

## CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

## God's servant first

By Janaan Manternach  
NC News Service

When Thomas More was a young man, he thought about becoming a monk. In fact, for several years he lived in a monastery. But he decided God was calling him to marry and to have a family.

He studied at Oxford University and became a lawyer. He married Jane Colt and they had four children. Thomas was a family man. He seemed to enjoy most the time he could spend with his family at home.

The family lived in a beautiful home not far from London. They enjoyed entertaining their many friends.

Thomas More became one of the most important people in 16th-century England. He was one of the most intelligent and best-educated men in Europe. Scholars came from many countries to learn from him. He taught his children himself.

A famous student of Thomas

was Henry VIII, king of England. The king was impressed with how intelligent Thomas was. He loved Thomas as a friend. King Henry sent him as a personal representative to other countries and made him a knight.

The king finally named Thomas to the most important position in the country as chancellor of England. Thomas was now second only to the king.

But then everything changed. King Henry wanted an annulment of his first marriage and hoped to marry Anne Boleyn. He wrote to the pope for permission, but the pope refused.

King Henry now named himself head of the church in England.

Thomas More refused to accept this. King Henry was very angry. He tried to get Thomas to change his mind and promised him great rewards.

But Thomas could not agree with what the king was doing. He resigned his position as chancellor.

King Henry tried harder to get

Thomas to support him. The king threatened Thomas and his family. But Thomas would not give in. So the king had Thomas arrested and put in the famous prison, the Tower of London.

For more than a year Thomas' family and friends visited him in prison. They tried to persuade him to change his mind and support the king. They reminded him how happy life would be again at home with those he loved. But Thomas refused. He was convinced that what the king wanted was wrong.

Finally the king was so angry he accused Thomas of betraying the country. Thomas was convicted and condemned to death. Most everyone knew he was not a traitor.

Just before Thomas was killed, he turned to the people who were watching. "I die the king's good servant — but God's first," he said.

The church considers Thomas More a saint. He is remembered



each year on his feast day, June 22.

(Ms. Manternach is the author of catechetical works, scripture stories and original stories for children.)

## Missing Parts

Fill in the vowels in the phrases below. All of the phrases are contained in this week's children's story.

1. h \_ l \_ v \_ d \_ n \_ m \_ n \_ s \_ t \_ r \_ y
2. th \_ K \_ n \_ g \_ w \_ s \_ m \_ p \_ r \_ s \_ s \_ d
3. d \_ v \_ r \_ c \_ h \_ s \_ w \_ f \_
4. T \_ w \_ r \_ f \_ L \_ n \_ d \_ n
5. c \_ n \_ d \_ m \_ n \_ d \_ t \_ d \_ \_ \_ th
6. Th \_ m \_ s \_ M \_ r \_

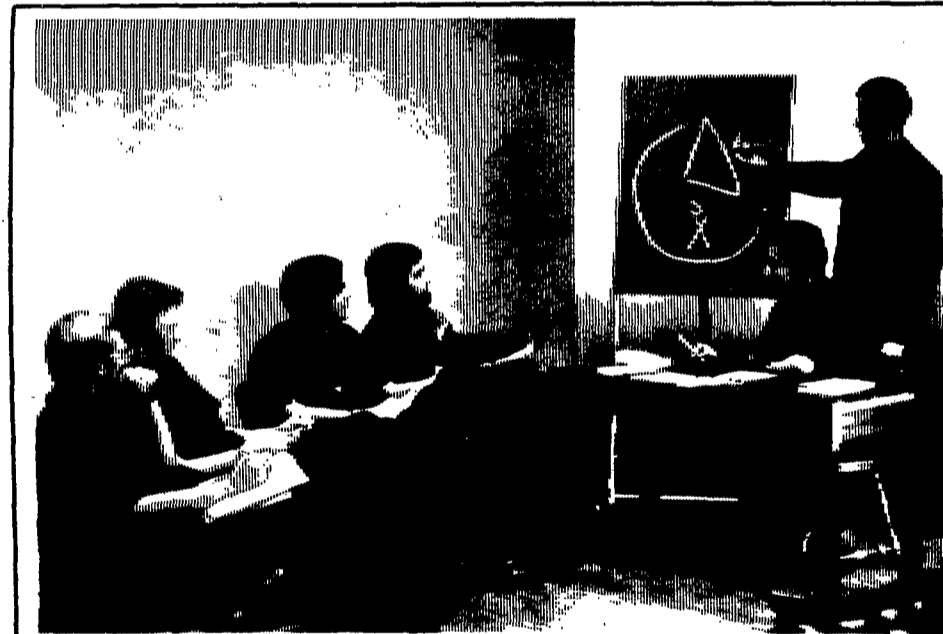
Answers: 1. he lived in a monastery, 2. the king was impressed, 3. divorce his wife, 4. Tower of London, 5. condemned to death, 6. Thomas More

## HOW ABOUT YOU?

Imagine that you were one of St. Thomas More's children. How do you think you would have felt about your father's courageous stand against King Henry's demands?

## Children's Reading Corner

Throughout history, lay people of the church have lived simple and heroic lives. Many of them are remembered because of the good that they did for others and because of their faithfulness to God. In "The Saints Book" by Kate Dooley, you can read the stories of some great lay people. For example: St. Thomas More, St. Barnabas, St. Casimir, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Margaret of Scotland, St. Isidore the farmer and St. Monica. (Paulist Press, 545 Island Rd., Ramsey, N.J. 07446. 1981. Paperback, \$2.95.)



## Frontier

There is a frontier ruggedness about young men studying for the priesthood in Alaska. They have to be tough. After ordination, planes, boats and snowmobiles will take them to remote missions in Eskimo villages, logging camps and outposts in the Aleutian Islands.

With funding from the Catholic Church Extension Society, they are now able to pursue the priesthood with intense missionary zeal. They are part of a team that brings God's Word to isolated people here in the United States. But that team can't do

the job alone. It needs new members. It needs you.

Join us. Become a member of the Extension team. Although you won't be present in the home missions personally, your impact will be felt in this holy effort. Together we will bring Christ to those living in remote home mission areas.

Write for a free subscription to Extension magazine today and discover the difference you can make. Together, and with God's grace, we can achieve His missionary goals here in our own beloved country.



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