

Kids' Chronicle

Jesus explains the living bread

BY JOE SARNICOLA

A large crowd of people had gathered to hear Jesus speak. Someone asked, "Teacher, how can we do God's work on earth?" And another asked, "What sign do we have so that we can believe what you say? Moses gave our ancestors manna when they walked through the desert."

The people were quiet while they waited for Jesus to answer the questions. Jesus looked around at the people before he spoke. "You only need to do one thing and you will be doing God's work. That is, to believe in the person God has sent to you. Manna fed our fathers and mothers who spent forty years in the desert. But the manna did not come from Moses, it came from God. And now God has sent bread which gives life to those who eat it."

This statement by Jesus caused much whispering among the crowd. "Give us this bread that gives life," one of them said.

"Just as manna came down from heaven and fed the people, I am the living bread, the bread of life. I, too, have come from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will have eternal life, and this bread is my flesh. I give it freely so that the world may live."

Now the people, especially the Jewish leaders, began to argue about what Jesus was saying. "How can we eat a man's flesh and live forever?"

Jesus continued. "Unless you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, you do not have his life inside of you. Those who do this will be raised when I call them on the final day."



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

Many of the disciples of Jesus were there, and they also wondered what Jesus was talking about. So they asked him privately, "We don't understand. How can we do what you ask?"

"Why are you surprised?" Jesus asked. "What if I were to go back to heaven in front of you? It is the spirit that gives life. The flesh is useless. The words I speak are spirit, and they give life. But there are those among you who doubt. No one may come to me, unless my Father allows him to." After Jesus said this, some of the disciples no longer followed him.

But when Jesus asked his 12 closest disciples if they believed, Peter said, "Lord, we know you are God's holy one."

READ MORE ABOUT IT
John 6

Q&A

1. What did Jesus say about God's work?
2. What was Peter's answer to Jesus?

Bible Accent

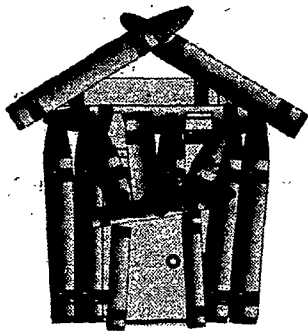
The four Gospels record the important events in the life of Jesus. The books of Matthew, Mark and Luke are similar, and many stories from one can be found in the others. For this reason they are called the synoptic Gospels, from the Greek word that means "view together." Some Bibles and religious education books include charts that show where these stories occur in the three Gospels.

Each of these books is told from a different point of view. Matthew, for instance, wrote about the things Jesus said, while Mark wrote about the things Jesus did, and Luke focused on Jesus as a human being in addition to his being the Son of God. John's Gospel was the last to be written, and was intended to show the importance of believing in Jesus in order to live forever with him in heaven.

St. Laurence

St. Laurence was a deacon under Pope Sixtus. When Emperor Valerian published his edicts against Christianity in the year 257, one of the first Christians ordered put to death was the pope. With tears in his eyes, Laurence asked why his friend and teacher was leaving him. The pope replied that Laurence would join him in three days.

When Laurence heard this, he sold the church's goods and gave the money to the poor. The prefect of Rome, assuming that considerable treasures had been hidden, told Laurence to hand over the treasures. Laurence gathered as many poor, unfortunate and unhappy people as would follow him and brought them before the prefect. Laurence told him, "Behold the treasures of the church." For his actions, Laurence was sentenced to death by slow burning. We honor him on Aug. 10.



Kids' Club

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Why is the Eucharist such an important sacrament?

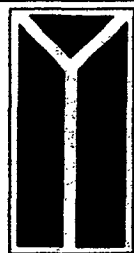
Send your essay — including name, home address, telephone number, school and grade —

to Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Deadline for entries is Aug. 17, 2000. 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 Emma Christiantelli, who will be a second-grader at St. Joseph School, Auburn. In answer to the question, Why do you think Jesus came to live on the earth?, she wrote: I think Jesus came to live on earth because he wanted to tell us not to do bad things, and to tell us not to be mean to other people. He told us to live good lives.

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Puzzle

Fill in the blanks to discover some of the miracles Jesus performed in the Gospel of John. Chapter numbers are given to help you find the answers. Answers on Page 6.

1. Jesus changed water into _____ (ch 2)
2. Jesus _____ the official's son. (ch 4)
3. "Take up your mat and _____." (ch 5)
4. Jesus _____ 5,000 people. (ch 6)
5. Jesus walked on _____ (ch 6)
6. Jesus brought _____ back to life. (ch 11)
7. Peter's net was full of _____ (ch 21)



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