

By Juliann Tenney Doman

(Based on a true story)

"You're my mother kind and true; dearest mother, I love you"
(Children's Songbook, 2006).

Twelve-year-old Tim, ten-year-old Jake, and eight-year-old Jill closed their books for the day.

"Awesome history lesson, Mom," Jake said.

"Totally!" Jill said. Mom made history so fun. It was Jill's favorite subject.

"Thanks, kids," Mom said as she gathered up her teaching supplies. "You're all doing great. Your teachers next

Homeschool GRADUATION

year are going to be so impressed with you, I just know it."

Jill's stomach did a little somersault. With the new baby coming, Mom had decided she would be too busy to teach homeschool next year.

"I'll miss having you as my teacher," Jill said.

Mom put a hand on Jill's shoulder. "I'll miss being your teacher too, sweetheart. But I'm still your mom." She grinned. "And a mom is always a teacher!"

As Jill got ready for bed that night, she thought about what Mom had said. *A mom is always a teacher.*

Jill had never really thought much about it before. Mom had worked so hard. Right then and there Jill decided to somehow give Mom a gigantic "Thank you!" for being her teacher. It would have to be something special. But *how* should she do it? She prayed for help.

Several days later Jill still hadn't thought of the perfect way to show thanks for Mom. She thanked her out loud all the time. But she wanted to do something more.

"You kids have done so well," Mom said. "You're definitely ready to graduate from homeschool."

Jill's hand froze in place, her pencil hovering above her paper. A fabulous idea popped into her head. *Graduate!* They could throw Mom a surprise graduation party! Mom

would love it. It was the perfect way to say thank you.

Jill told Tim and Jake her plan. They soon began working to throw a great surprise party.

Jill had a hard time focusing on math the next day. She kept picturing Mom's face when they surprised her.

Finally it was time to put their books away. When Mom turned around to wipe the chalkboard, Jill gave a thumbs-up to Tim and Jake to show that it was time.

As quietly as possible they pulled out the secret party supplies they had hidden under their desks.

"Surprise!" they all yelled as Mom turned around.

Jill ran over and

gave Mom a rolled-up paper that she'd tied carefully with a ribbon. She'd worked hard on that homemade diploma.

"What's all this?"

Mom asked with a laugh.

Tim put a graduation hat made of

black construction paper on her head.

"It's a graduation party!" said Jake. "From all of us."

Jill gave Mom a big hug. "We wanted to thank you for being such a great teacher."

"Happy graduation!" Jill and her brothers all shouted.

Tim pulled out a party noisemaker and blew it loudly.

"Come into the kitchen!" he said. "It's time to get this party started."

Mom laughed again and adjusted the graduation hat on her head. Then she followed Tim and Jake into the kitchen for the treats they'd planned.

Jill felt good inside. They had made Mom happy.

Next school year was going to be great, Jill decided. And if she ever had homework questions, she knew just who to ask for help. With a huge smile, Jill ran into the kitchen to join the party. ♦

The author lives in Colorado, USA.



"Love should be the very heart of family life."

President Thomas S. Monson

"Love—the Essence of the Gospel," *Ensign*,
May 2014, 92.

We should throw
a party for Mom.
I'll decorate.

Great idea!
I'll make some
party hats.

How could Jill
thank Mom
for being such
an awesome
teacher?



ILLUSTRATION BY JOSH TALBOT