

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

The carpenter's son preaches in Nazareth

By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

Not long after John baptized Jesus at the Jordan, Jesus returned to Nazareth, his home. While he was there he decided to visit the synagogue.

In the synagogue, Hannah sat quietly with the other women of Nazareth. "They say Jesus will be here today," she thought to herself. "I'm eager to see him again. People are saying such strange things about him these days."

While Hannah was musing about Jesus, she heard excited voices outside. Then she saw Jesus.

"He doesn't look changed," she thought as she watched Jesus sit down. "They say he has been teaching like a rabbi in some of the other towns. But I don't remember him ever going to school, except here in the synagogue."

The service began. The rabbi led the people in prayer and song. Then he invited Jesus to read from the Bible.

Jesus stood up. The rabbi handed him the sacred scroll. Jesus selected a passage from the prophet, Isaiah. In a clear, strong voice he read:

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me. God has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. The Lord sends me to announce freedom for captives, sight for the blind, liberation for the oppressed. The time has come for the Lord to

save us."

Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it to the rabbi's assistant and sat down to talk about those words.

The synagogue was very still. Everyone stared at Jesus, waiting to hear his teaching.

"Who is he to be teaching us?" Hannah wondered. "I remember when he was a child. He used to play with my son, Joshua. Then he worked in Joseph's carpenter shop. Where did he learn anything more than the rest of us?"

Jesus began to speak. "What I just read has come true today."

"How can he say that?" Hannah argued within herself. "Has God anointed him to preach? He grew up just down the street from me! He is a carpenter, not a prophet!"

Hannah looked around. Everyone seemed surprised at Jesus' words.

At first they seemed pleased at what Jesus said, but then he added: "You may want me to do here in my home town the same things I did elsewhere. But, I tell you, a prophet is never welcome in his home town."

Hannah thought: "I always liked him. But now I wonder who he thinks he is."

Story hour biblical quotes — this week from Luke 4:14-30 — are paraphrased.

(Ms. Manternach is the author of numerous catechetical books and articles for children.)

Jesus took the scroll and began to read. "God has chosen me to bring good news..." he told the people in the synagogue. It was the beginning of his public life.



Trust

After ordination to the priesthood in his native Ireland, Father Peter Quinn came to America to give his life of priestly service to the disadvantaged living in our poorest home mission areas.

Supported by grants from the Catholic Extension Society, Father Quinn has earned the trust of his Mississippi parishioners by devoted service to their spiritual needs. He is part of a team of home missionaries who, together with Extension, pursue the vital and urgent task of evangelization here in the United States. But the team is too small to do the job without help. It

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HOW ABOUT YOU?

How do you think you would feel if a friend of yours, the one you play with everyday, were to grow up and become a famous leader, the way Jesus did? Would you find it hard to recognize your friend in this new position?

If your friend were to come back to visit your town, how would you treat him? How would you expect him to treat you?

Children's Reading Corner

All of us want to be accepted just the way we are, and respected by others. But, sometimes we are not. This can hurt us, especially if the people who seem not to like us any longer are those we expect to be friendly and caring. The true story, "Please Don't Tease Me," by Joan Madsen with Diane Bockoras talks about how hard it is to try and understand what is happening when one is teased and not accepted. (Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pa. 19481. 1980. Paperback.)



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