



## Christian Education Bulletin Insert April, 2002

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### St George's Day, April 23

St George is the patron saint of England. His flag is a red cross (+) on a white background, and is one of the three flags (along with the flags of St Andrew of Scotland and St Patrick of Ireland) which are combined to form the British flag, the Union Jack. He lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> century and may have been a soldier. He was probably a secret Christian and died as a martyr in Palestine at the hands of the Romans. The legend of St George and the dragon began to be told in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. There are several versions. One is told in the beautifully illustrated book, "Saint George and the Dragon," by Margaret Hodges, ISBN 0 316 36795 8. This book won the Caldecott Medal for its artwork. Another version says that a dragon was terrorizing the land and could only be pacified by being given 2 sheep to eat every day. When the land had no more sheep, the dragon was fed young women. The king's daughter was next in line when the knight, George, appeared and took the dragon captive. He said he would kill the dragon if all the people in the town, 15,000 of them, were baptized. They were and the dragon was slain.

The story tells how good wins over evil. Sometimes the dragon has been likened to Satan and the church to the princess. Children might enjoy dressing up and acting it out. St George needs a helmet, a sword and a shield with a large red cross on it. Two children will be needed for the dragon. The head might be made with a cardboard box in which eye holes have been made and a large mouth with lots of sharp teeth drawn on. A large old sheet could be used for the body. 'Scales' cut from construction paper or green garbage bags could be attached.

Older children might talk about how a Christian should "fight under Christ's banner against sin, the world, and the devil,

and continue his faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end." What things are the 'dragons' of today? Against what do we need to fight? Such things as fear, injustice, war, poverty, pollution and ignorance might come to mind.

### St Mark, April 25

St Mark is sometimes called John Mark. He may have been the young man mentioned in Mark 14:51, who fled naked from the Garden of Gethsemane after Jesus was arrested. His mother, Mary (there are many Marys in the Bible) had a home in Jerusalem which was used as a meeting place for Christians. Mark went with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, and, after an argument with Paul, continued to Cyprus with Barnabas. Mark spent a lot of time listening to the apostle, Peter, tell about his 3 years with Jesus, and used these stories to write his gospel, which was probably the first.

The symbol for St Mark is a winged lion. The lion is the Hebrew symbol for the great King David, and from ancient times a symbol of royalty.

Tell children how the gospels were first written - in ink on papyrus scrolls. Papyrus was made from the crushed stems of papyrus reeds and was very, very expensive.

Use 2 30cm pieces of 5mm dowel. On each end of each piece of dowel, glue a large wooden bead. (Have someone drill a 5mm hole in each bead so they will fit on) Cut a piece of brown wrapping paper or other strong paper wide enough to fit the space between the beads and about 40cm long, and tape one end of the paper to one dowel, and the other to the other dowel. Print some verses from Mark's gospel on the paper, and roll it up. (Perhaps Mark 1:2 or Mark 16:6 and 7)

### Worth thinking about

We can learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have strange names, and all are different colours . . . but they all have to learn to live in the same box.