

# Kids' Chronicle

## The Apostles preach in Samaria

BY JOE SARNICOLA

Philip traveled to the capital of Samaria to preach the message that Jesus was the Messiah. As he preached, the Holy Spirit used him to heal sick people and to perform other miracles. Many of the Samaritans were amazed by the works of the Lord and became Christians. The joyfulness of the new Christians filled the city.

In this same city lived a man named Simon, a magician. Simon was a proud and important man. For years he used his magical powers to impress the people and to win their admiration. Some even called him "The Great Power." But everything changed after Philip came to Samaria.

The magical tricks of Simon seemed insignificant compared to the miraculous acts of Philip. Many of the people who were at one time loyal to Simon came to believe in Jesus and were baptized. Simon recognized a greater power and he also came to believe in Jesus and was baptized.

News of the success of Philip in Samaria reached the Christians in Jerusalem. Peter and John were sent to help spread the Gospel in that country. Peter and John learned that, although the Samaritan Christians had been baptized in water, they had not yet received the Holy Spirit. They laid their hands on them and prayed that the spirit would descend on Samaria.

When Simon saw that Peter and John were able to give the Holy Spirit by laying

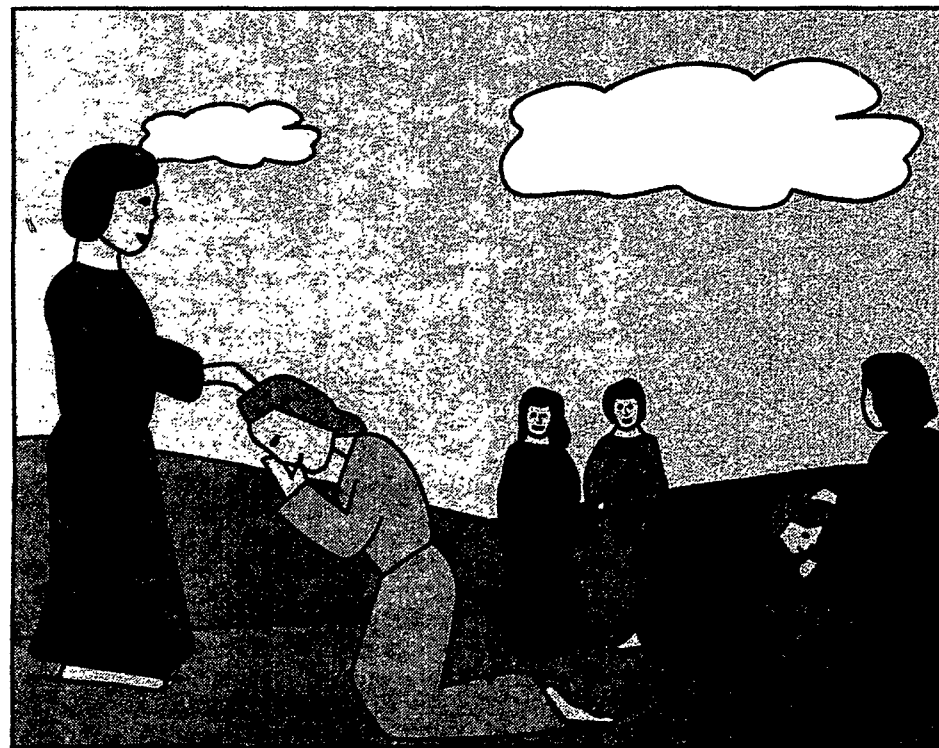


Illustration by Amy Sundstrom

their hands on people, he approached them.

"What is the price of your power?" he asked. "I am a wealthy man, and I want to be able to do what you do."

Peter became angry and said, "How dare you think you could buy God's gift with money? Repent or your jealous heart will send you to hell."

Simon, fearing the power of God, knelt down.

"Pray, my brothers that God will have mercy on me," he begged. "I do believe in God, and I do not want him to be an-

gry with me."

Peter and John prayed for Simon and then prepared for the journey back to Jerusalem. Along the way, they continued to minister to the Christians of Samaria.

READ MORE ABOUT IT: Acts 8

### Q&A

1. Who was one of the first Apostles to preach in Samaria?
2. Why was Peter mad at Simon?



### Bible Accent

Samaria during the time of Christ was bordered by the Mediterranean Sea on one side and the Jordan River on the other. Although Samaria itself was very hilly, to the north was the Valley of Jezreel and to the south was the Valley of Ajalon.

The country was known for its great wealth and natural resources, and its geographical features made it difficult for enemies to launch successful attacks against it. Its main weakness was the lack of adequate water for its needs.

The Gospel of John tells a story that when Jesus passed through Samaria he offered a woman "living water." Jesus himself told a parable about a good Samaritan. Both stories mention the prejudice that Jews and Samaritans had for each other, and were examples of how kindness and God's love can overcome prejudice and intolerance.

### St. Pachomius

Pachomius was born in Egypt almost 300 years after the birth of Jesus. He was not raised a Christian, but when he saw how the Christians were kind even to the Egyptian soldiers who abused them, he wanted to know more about their God. He met with some of the free Christians, and decided to pursue a religious life himself.

Pachomius was a persuasive speaker, and he had attracted more than 100 followers, who became the first monks of his newly established monastery. He built five more before his death in the year 346. His monks contributed to the monastery according to their talents or abilities. Products and goods made by the monks were sold to support the monasteries.

We honor Pachomius on May 9.

### Puzzle

In Acts 8, the disciples were obeying the instructions Jesus gave them before he ascended into heaven. Using the key 1=A, 2=B ... 26=Z, fill in the blanks to find out what Jesus said.

Answers can be found on Page 11

7-15 1-14-4

16-18-5-1-3-8

20-8-5

7-15-19-16-5-12



You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) answering this question:

**What are some of the ways we can fight prejudice and create friendship among people of different colors, faiths and nationalities?**

Send your essay - including name, home address, telephone number, school and grade - to Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY 14624. Deadline for entries is May 23, 1996. The winner will be notified by phone and receive the savings bond by mail. In addition, the winner's essay will be published in an upcoming issue of Kids' Chronicle.

Last month's winner was Cheryl Eddinger, an eighth-grade student at Bloomfield Central School. In response to the question How was it possible for the Apostles to perform miracles? she wrote:

The Apostles performed miracles because they were blessed by God and filled with the Holy Spirit. They prayed and praised God. They tried to live like Jesus did before he died.

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