

Jesus teaches about praying humbly

Joe Sarnicola/Contributing writer

Jesus looked into the hearts of the people who had come to hear him preach. He knew there were those with sorrow and sickness, happiness and health. He also knew there would be a few who believed they were better or more righteous than everyone else. Jesus decided to tell a story about those selfish and arrogant people in the crowd.

"Two people went up to the temple area to pray," Jesus said. "One was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector." To emphasize his words, Jesus grabbed the front of his robe with his hands, tipped his head back so he would appear to be looking down at the people, and he cleared his throat with exaggeration.

"The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer: 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity — greedy, dishonest, adulterous — or even like this tax collector.'" Jesus, still acting, pretended to turn away from the tax collector of his story. Most of the people watching laughed. A few did not, just as Jesus expected. Jesus continued by keeling down and raising his arms up high. "I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income."

Jesus knew that tax collectors were not very popular with the people, because taxes made raising a family difficult and expensive. He stood up and bowed his head. "But



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

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the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.'" Jesus paused to let the people listening think about what the tax collector had said.

Then Jesus addressed the crowd of people directly. "I tell you the (tax collector) went home justified, not the (Pharisee); for everyone

who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

After Jesus had finished speaking, people brought their children to him, hoping that he would bless them. The disciples did not like to see so many children trying to be near Jesus, so they tried to prevent any more of them from coming up. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ... Whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

Luke 18.

Q&A

1. Who were the two men who prayed in the story Jesus told?
2. What did Jesus say about children?

Bible Accent

When Jesus was born in Israel, the Roman army occupied the territory, but the Jews were allowed to practice their religion. Within the Jewish community were several groups that differed in the way they interpreted Scripture.

The Hasidim believed in a very strict and literal following of the religious law, called the Torah.

The Pharisees were even more strict about obeying the Law, both written and oral, and were critical of people who did not believe as they did. They often challenged the teachings and actions of Jesus.

The Sadducees believed that only the first five books of the Old Testament, called the Pentateuch, were the true laws of God.

The scribes, who could read and write, wrote down the laws to preserve them and eventually became interpreters of the laws. Because many of the scribes were members of the Sanhedrin, they had powerful influence in the government of Israel.

St. Keyne

St. Keyne was one of 24 children of a Welsh king. She became a very attractive young woman, but had no desire to marry.

Wanting to lead a life of prayer and solitude, she crossed the Severn River and lived in a forest. She did not live entirely as a hermit. She often traveled and established several prayer chapels.

Her nephew, St. Cadoc, tried to persuade her to come back to Wales. She agreed to do so after receiving a visit from an angel who told her to go back to Wales.

She built a small house at the foot of a mountain near a stream. Many people were then healed by its waters. Keyne told her nephew "in this place the name of the Lord shall be blessed forever."

We remember her on Oct. 8.

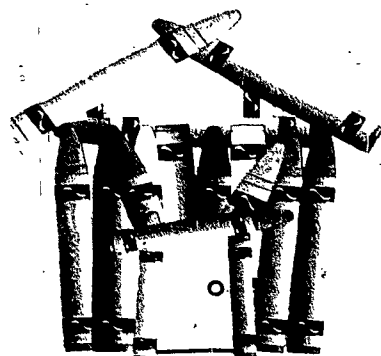
Puzzle

The answers to all of the following definitions are words that begin with the letter P. Can you guess them all correctly? Answers on page B17.

1. No war. p _ _ _ _
2. A story. p _ _ _ _
3. He was also named Saul. P _ _ _ _
4. Holy Spirit first came. P _ _ _ _
5. A fishing disciple. P _ _ _ _
6. Old Testament songs. p _ _ _ _
7. God's messenger. p _ _ _ _
8. Talking to God. p _ _ _ _

CORRECTION

An incorrect birth date for St. Catherine of Genoa was listed on the Courier's September Kids' Chronicle page. She was born in 1447.



Kids' Club

You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) in response to **Why do you think Jesus lived as a humble man on Earth, rather than as a mighty king?**

Send your essay — including name, home address, telephone number, school & grade — to Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Deadline for entries is Oct. 20. The winner, whose essay will be published in an upcoming issue of Kids' Chronicle, will be notified by phone.

Last month's winner was Meaghan Lambert, a seventh-grader at Our Lady of Mercy Middle School. In response to **Why is Communion such an important part of Mass?** she wrote, "Out of the many wonders that Jesus performed, the sacrifice of himself was the most glorious. Communion today reminds us how we, the people, must sacrifice our sins and take up our daily cross. Communion signifies the night of the Last Supper; the night when Jesus gave up his life to show the people peace and faith. The host and wine at Mass (become) Christ's body and blood that he gave up for us. Communion is so important because it signifies and reminds us, as Catholic people, our values in our faith with God."

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