

John preaches about Jesus' coming

Joe Sarnicola/Contributing writer

When Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, a man named John, son of Zechariah and Elizabeth, was in the desert. And the word of God spoke to him there. After that John returned to the cities and towns along the Jordan River and preached to the people.

The words that had been spoken to Isaiah the prophet had come true, for now there was "a voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.'"

John was not a man to be gentle with his words. He knew his message was too important. When people came to be baptized by him, he would say, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee the coming wrath? Produce good fruits as evidence of your repentance. Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

Even brave, strong men would tremble at the conviction of John's words. He spoke with a courage and a faith that could not be ignored. People would ask, "What should we do?"

With a warning of his wrath, God would often give a message of hope in obedience. John pointed one hand to a man who was wearing fine robes, and the other to a man in tattered garments. "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none." The rich man immediately gave his outer robe to the poor man. Then John added, "Whoever has food should do likewise."

When one of the tax collectors, a man who was not well liked by the people because of his profession, asked, "What should we do?" John replied, "Stop collecting more than what is prescribed." Many people cheered when they heard John's answer. The tax collector pulled out what coins he had in his pockets and began to throw them to the people who were watching. He was very ea-



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ing. He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire."

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Luke 3.

Q&A

1. How did the prophet Isaiah describe John?
2. What did John tell the rich man to do?

Kids Chronicle

ger to do what John had asked of him.

Then John addressed everyone who was present. "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages. I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is com-

Bible Trivia

What do we call the 40 days leading up to Christmas? Send answer to Catholic Courier Bible Trivia, PO Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Include your name, address, school and grade. All entries must be received by Dec. 4. A winner, selected at random from all the correct entries submitted, will receive a prize. The winner of the last trivia question, "Who were the first two sons of Adam and Eve?" is Rob Johnson, a third grader at Holy Family Primary School in Elmira, who answered "Cain and Abel."

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Puzzle

Answer the questions below based on Luke's account of the Christmas story. Answers on page 4.

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| 1. _____ was king when Jesus was born. | a. Mary |
| 2. _____ was the wife of Zechariah. | b. Gabriel |
| 3. _____ was the name of the angel. | c. Jesus |
| 4. _____ was the city where Joseph lived. | d. Elizabeth |
| 5. _____ was the name given to Mary's baby. | e. John |
| 6. _____ was the name given to Elizabeth's baby. | f. Nazareth |
| 7. _____ was the handmaid of the Lord. | g. Herod |