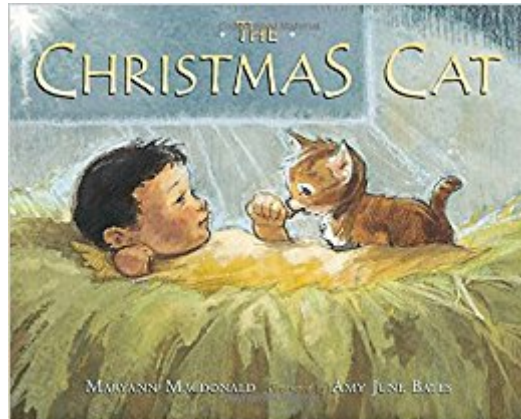




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# The Christmas Cat



## Synopsis

A cozy Nativity story for those who love Christmas and cats. All babies are beautiful and all babies cry. Jesus was no exception. On the night he was born, nothing Mary, Joseph, or the animals in the stable could do would comfort him. But when a curious kitten wanted its turn to calm the baby Jesus, a loving friendship blossomed on that very first Christmas. This perfect read-aloud was inspired by Leonardo da Vinci's drawings of La Madonna del Gatto, which show Mary lovingly holding the baby Jesus who is cuddling a cat.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 22 customer reviews

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Age Range: 3 - 5 years

Grade Level: Preschool - Kindergarten

## Customer Reviews

K-Gr 3-According to the author's note, this somewhat lengthy story was inspired by Leonardo da Vinci's drawings of La Madonna del Gatto as well as legends of a cat that purred Jesus to sleep. Only a kitten hiding in the stables can console a crying baby Jesus, and the two newborns form a bond. Later, when the family must flee Herod's forces, the feline can't be found and is seemingly left behind. Much to the delight of a heartbroken Jesus, the cat has secretly stowed away in the family's belongings, helping to keep him quiet as they escape to Egypt. With its focus beyond the Nativity, this story is an interesting change from typical Christmas fare. The expressive characters set against the rich background of watercolors in ochres, blues, and grays are lovely, but the frequent use of white text against this background makes reading a challenge. Cat lovers might be the best

audience for this take on a familiar tale.-Brooke Sheets, Los Angeles Public Library  
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It would be hard to find opening lines as simultaneously surprising and comforting as "Jesus was beautiful, like all babies. And like all babies, he cried." MacDonald (Odette's Secrets, 2013) works to balance the baby Jesus's extraordinary circumstances and his universal humanity in a story suggested by da Vinci's numerous La Madonna del Gatto (The Madonna of the Cat) drawings. After a procession of animals, including a cow, a donkey, and a flock of doves, tries unsuccessfully, only a curious and adorable kitten can quiet the crying Jesus. When Mary and Joseph must flee King Herod's soldiers with their baby, the same feline hitches a ride and calms little Jesus at a crucial moment, cementing a destiny of love and companionship. MacDonald does a seamless job of weaving the feline fancy into the larger tapestry, though young readers unfamiliar with the greatest story ever told will require some extra explanation. Bates's soft, misty lighting casts the characters in the warm glow of history and allegory. Grades K-2. --Jesse Karp

I purchased this as part of our "story book countdown to Christmas," a tradition we have started with our children. I like how this book highlights a part of the Christmas story that is often overlooked. Like other reviews state, this book mentions the role of a cat when Joseph takes Mary and young Jesus into Egypt. I was hoping I'd get a warm fuzzy feeling with the message and the tie into the cat, but it is just "alright." A cat lover would probably like this book more than I have. It is a book that focuses on Jesus' role in Christmas, so I've included it in our collection, but it's not near the top of my list of favorites.

This is the story for cat lovers who want to share the story of baby Jesus with their children. A crying Jesus needs comforting, and a little kitten fits the bill. A story more about friendship with pets than the story of Christ. It's filled with beautiful pictures, and is based on a legend of a cat living in the stable in Bethlehem. It was inspired by the author's childhood trip to an art museum with a picture drawn by Leonardo da Vinci of Mary, Jesus, and the cat.

I bought this book originally to gain the interest of my son in the details of the Christmas story. To make it more immersive for him. This turned out to be the perfect book! It teaches the bible story of

Jesus' birth and the family's flight from Bethlehem, but also shows the special bond between a boy and his cat. We have read it multiple times together. One noted side affect: My son has insisted on being a cat and lying on the floor next to the manger purring during our church nativity play.

Great Book. This is a good book to read to your young child. Perfect for a boy or girl. Great book to give to a child for Christmas. This book is a wonderful book for cat lovers and for people who love Christmas.

This is a great book for cat lovers. Read it to my grandchildren. They enjoyed the story (which could be true) and the illustrations.

Beautiful book. I like the concept that it was inspired by Di Vinci's sketch of Madonna and Child----with the Child holding a kitten. I think most cat lovers will love this book!

I thoroughly enjoyed reading it with my granddaughter.

. The baby Jesus is crying and needs someone to comfort him-- none of the animals succeed but the purring of a baby kitten stops the crying of Little Lord Jesus. Its a sweet book about friendship and goes beyond just the nativity. A great Christmas book for children.

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