

Kids' Chronicle

The rebellious son returns home

BY JOE SARNICOLA

Jesus looked out at all of the people who had come to listen to him preach and said, "My friends, let us give thanks to God for this day in which we may worship him. Many of you have come from long distances to hear me. I would like to tell you a story, and I need the help of two young men."

Several of the older boys stood up or waved their hands so Jesus would pick them. Jesus chose two of them to come and stand next to him. He put his arms around their shoulders and said, "Here is a story of a man who had two sons, the younger ..." (then Jesus prompted one of the boys to raise his hand), "and the older." Jesus had the other boy raise his hand, to the laughter of the crowd.

Jesus told the boy portraying the older brother to stand aside, and then he pointed to the other boy and said, "Now the younger son went to his father and asked for his portion of his father's fortune. He wanted to see what life was like beyond that of working on his father's land. He sold everything his father had given him, said goodbye to his father and brother, and left the farm.

"The younger son then spent money on foolish things, expensive food and clothing, and anything that interested

him. But soon all of his money was gone. And so were the good times and the friends he thought he had. Then a famine struck the land. Food was scarce and there was little work to earn money."

Jesus put his hands on the shoulder of the boy and said, "The young man found work with a man who raised pigs."

The boy covered his face and pretended to cry. Jesus whispered something into the boy's ear.

"When the man had nothing to eat but the scraps the pigs left, he said ..."

At that, the boy pretending to be the younger son said, "I wish I were back on my father's land. There was always enough to eat and a clean bed to sleep in."

Then Jesus added, "So the young man returned to his father's home. And before he had even reached his father's house, his father saw him and ran to greet him with a kiss. There was a celebration because the son had returned home."

Jesus had the first boy sit down and



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

he pointed to the boy who portrayed the older son.

"But the older son was jealous because his brother was being treated so royally."

The boy playing the older brother pretended to be angry and shook his fist.

"But the father said, 'You are my oldest son, and everything I have is yours. Rejoice with me that your brother is home safe with us.'"

Bible Accent

When Jesus lived on earth, he traveled often, preaching, healing the sick and performing miracles. Large crowds frequently came to listen to him or to receive a miracle.

But while Jesus traveled a lot, he did not travel far during his life on earth—except when the Holy Family briefly fled to Egypt.

He was born in Bethlehem, which is in Judea near Jerusalem. But he spent most of his childhood in Nazareth, in Galilee, about 50 miles north of Bethlehem. His first miracle was performed at the wedding feast in Cana, about 10 miles away from Nazareth, and he spent a lot of time preaching and healing near the Sea of Galilee, which is about 20 miles away from Nazareth.

When it was time for him to die, Jesus returned to Judea. The garden of Gethsemane, where he was arrested, was on one side of Jerusalem. Golgotha, the hill on which he was crucified, was on the other.

St. Patrick

Patrick was born in Scotland in the last decade of the fourth century. When he was in his teens, he was captured by slavers and was taken to Ireland to serve as a farm laborer. Within a few years, he escaped and returned home with the help of some kind sailors.

Patrick used his regained freedom in prayer and religious study. He entered the priesthood and his enthusiasm inspired many followers. He built churches and schools where the quality of education was high and an emphasis was placed on Latin, then the official language of the church.

Legends say that Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to teach about the Trinity. He is the patron saint of Ireland. We remember him on March 17.

Kids' Club



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

Many people adopt or are named after a patron saint. Who is your patron saint, and what do you admire about that saint?

Send your essay — including name, home address, telephone number, school and grade — to Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Deadline for entries is March 19, 1998. 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 Danielle Dzwigal, a third-grade student at Holy Cross School, Rochester. In response to the question *Why was David such an important biblical figure?* she wrote:

God watched over David for many years because he knew David had a good heart. God chose David when he was a boy to some day be king of Israel. David stood up to Goliath because Goliath challenged God's army. David was not afraid of Goliath because he knew that God would protect him. By killing Goliath, David showed all people just how great God really is. David later became king of Israel.

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Q&A

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
LUKE 15

1. What did the younger son do with his inheritance?
2. How did he react when his son returned home?

Puzzle

Answers on page 5.

Using the answer key, fill in the blanks to discover a message from the Gospel according to Luke.

11-23-9-8 3-1-13-25-4 4-1-26 6-1-21-22 11-23-9 10-22-16-16

KEY: 1-A 2-C 3-F 4-H 5-K 6-M 7-P 8-R 9-U 10-W 11-Y 12-G 13-I 14-Q
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