

Kids' Chronicle

Ezra reads from God's word

BY JOE SARNICOLA

All of the people had assembled in the wide field in front of the Water Gate. The crowd was so large and so tightly did they sit near each other that they looked like one massive, colorful shape. And everyone was there for the same purpose: to hear the Law read to them. Then Ezra, the priest, appeared before them, holding the law of Moses.

Ezra stood on a wooden platform so that he could be seen and heard by the people. When Ezra held up the scroll and unrolled it, the people stood up. And they remained in a state of quiet reverence for the word of God. After Ezra had prayed, all of the people raised their hands and said, "Amen, amen."

Then Ezra began to read from the scroll. As he did, the people began to cry softly. They felt honored to hear the Scripture read to them, but they also felt sad because they knew at times they had not always followed God's laws as well as they should have. Ezra knew that the Lord did not want his people to be sad, so he read a special Scripture to them.

"Today is holy to the Lord your God. Do not be sad, and do not weep. Do not

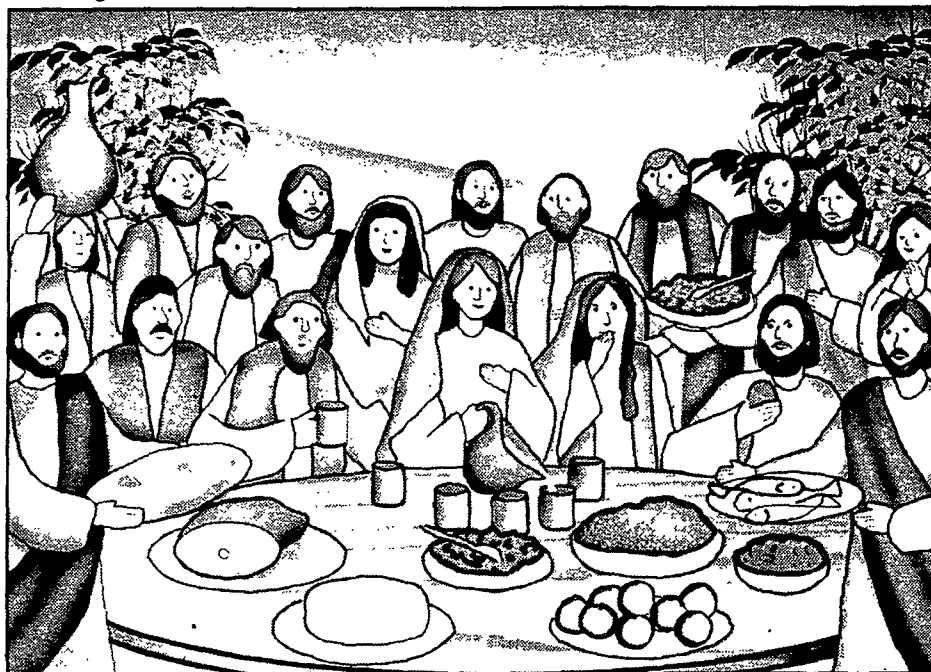


Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

be sad this day for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength." Ezra continued to read from the scroll. He read from morning until night. As he read, he explained and translated the words so that the men, women and children

who were listening would be able to understand.

Ezra read a joyful command the Lord had given to him. "Go eat rich food and drink sweet drinks, and allot portions to those who had nothing prepared; for today is holy to our Lord." The people immediately started a feast. Those who had more than enough shared with those who had little or nothing. They rejoiced together because they had heard the word of God and they understood what it meant.

On the next day Ezra read from the Law to the priests, the Levites and the heads of all the families who were there. Ezra read to all the people for seven days, and on the eighth day held a solemn assembly. Such a large celebration of God's word had not taken place since the time of Joshua.

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
Nehemiah 8

Q&A

1. Why did Ezra stand on the platform?
2. Why were the people so happy?

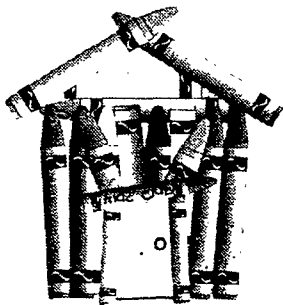
Bible Accent

Priests were considered the holy men of Israel, and they were responsible for teaching God's Law to the people. They were also in charge of the temples and tabernacles. Chapter 28 of Exodus describes in great detail the clothing to be worn by priests. They wore beautiful robes of gold, blue, purple and scarlet. Aaron, the brother of Moses, and the first high priest, was told by God to wear a type of outer apron called an ephod. The ephod would bear two onyx stones engraved with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel, six on each stone. (The tribes of Israel take their names from the sons of Jacob.) A separate breastpiece was decorated with four rows of precious stones. The priest also wore ribbons of fine linens and chains of gold. The lesser priests wore sashes of particular colors that denoted their rank.

St. Caspar del Bufalo

Caspar del Bufalo was born in Rome in 1786. He attended the Collegio Romano and was ordained as a priest in 1808. After Rome had been conquered by the army of Napoleon, Caspar was exiled. He returned five years later, after Napoleon had been taken out of power, to find a country that had been without priests.

In 1815, Caspar began a quest to train new missionaries who, he believed, needed to know God's word, foreign languages and how to survive in difficult conditions or places. With the assistance of Cardinal Cristaldi and the formal approval of Pope Pius VII, Caspar founded the first House of the Most Precious Blood to begin teaching the new missionaries. He wanted his students to be ready physically and spiritually for the duties that they may have to perform. Caspar died in 1837. We honor him on Jan. 2.



Kids' Club

You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) answering this question: **Why do you think Jesus used parables, or stories, when he was teaching?**

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 Jan. 18, 2001. 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 of the trivia contest was Rachel Dunn of St. Michael School, Newark. In response to "The last Sunday of the church year celebrates Christ as our ___," she wrote, "king."

Last month's essay winner was Claire Elizabeth Elling, a second-grader at St. Pius Tenth School, Chili. She wrote, "If Jesus was born in Rochester I would give him a hug because I love him. I would also give him a blanket because he would be cold. I would give him an apple because he would need food, and a cross necklace."

THANKS TO OUR SAVINGS BOND DONOR
651 Plymouth Ave. N., Rochester, NY 14608 (716) 546-1740
Quality Sausage and Meat Products Since 1880

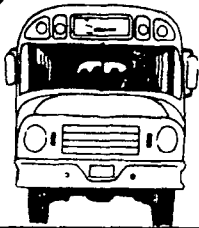


DON'T MISS THE BUS!

Attie's Young Fashions Annual
School Uniform Sale
JANUARY 7th THROUGH THE 20th

10% off your total uniform purchase
PLUS We'll pay the sales tax!

Buy now for next year. Special orders and layaways are welcome.
Sizes may be exchanged anytime before the start of school next year.
Sorry, does not apply to previous layaways or purchases.



attie's
YOUNG FASHIONS

Elderwear
we care.

1906 Monroe Avenue, Rochester, New York 14618
716-242-8640 or 1-800-966-8640 • Order on the web at atties.com
Hours: Mon.-Thur. 10-8, Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5

Puzzle

Both Ezra and Nehemiah have books in the Old Testament attributed to them. Make a check mark next to the names of the people who have Old Testament books named after them. Answers on Page 8.

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| 1. Joshua | 2. Paul | 3. Ruth | 4. Moses |
| 5. Esther | 6. Daniel | 7. David | 8. Joel |
| 9. Micah | 10. Jonah | 11. Joseph | 12. Stephen |