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# The Strangers At The Manger (Chime Travelers)



## Synopsis

It's Christmas time at St. Anne parish, and a new family has arrived! The Perez family doesn't look like the other families in the parish. As five-year-old Mateo stares at Katie and Patrick, clutching his little stuffed burro, they see he's just puzzled about them. But it's Father Miguel's job to take care of them, right? Just then, a bell rings and the twins are swept up in another Chime Travel adventure, this time to find Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem. This fresh yet authentic retelling of the biblical Infancy Narratives sheds new light on the life of the Holy Family. And when at last the Magi arrive, Katie asks Mary, "Are you sure you want all of these strangers around the baby?" Mary smiles. "Strangers are simply new friends, just waiting to be loved." Katie and Patrick think of the Perez family. Can they still make new friends for Christmas?

## Book Information

Series: Chime Travelers (Book 5)

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 16 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #248,744 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Christian > Friendship #18 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Christian > Social Issues #40 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Christian > Historical

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

## Customer Reviews

"Through her gifted storytelling, Lisa Hendey truly makes the Holy Family come alive. This book will help you and your children see Mary, Joseph, and Jesus as real people who lived, worked, and prayed with simple and humble faith, not just figurines in your nativity set. In this world filled with consumerism, give your children the gift of understanding the true story of Christmas and the joy

that comes with welcoming the stranger by sharing with them The Strangers at the Manger.

• Michele Faehnle, coauthor, Divine Mercy for Moms, Sharing the Lessons of St. Faustina

“Lisa Hendey invites us to enter into the Christmas story with her beloved twin heroes, Patrick and Katie, as they learn firsthand how to welcome the stranger, share from the heart, and rekindle the joy of Jesus’s birth. Through this festive, charming, and imaginative Chime Travelers book, the true meaning of Christmas will shine brightly in the hearts of children and parents alike.

• Sarah Damm, mom of six and editorial and marketing director for WINE: Women in the New Evangelization

“This latest adventure with Chime Travelers Patrick and Katie is rich with warmth and charm. Lisa Hendey gives us a story that manages not only to bring young imaginations to the realities of Christ’s birth, but also brings Christmas to life in the midst of our present-day experiences. Highly recommended for all ages!

• Erin McCole Cupp, author, Unclaimed

“This is a fantastic book. It reminds me of the Ignatian spiritual exercises, but for kids! What a terrific way for children to engage in the faith and in the Bible more deeply!

• Christine Johnson, Catholic mom and blogger at DomesticVocation.com

Lisa Hendey is the founder and editor of CatholicMom.com and the bestselling author of The Grace of Yes and The Handbook for Catholic Moms. In the Chime Travelers series for elementary school readers, Hendey reaches a new generation of young Catholics with her charming stories about the Brady twins, who travel through time to encounter some of the most beloved spiritual giants of all time. A gifted Catholic evangelist, Hendey travel nationally and internationally to share her love for Jesus with everyone she meets. Her articles appear in Catholic Digest, National Catholic Register, and Our Sunday Visitor.

My 8 year old daughter loves all the books in this series. Love that she is being introduced to the saints and biblical figures and also taught Christian/moral lessons in fun stories that she loves to read.

This is a great series with good, wholesome education. These books are easy reads yet keep the reader engaged. This is a fun way to learn about the saints. Looking forward to what Lisa Hendey has coming next.

We’re mid way through this book and my son is begging me to go on to order more. Help...there’s

no more in the series yet. We're excited about this series and I can't wait to share it with my parish CCD director.

We read this book to our 5 year old. He never wanted us to put it down. It was great! My 7 and 10 year old niece and nephew each read it on their own and loved it too!

Enjoy this series with my children.

In Katie and Patrick's latest "Chime Travelers" adventure, *The Strangers at the Manger*, the plucky twins travel to Bethlehem to witness the real Christmas story. While they are helping their parents get the church cleaned up for Christmas Eve service, the bell choir starts rehearsal. When the bells chime just right, they are whooshed into a strange, yet strangely familiar land. The twins meet Mary and Joseph while they are on the road to Bethlehem, and end up staying with them for a long period of time. They get to witness Jesus' birth and the visits from the shepherds and wise men. They also work hard to help the Holy Family with household chores and babysitting. From Mary they learn the importance of kindness to strangers, and when they return home they immediately put that lesson to work. The Chime Traveling twins remind me of the kids in the *Magic Treehouse* series. Lisa Hendey brings the story of the first Christmas to life in a cute and breezy way. Jenn Bower's illustrations match Hendey's tone perfectly. *The Strangers at the Manger* is great for all kids (and grown-ups). Hendey is Roman Catholic, so some of the words may not be familiar to non-Catholics. Nevertheless, it's a fun read, getting me in the Christmas spirit and reminding me of the joy and miracle of Jesus' birth. Thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for the complimentary electronic review copy!

Lisa M. Hendey is an editor and founder of CatholicMom website she has written numerous books and contributed to a number as well. She has also written the forward to a number of other books. But this is the first book of hers that I have read, and it was wonderful. It was a little weird starting with the fifth book in a series but it was also a good test. For starting with this book it was easy to determine that though there are references to earlier books, or at least events from them, this book stands well on its own! The Brady twins Patrick and Katie have had some unique adventures after the family became more active in the parish of Saint Anne's, and specifically joined the cleaning team. The reason for joining the cleaning team might have something to do with Patrick's pet frog ending up in the baptismal font. (But alas that is part of another story.) For it seems that at certain

points after hearing the church bells chime they have each travelled into the past. They then stay there until they learn a lesson. This book begins on the last day before Christmas break, as school is letting out the Brady twins notice a new family at the school with Fr. Miguel and Sr. Margaret. The newcomers are the Perez family and they do not look like anyone else at the parish. Patrick and Katie learn that the Perez's need a safe place to stay and are staying at the parish centre. While helping clean the church for Christmas service, the twins Chime Travel, they appear on a hillside outside a cave with a donkey braying nearby. The children end up back in time at the first Christmas story. They meet Mary and Joseph as they travel to Bethlehem and join them on the journey. Over their time in the past they learn many lessons and start thinking about life back home in their own time. The children interact with a number of biblical characters, but most closely with Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. The children also meet the shepherds, the wise men, the visit to the temple, and more. When the Magi arrive, Katie asks Mary, "Are you sure you want all of these strangers around the baby?" Mary smiles. "Strangers are simply new friends, just waiting to be loved. And that is a sentiment needed today. And once they are home their attitude and interactions with the Perez family change drastically. Overall it is a very moving read. It is a powerful story and really brings the Christmas story alive for kids and those who read to and with them. The illustrations are a great addition to the story and Jenn Bower does a great job with capturing the sentiment of the book in the pictures. This book is a wonderful retelling of the nativity story and makes it very real. If the rest of the books in the series are as good there is some amazing reading ahead for the kids and me! And I hope that this is not the last in the series. Well done.

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