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12-HUMSS Fr. Horacio de la Costa, S.J

August 08, 2025

### **The Star I Cannot Teach To Shine**

I held you once with steady hands, so sure the world would make you bright,  
That I could be the map you'd need, the voice to guide you through the night.

You held a pen like fragile glass, as if the letters hid the key,  
And asked me what the shapes all meant—but none of them made sense to me.

I smiled and nodded, played the part, while panic stirred behind my eyes,  
Ashamed that I could not explain the language others recognize.  
You searched my face for simple clues, the ones I never learned to give—  
And every time I failed to help, I questioned what it means to live.

They say a parent lights the path, but I have stumbled from the start,  
With words that fall like broken steps, with fear that haunts a heavy heart.  
Each time you point and softly ask, "Is this a D? Or maybe B?"  
I pause too long, I fake a grin, then nod with aching honesty.

I read you tales with missing words, invent the parts I never knew,  
And pray that somehow love alone will carry what I can't get through.  
While others grow and race ahead, you fight with every line you trace,  
But still you try—and so do I—to give your dreams a fighting place.

And though I cannot lift you up the way a wiser teacher might,  
I hold you close and breathe your name and wrap you in a gentler light.  
For you, my child, still softly glow, not from the lines or what you learn,  
But from the warmth you bring to me, the way your quiet starlight burns.