

Kids' Chronicle

Peter visits Cornelius

By Joe Sarnicola

Cornelius, a centurion in Caesarea, believed in God. He prayed every day, and he gave money to the Jewish temples to support God's work.

One day, an angel appeared to him.

"Cornelius," the angel called.

Cornelius was terrified by the apparition and was only able to say, "I am Cornelius."

"Do not be afraid. God has heard your prayers, and he has seen the generosity of your heart."

Relieved that he was not seeing a ghost, Cornelius asked, "What does the Lord want me to do?"

"Order some of your servants to go to Joppa," the angel said. "There, in the house of Simon the tanner, they will find a man named Peter. If your men invite Peter to your house, he will return with them."

Immediately after the angel left, Cornelius called two servants and a soldier and sent them to Joppa. They found Peter at the house of Simon the tanner, just as the angel had told them.

"What is it I can do for you?" Peter asked.

"Our master, Cornelius," the soldier said, "saw a vision of an angel who said you would bring the Lord's blessing to him."

"I, too, have had a vision," Peter replied. "Three times I saw foods that



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

we Jews are forbidden to eat because they are unclean, and each time a voice told me to eat, saying that anything the Lord has cleansed is clean in his sight. I believe he was referring to Gentiles, with whom we Jews have avoided contact. I now know God loves us all equally. I will come with you."

When Peter arrived in Caesarea, Cornelius, his family and many friends

were waiting to hear him.

"Welcome to my home, Peter," Cornelius said.

"Thank you for inviting me here," Peter said. "God has shown me that anyone who obeys God, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, are acceptable to him. God sent his son Jesus to earth, and he performed miracles and acts of goodness. We are witnesses of these things. Even though he was crucified, Jesus rose on the third day, and he chose us to preach with his authority."

Everyone who heard Peter began to pray out loud and rejoice that God was sending his blessings on Gentiles as well as Jews. Then Peter said, "I see no reason why these people cannot be baptized as we have been."

So Cornelius and his family and friends were baptized that same day.

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

Acts 10

Q&A

1. How did Cornelius know where to find Peter?
2. What vision did Peter have?

Bible Accent

The Bible contains many references to food and eating. In the Old Testament, certain guidelines and restrictions were given by God to the Israelites concerning which foods were acceptable to be eaten and which ones were not. Those that were not were called "unclean" foods.

When St. Peter had his vision, God was telling him that if God said something he had cleansed was now fit to eat, then it was permissible for Peter to eat it. God was not only referring to the food, but to Cornelius and all Gentiles, whom many of the first Christians believed could not receive the blessing of salvation from God. Because St. Peter obeyed God, the other early Christians followed his example and began to preach the good news to anyone who wanted to listen.

St. Joseph

St. Joseph was the earthly father of Jesus, and he was also a descendant of King David. He took care of his family after an angel told him that Mary, his wife-to-be, was going to have a son through a miracle performed by the Holy Spirit. The Gospel of Matthew describes St. Joseph as "a righteous man."

After Jesus was born, St. Joseph was again visited by an angel. This time the angel warned St. Joseph that King Herod was jealous of the rumors that a new king of the Jews had been born and Herod planned to kill all children under the age of 2. St. Joseph took Mary and Jesus into Egypt until the angel told him it was safe to return.

No mention is made of St. Joseph in the Bible after he brought his 12-year-old son Jesus to the temple. We honor St. Joseph on March 19.

Puzzle

Fill in the blanks with the answers from the Acts of the Apostles. The verses where the phrases are found are given in the parentheses. Answers on page 8.

1. G _ _ _ _ " _ _ _ _ _ of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob." (3:13)
2. E _ _ _ _ _ " _ _ _ _ _ Apostles" (1:26)
3. N _ _ _ _ _ " _ _ _ _ _ silver nor gold." (3:6)
4. T _ _ _ _ _ "a disciple named _ _ _ _ _" (9:36)
5. I _ _ _ _ _ " _ _ _ _ _ custody" (12:4)
6. L _ _ _ _ _ "living in _ _ _ _ _" (9:32)
7. E _ _ _ _ _ "there was an _ _ _ _ _" (8:27)

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Bible Trivia

What was the occupation of Peter (also called Simon) before he followed Jesus?

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 April 1, 1999. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted.

Last month's winner was Christina DeLeon, of Rochester's Nazareth Hall Middle School. She listed Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy as the books that with Exodus make up the Pentateuch.