

The life of the first Christians and Peter in prison

Acts 2:42-47; Acts 4:32-37; Acts 11:19-30; Acts 12:1-9



There was a lot of love in the first community of Christians! If one of them had something extra, he or she would sell it and bring the money to the apostles.



Then the apostles gave it to those who needed it, and so none of them were rich and none of them were poor!



The Christians met in one another's homes. They prayed together and they repeated together what Jesus had done at the Last Supper,



when he took bread and broke it and said: "Take this and eat it, all of you; this is my body which is given up for you. Do this in memory of me." And then he took the chalice of wine and said: "Take and drink from this, all of you; this is the chalice of my blood poured out for you. Do this in memory of me." Now too Jesus is present in the bread and wine that each one receives.



The people of Jerusalem saw how the first Christians lived and said, "Look at how they love one another! Even though they don't know one another and come from different countries."



Chiara also told the Gen 4 to love one another and then their friends would be attracted and want to follow Jesus. We've had that experience, too.



Barnabas came from a rich family. He was excited when he heard about Jesus. He too wanted to live like the other Christians.



He decided to sell a piece of land he had in Jerusalem. He brought the money to the apostles and became one of them.



Some time later the disciples sent him to the city of Antioch where he stayed for a whole year and through him many people got to know Jesus and became Christians.



One day bad news arrived in Antioch - the Christians in Jerusalem were starving and needed food.

Today too we sometimes hear about people in other parts of the world who have no food. Have any of you heard this on TV?



Barnabas called together all the Christians of Antioch, and told them about the famine in Jerusalem.



Each one gave whatever they could to help the Christians in that city. Everything was loaded onto a ship that would carry the supplies to Jerusalem.



Barnabas got on board the ship, too, to take all they had collected for the community in Jerusalem. They were all so happy that they could help! It was a real proof that Christians practice love, like one big family!



At that time, King Herod started persecuting the first Christians, and he even arrested Peter. He put him in prison, and had many soldiers guard him.



The first Christians prayed to God that he might be freed.

Why do you think the Christians were persecuted?



During the night, Peter was asleep between two soldiers. He was bound with two big chains, and other soldiers were standing guard at the prison gate.



Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and the prison cell was filled with light.



The angel woke Peter and told him: "Hurry and get up!" And the chains fall from his hands. The angel said: "Put on your clothes and sandals." Peter did it. Then he told him: "Put on your cloak and follow me."



The angel went out and Peter followed him. He still didn't know if what was happening to him was real or just a dream, or a vision!



They passed the guards, and got all the way to the iron gate that led into the city.



When Peter got out into the street, the angel suddenly disappeared.



By then Peter was awake and he thought to himself: "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent his angel and has freed me from prison."



If anyone loves, he gives, and if another person loves, he gives. And if they all love one another, everything belongs to everyone. That's how the Gen 4 live! Chiara



Is this for me?

Barbara and Alessandra from Italy



"I have an idea!" Barbara told her friends one day at recess. "Tomorrow let's all bring our Barbie dolls to school, so we can trade them!"



"I have the ballerina Barbie!" Roberta said. "And I'm bringing Ariel, the little siren," Louisa said.



Monica didn't say anything and Barbara noticed. She knew that Monica had many little brothers and sisters, and that her mother didn't have enough money to buy Barbie dolls.



Barbara winked at Alessandra who is also a Gen 4.



They met together after school and decided to surprise Monica.



That afternoon, Barbara got out her Barbie doll and Alessandra brought the clothes. They made a nice package and they took it to Monica.



She opened it right away and she was so surprised! "Is it for me?" "Yes, do you like it?" the other girls said.



"Yes, very much!"



Monica's mother came over and asked: "But why are you giving away your dolls?"



"I have another one!" Barbara said with a smile.



"We Gen 4 always do things like that!" Alessandra added.



Monica looked at her doll, then at Barbara and Alessandra... And she decided that she wanted to be a Gen 4, too.

A trip to the woods

Some Gen 4 in Italy



Alberto and Luca went with the Gen 4 on a trip into the woods to collect chestnuts.



Marco, a boy who lives in the same building as Alberto, asked him: "Can I come to?" "Sure!" Alberto told him, "Come on!"



After walking a while, they got to the woods. They went around all the trees looking for chestnuts hidden under the leaves. And they found a lot!



Everyone put them into their own sack. Then they collected some wood and made a fire to roast the chestnuts.



Marco put his chestnuts into his pocket. The Gen 4 instead put them all together into a nice little pile, and so their chestnuts belonged to everyone.



Marco kept his chestnuts for himself. But when he saw what the Gen 4 did,



he emptied his pockets and put his chestnuts on the pile, too. He looked very happy.



The chestnuts burst open in the fire. The Gen 4 started singing happily!