

Kids' Chronicle

The Corinthians read Paul's letter

BY JOE SARNICOLA

The city of Corinth was one of the most important and wealthiest seaports in Greece. Many sailors and traders stopped there as they travelled between the Aegean and Adriatic Seas. Its history went back almost 1,000 years before the birth of Jesus. The apostle Paul had visited there and had established a congregation of people who had come to believe in Jesus.

People who followed the teachings of Jesus were being called Christians.

The people who lived in Corinth had diverse backgrounds, and some of them had followed pagan religions before they had become Christians. As a result, the Christians had some confusion about how to best interpret the Scriptures. They started to put more emphasis on individual leaders and teachers instead of Jesus. When Paul heard what was going on, he was disappointed in his Christian friends in Corinth. He decided to write them a long letter to help answer some of their questions.

When the letter arrived, the people were very excited. Some people believed that Apollos was a better teacher than Paul, but everyone wanted to hear the letter.

"To the church of God in Corinth:
"Grace to you and peace from God our Father. God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. I urge you, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?"

When these words were read for the people to hear, there was some mumbling and arguing. Some wondered how Paul had heard what was going on in

Corinth. Others felt guilty that they had upset Paul, or that maybe they had offended God. The reading continued.

"Now in regard to spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be unaware. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same spirit; different forms of service, but the same Lord; different workings, but the same God who produces all of them."

More grumbling could be heard, but just as many people called for quiet so that more of the letter could be heard.

"As a body is one though it has many parts, so also is Christ. For in one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one spirit."

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
1 Corinthians 12

Q&A

1. Why did Paul write to the Corinthians?
2. What did Paul say about spiritual gifts?

Bible Accent

Paul was an extraordinary man in many ways. He was born in the city of Tarsus, and was both a Jew and a Roman citizen from birth. During the time of Paul's life, Roman citizenship was a very valuable asset, and he received privileges non-citizens did not receive. He studied the Greek language and was trained as a Pharisee who observed the Hebrew Scriptures in a very strict manner. Before his own conversion, he believed the early Christians had broken the Jewish religious laws, and he persecuted them severely. When Stephen died as the first Christian martyr, Paul was a witness to his death. Paul was traveling when God struck him blind. After being healed, Paul became one of the most active and influential men of the New Testament. His missionary journeys and his teachings remain as an example of what one person, devoted to God, can accomplish.

St. Antoninus

Antony Pierozzi was the son of an official (the notary to the republic) in 15th-century Florence, Italy. Because he was always very short, he earned the nickname Antonino, which means "little Anthony." From the time he was a young boy, Antonino was good natured, but serious, especially about his religious studies and his prayer time. When he was 15 years old, Antonino asked Friar John Dominici to allow him to enter the Dominican Order. Dominici did not think the boy was ready for the life of a monk, so he gave Antonino a challenge he thought would be too great for him to complete, to study the *Decretum Gratiani*, a collection of all church laws at that time. When Antonino returned to Dominici a year later, he had committed the entire document to memory. He was allowed to enter the order. Antonino excelled as a scholar and he restored several churches to their original beauty. The pope rewarded the good works of Antonino by appointing him Archbishop of Florence. We honor him on May 10.

Puzzle

Fill in the blanks with the correct answers to the clues.
Answers on page 9.

1. Not a Gentile J _ _ _
2. A famous garden E _ _ _ _
3. David's wise son S _ _ _ _ _
4. "In the U _ _ _ _ _ of the Holy Spirit"
5. To disobey God S _ _ _ _

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Kids' Club

You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) answering this question:
The early Christians depended on Paul to help them understand the teachings of Jesus. Who is someone who has been helpful in your Christian growth, and what has that person shown you?

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 May 16, 2002. 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 Tracy Adler, a fifth-grader at St. Patrick School in Seneca Falls. In response to What can we do to show God we respect the earth he made for us?, Tracy wrote "There are many ways to show God we love and respect the earth he made for us. We can respect and care for everything around us in our lives everyday. We can all try our hardest to recycle our trash because we all know how hurtful it is to the earth when we pollute. We can help out in our community by cleaning parks, sidewalks or even our neighbor's yard. We can also care for plants, animals and every single living thing. These are some ways we can respect the earth and it is very important that we all try to do some of these things."

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