

Kids' Chronicle

Who will throw the first stone?

By JOE SARNICOLA

Jesus rose early in the morning and went to the temple area. As people began to gather there, Jesus started to teach them about the kingdom of God. Then there was a noisy commotion as a group of scribes and Pharisees brought a woman and made her stand in front of everyone. The woman was embarrassed, and she had been crying.

One of the scribes held the woman's arm tightly and said, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?"

Jesus knew the scribes and Pharisees were hoping to trap him into saying or doing something they could use against him. So Jesus ignored them completely and just wrote in the sand by his feet. The people watching looked at Jesus, then at the scribe who was holding the woman. The scribe was getting angry because Jesus did not say anything. The people became more nervous and wondered what

was going to happen.

The scribes and Pharisees continued to call out for Jesus to make a statement. Finally Jesus stood up and waited for everyone to be quiet. The woman used one hand to wipe another tear from her eye. She did not want to be stoned to death.

"What do you say?" the scribe repeated.

And Jesus gave a simple reply. "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Then Jesus bent down and wrote in the sand again.

Having no way to attack Jesus for



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

what he had said, the scribes left, then the Pharisees followed them. The woman who had been accused of adultery remained where she was. She had stopped crying, but she was not sure what she should do next, so she looked at Jesus and waited for him to say something to her.

Finally Jesus stood and asked, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

The woman looked at Jesus, trying not to cry again. She said, "No one, sir."

Jesus looked around. The scribes and Pharisees were gone. The people who had been listening to Jesus teach were silent, and they watched with expectation. "Neither do I condemn you," said Jesus. "Go and from now on do not sin any more." The woman nodded her head to acknowledge that she would not repeat her sin and she ran home.

READ MORE ABOUT IT

John 8

Q&A

1. Why did the scribes bring the woman to Jesus?
2. What commandment did Jesus give the woman?

Bible Accent

The scribes and Pharisees were always watching to see if anyone had broken any of the laws set down by Moses, so that they could punish them. And very often they tried to trap Jesus into breaking a law or to force him to agree with their position about a law, such as with the woman who had been caught committing an act of adultery.

But Jesus was always wiser than those who tried to trap him. The Law of Moses said such a woman should be sentenced to death, but the Roman laws did not allow the Jews to carry out such a sentence. The scribes hoped that if Jesus said the woman did not have to die, he would be guilty of breaking the Law of Moses. If he ordered the woman put to death, he would be breaking the law of the Roman government, which controlled Israel. Jesus replied by forcing the people to look at themselves instead of the woman who had sinned. And then Jesus forgave the woman.

St. Patrick

There is debate about the actual birthplace of St. Patrick, but he claimed to be of Roman and British nationality. His father was a public official and his grandfather was a priest, before the laws of celibacy were in effect for the clergy.

Shortly after the turn of the fifth century, raiders kidnapped the teenage Patrick with others to be sold into slavery in Ireland. Even in a life of bondage, Patrick's faith in God remained strong. In a dream, Patrick was told he was about to regain his freedom. He ran away and was able to find passage on a ship after walking 200 miles. After a difficult voyage, Patrick was reunited with his family. But he felt a call to return to Ireland.

Patrick preached throughout Ireland, gaining many friends and followers. Legends say that Patrick used the three-leaf Irish shamrock to explain the Trinity. He is the patron saint of Ireland, and we honor him on March 17.

Puzzle

Reassemble the following letters to find out what Jesus wants us to do. Answer on Page 13.

G O O O A N N N E D S I M R

Bible Trivia

How many epistles (letters) written by John are included in the New Testament?

Send your answer to: Catholic Courier Bible Trivia, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Deadline for entries is March 29, 2001. There was no winner for last month's question, Which Gospel does not include an account of the temptation of Jesus? The answer was John.

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