

Kids' Chronicle

God blesses the Gentiles

BY JOE SARNICOLA

Cornelius was a career soldier, a captain in the division of the Roman Army called "The Italian Regiment," which was stationed in the town of Caesarea.

Cornelius was also a kind and honorable man who believed in God. He was known to the Jewish people as a person who would help families in need. And he was a man who prayed often.

One day when Captain Cornelius was praying he had a vision. An angel appeared before him in a warm, bright light and said, "Cornelius, God has heard your prayers and he has seen the goodness of your heart. Send some of your soldiers to find a man named Peter. They will find him at the house of the tanner who lives in Joppa."

Then the angel was gone as quickly as she had appeared. Cornelius immediately dispatched a small platoon of soldiers to find Peter and bring him back with them.

At about the same time Peter was also praying. And he, too, had a vision. He saw a blanket filled with foods that the Jewish people had been commanded by God not to eat.

"Eat and be filled," a voice said.

"No," Peter answered. "I have kept all the laws and have not eaten any unclean foods."

This happened three times. Peter could not imagine what the vision meant. Then there was a knock at the door. Peter heard the voices of men who were asking if he was home.

Then Peter heard the voice from his vision again.

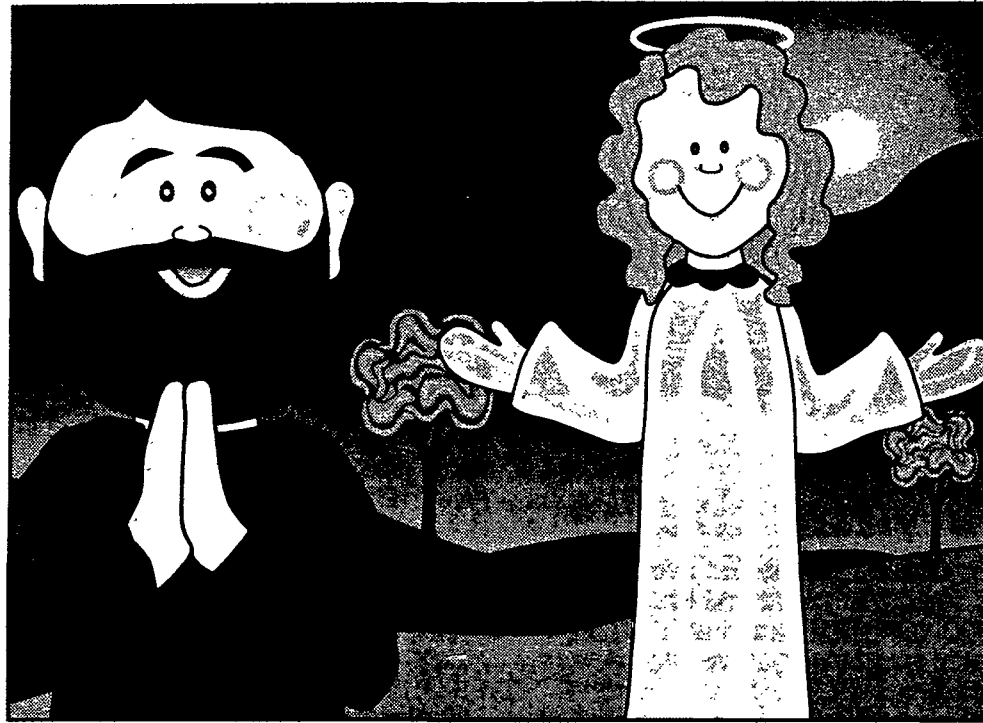


Illustration by Zoe Woodruff

"Go with these men, Peter," the voice said. "The Lord has sent them to find you."

Peter went to the door himself and said, "I am Peter. Who is it that is looking for me?"

"Captain Cornelius of the Roman Army," one of the soldiers said. "He is a God-fearing man and a friend of both Romans and Jews. An angel told him you would be here."

Peter invited the men to stay the night, and early the next morning they headed back to Caesarea. Peter arrived to find Cornelius and many of his friends and relatives anxiously awaiting his visit. Cornelius knelt down at Peter's feet.

"Please stand up," Peter said. "I am nothing more than a man who believes in God, as you are."

Peter addressed the small crowd of people who had gathered to hear what he had to say.

"You well know that a Jew is not supposed to associate with Gentiles," he said. "But yesterday I had a vision and the Lord told me I should not have such feelings about any man or woman. God loves all of us. He is not only the God of the Jews, but the God of the Gentiles as well."

As Peter spoke, the spirit of God filled the room and blessed everyone there, both Jew and Gentile. After that Cornelius and his family were baptized with water.

Q & A

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

Acts 10

1. What was Cornelius doing when he had his vision?
2. What did Peter's vision mean?

Bible Trivia

What was the apostle Paul's name before he became a Christian? (Acts 13)?

Send Answer to: Catholic Courier Bible Trivia, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your name, address and school name.

All entries must be received by May 8, 1997. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted.

Last month's winner was Tamar Serce, a student at Christ the King School, Irondequoit. She correctly answered that there are 40 days in Lent.

Puzzle

Answers on page 7.

Write the following books in the order they appear in the New Testament.

Corinthians (1&2) Ephesians Luke Matthew Acts Mark Galatians Philippians Romans John



Bible Accent

Many archaeologists break ancient history into nine time periods. Here are the periods, and key people or events during them.

Prehistory: 1 million to 3,150 years B.C. ("before Christ")

Bronze Age: 3,150-1,200 B.C. (Abraham)

Iron Age: 1,200-586 B.C. (Joshua)

Persian Period: 586-332 B.C. (end of Babylonian exile)

Hellenistic Period: 332-141 B.C. (Alexander the Great)

Hasmonean Period: 141-37 B.C.

Herodian Period: 37 B.C.-70 A.D. (Anno Domini means "in the year of the Lord") (Jesus)

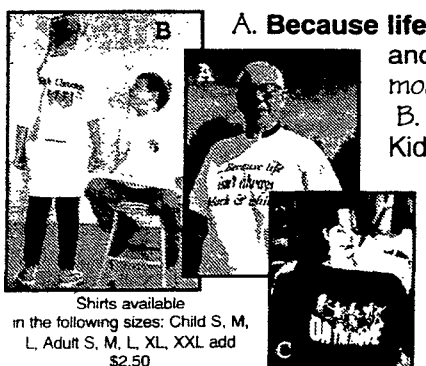
Roman Period: 70-324 A.D. (early Christian churches)

Byzantine Period: 324-638 A.D. (Constantine the Great)

St. Mark

St. Mark is usually identified as the "John Mark" mentioned in the Book of Acts. St. Mark travelled with Paul, Barnabas and Peter. He is believed to have lived in Italy for many years, especially Rome and Venice.

St. Mark is traditionally credited with writing the second Gospel - though Bible scholars say the real author is unknown. But because of this tradition, he is the patron saint of secretaries and notaries. He is also the patron saint of the city of Venice, which claims to have his remains. We honor St. Mark on April 25.



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