.”

“Yay!” Nora says. “We’re going to have so much fun!”

Soon the other children wake and discover that mom has gone to the hospital. Cries of joy erupt—both over the new baby and because auntie Bernice will be here for a few days. There is much discussion about baby names and what’s on the agenda for the day. Everyone has different ideas.

The chores get done quickly when they decide that today will be a baking day. Everyone puts on an apron or dishtowel—even two-year-old Ava. The kitchen becomes quite a disaster with so many people and little fingers “helping out.” Through it all, Bernice chatters and hums.

After everyone is done and tummies are filled with samples, the kids help to clean up. Bernice always says, “Many hands make light work!” In the evening, she reads a few books and tells stories about her childhood. Her stories are always interesting! When the kids are tucked in bed, she preaches the gospel. Nora’s sister Lydia wonders—what will tomorrow bring?

Aunt Bernice isn’t really their aunt, but they call her aunt because she seems like part of their family. Many years ago, when mom was really sick in bed, Bernice showed up on the doorstep with a meal for the family. They all had a good visit, and she’s been a special “aunt” ever since. Many times she visits them, sometimes stays overnight, or takes the children on an adventure.

Even though Bernice isn’t married and doesn’t have children of her own, she always says she “has lots of kids.” That’s because over the years, many families have been blessed by her spirit of love and desire to help anyone in need. “When Bernice is in charge, the kids and house are well taken care of!” Mom says. The children say they feel lucky to have such a special, caring “aunt.”

Lydia Hillukka

(with Katie Hillukka)

## Things to Visit About:

1. Do you have a special person in your life, like the “auntie” in this story? Why is she (or he) special to you?
2. Do you think that you are special in her (or his) life as well? How do you help her?
3. Sing song of Zion #431. Who are the escorts in our lives, that verse 4 speaks about? What important duty do our escorts in faith do? Why are they so important?

# My Special Friends

From a little hand waving in church to a big smile or a hug, I feel blessed to have a large family of children in my life, even though God has not blessed me with my own. “When can we come to your house? Can we have a sleepover?” What blessed sights and sounds.

Helping families has been something I learned from childhood. My family experienced the need and support of others due to family illness. God’s children came to help in many ways. Now I have time and find joy in helping others and through this have gained many special friends in God’s kingdom.

God has given me a gift to love children, which is precious. A joy of spending time with them is seeing their eyes sparkle with delight. It can be from something as simple as a treat, or maybe they have come to ask for the gospel. I’m thankful that God has allowed many parents to share their blessings with me. Many thanks to God that He has given His kingdom many little escorts to be loved and cared for. May God keep you, dear children, in His kingdom.

Bernice Hillukka