

Kids' Chronicle

Jesus explains what faith can do

BY JOE SARNICOLA

One day when Jesus was speaking to his disciples, he said, "Watch out. If someone sins against you, be firm in your criticism about what he has done. But if seven times he should do so, yet seven times asks your forgiveness, then forgive him."

Peter, in response, asked, "Lord, to do as you say requires faith. Please increase our faith, so that we will be able to do the things you ask of us."

"Think of the mustard plant," Jesus answered. "The smallest of seeds becomes the tallest of shrubs. If your faith was only the size of a mustard seed, it would be enough to command a mulberry bush to pull itself out of the ground in which it was planted and throw itself into the sea."

After Jesus had finished speaking, he stood up and prepared to leave.

"Whatever you do," he said, "think of yourselves as obedient servants, following the instructions of your master. Let us go now to Jerusalem."

The disciples rose with Jesus, gathered their supplies together, and went with him.

Along the way, 10 men crossed in front of Jesus at a distance.

"Unclean, unclean," the men called out.

This cry identified them as lepers, to be avoided. One of the lepers recog-

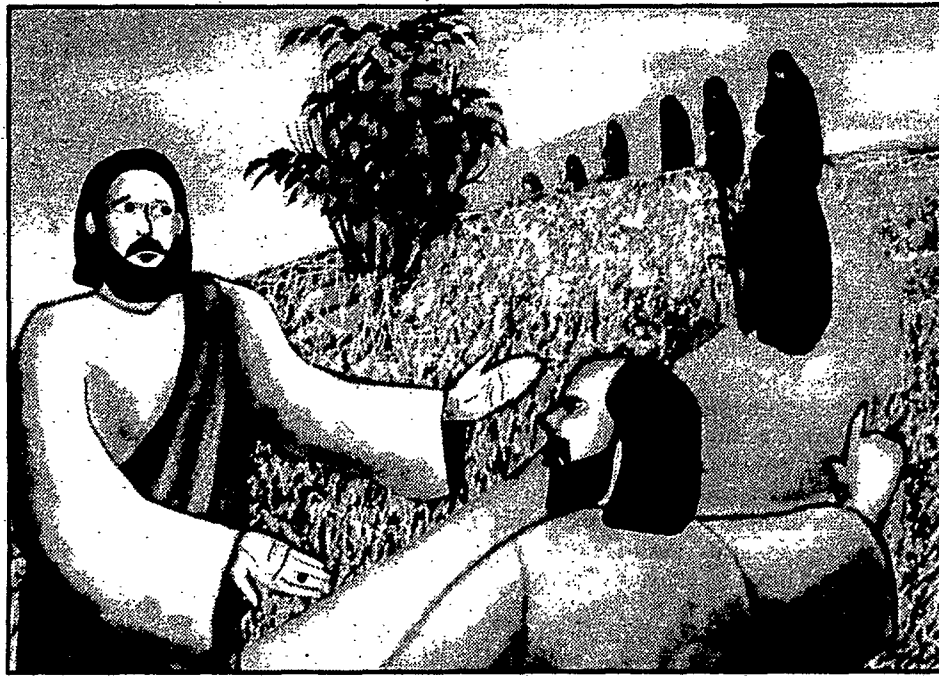


Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

nized Jesus for who he was.

"Jesus, son of God," he pleaded, "Have mercy on us. Heal us!"

Jesus walked closer to the men and said, "I ask only one thing of you. Show yourselves to the priest, as Moses commanded. Let him declare you clean."

As soon as the men turned around to head into the city to find a priest, they were healed. One of the lepers rejoiced that he had been healed. He turned back, knelt down in front of Jesus and said, "I am not a Jew, I am a Samaritan, but I praise God for his power to heal me."

"I thought I counted 10 of you with leprosy," Jesus said. "Where are the rest of the men?"

The Samaritan could not say where the others had gone.

"Rise, my friend," said Jesus, as he held out his hand to the man. "It is because of your faith that you have been saved."

Jesus and his disciples walked the rest of the way to Jerusalem without encountering any other travelers. As they entered the city, they saw some of the Pharisees engaged in a discussion on the temple steps. When they saw Jesus, one of them said sarcastically, "Jesus, when can we expect to enter the kingdom of God?"

Jesus looked into the faces of each of the men and said, "The kingdom of God is already among you."

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
Luke 17

Q & A

1. How did Jesus describe a mustard plant?
2. What did Jesus say about the kingdom of God?

Bible Trivia

Eucharist is one of the three sacraments of initiation. Can you name the other two?

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 Oct. 1, 1998. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted.

Last month's winner was **Mary Hallahan**, a second-grade student at Honeoye Falls-Lima Primary School. She correctly identified the Letter to the Hebrews as the New Testament book that follows the Letter to Philemon.

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Puzzle

Match the words in column A with the correct definitions from column B.

- | A | B |
|--------------|--|
| 1. Angel | a) An important Jewish city |
| 2. Eucharist | b) A song of worship |
| 3. Genesis | c) A story with a message |
| 4. Gospel | d) Someone who died for his or her faith |
| 5. Jerusalem | e) A spiritual messenger |
| 6. Martyr | f) Means "good news" |
| 7. Parable | g) The first book of the Old Testament |
| 8. Psalm | h) A sacrament of initiation |

Bible Accent

In order to receive Communion, we must first have completed the required training, such as in a Catholic school or in a church preparation program. For adults seeking their first Communion, there is a special program called RCIA, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

The church expects us to be sorry for any sins we may have committed before receiving Communion. The host may be received either on the tongue or in the hand. Once the priest consecrates the host, it becomes the body of Christ. This is the mystery and the miracle of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The eucharistic minister offers the host with the declaration, "The body of Christ." Our correct response is, "Amen."

Many churches offer the optional consecrated wine, which is the blood of Christ. The church requires us to receive Communion at least once a year, during Easter, but unless we have serious sins we have not confessed, we may receive Communion whenever we attend Mass.

Ss. Cosmas & Damian

The stories of the early Christian martyrs Ss. Cosmas and Damian are based mostly on legends that have been passed on by tradition and by a few unverifiable written records. They were referred to as "the men without money," because they offered their medical service to patients in need without charge.

Born in Arabia, the twin brothers became skilled healers, and they received a widespread reputation for their work. But not everyone appreciated what they were doing. During a time of Christian persecution, Ss. Cosmas and Damian were arrested and executed in Syria. Whether it was legend or true apparition, many sick people claimed to have seen the spirits of the two men and were healed. Some of the people who said this were not even Christians, so they would not have made the story up just to keep the men's memory and reputation alive in the public eye.

Ss. Cosmas and Damian are patron saints of doctors. We remember them on Sept. 26.

Kids' Answers

1. e 2. h 3. g 4. f 5. a 6. d 7. c 8. b