

Kids' Chronicle

The enemy tries to ruin a crop

BY JOE SARNICOLA

One day Jesus went down to the sea and sat on the shore. Soon a crowd began to gather. There were so many people that Jesus had to sit in a boat so that he could be seen and heard as he preached.

"In order to tell you about the kingdom of heaven," Jesus said, "I will tell you a story.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a man who planted wheat on his land. But after everyone had gone to bed, the man's enemy came onto his property and planted weeds in with the seed the man had planted. As the wheat grew, the weeds also thrived."

Jesus stood up as he paused and looked around at the people who had come to hear him. Then he said: "When the man's workers saw what was happening, they asked him why there were so many weeds, since he had paid so much money for good seed. And they wanted to know if they should pull the weeds out by the roots.

"But the man was very wise, so he instructed them to wait. He knew one of his enemies must have tried to spoil his crop, and if the workers pulled the weeds, they would probably damage much of the wheat. It would be better if they waited until harvest time. Then they would put the wheat into the barn, but the



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

weeds would be put into piles and burned."

Jesus then told them another story.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that is planted in a field. The tiniest of seeds becomes the biggest plant in the field. Why, the birds come down out of the sky and find shelter in its shrubbery."

Then he told them yet another story.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a small amount of yeast that is able to leaven many loaves of bread."

And so Jesus continued to speak, in parables and stories.

After the crowd had gone back to their homes and Jesus was alone with his disciples, Peter

asked him to explain the meaning of the stories.

"The man who planted the good seed," Jesus answered, "is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the seed was the children to whom the kingdom is promised. The enemy was the devil and the weeds are those who follow him. Like the weeds, they will be burned on the day of judgment. But those who obey the Father will live with him in heaven forever."

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

Matthew 13

Q&A

1. From where did Jesus preach?
2. Who did Jesus say the wheat represented?

Bible Accent

Farming was one of the most important parts of the economy of biblical Israel. The major crops were wheat, olives and grapes, but many other grains and vegetables were grown and harvested. Most of the clearing of the fields was done by hand or with the help of plows pulled by oxen, after which dung was spread as fertilizer and seed was planted.

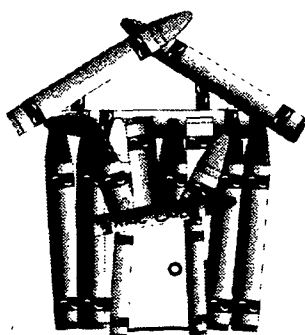
Although some of their neighboring countries used irrigation to water their fields, the Israelites relied on rain and dew. As such, there was always a danger of drought and its devastating effects if the rains did not come. Jesus used the imagery of farming for many of his parables, since that was part of the daily life of the people, but even today we can learn from the stories Jesus told because he conveyed powerful messages in easy to understand language.

St. Arsenius

St. Arsenius the Great was a Roman senator more than three centuries after Christ. Because he was well-educated and a good teacher, he was selected to be the tutor of the Emperor's children. After 10 years in that position, St. Arsenius became a monk, and for 40 years lived as a hermit.

St. Arsenius preferred to be alone to pray and study, but he built a reputation as an effective teacher and devout follower of Jesus. Although he spent much of his life studying and teaching, he was always impressed when he met a person who may not have had much formal education, but who served God in truth and humility. In the same way, he did not like people who bragged about their social status or their wealth as if those things made them better than other people. We remember St. Arsenius on July 19.

Kids' Club



You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) answering this question: **Which story about Jesus from the Gospels is your favorite, and why?**

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 July 15, 1999. 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 Paul Glavin, a third-grade student at French Road Elementary School, Brighton. In response to the question **If Jesus had asked you what kind of person would make a good disciple, what would you have told him?** he wrote:

A good disciple tries his best every day. A good disciple thanks and prays to God every day. A good disciple never betrays anyone. A good disciple should love his enemies. A good disciple should give money to the poor, give clothes to the poor people who don't have clothes, give shelter to anyone who needs it, and give food to all that are hungry.

THANKS TO OUR SAVINGS BOND DONOR

651 Plymouth Ave. N., Rochester, NY 14608 (716) 546-1740

Quality Sausage and Meat Products Since 1880



Puzzle

Unscramble the names of the following crops that were grown in Bible times. *Answers on page 9*

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. ybear _____ | 2. sgif _____ |
| 3. spearg _____ | 4. elmsno _____ |
| 5. vileso _____ | 6. athew _____ |
| 7. tuns _____ | 8. spelap _____ |
| 9. seban _____ | 10. graicl _____ |
| 11. noonis _____ | 12. bersh _____ |