

A NOTE TO PARENTS

And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. – John 3:19

Has your child ever hidden under the bed or in the closet when you were looking for him, because he had done something he knew he wasn't supposed to do? Has your child ever sat in front of you, scrunching up her eyes and covering her ears, while you were trying to explain to her, calmly and rationally, why she was being punished for something she knew perfectly well was wrong?

It is natural to be afraid of the dark, but equally natural to be afraid of being seen in the light when we have done wrong. Adam and Eve cover their bodies and hide among the trees of the garden after they have taken the forbidden fruit. Cain hides from God after murdering Abel. And Jesus says, "people loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Talk with your child about light and darkness. Why are we scared of the dark? Why do we say that *God is light*? What do we mean when we say Jesus is the *light of the world*? Why would anybody like darkness better than light? Your child may or may not be ready to think about the symbolic or metaphorical meanings of darkness and light; you may find yourselves in a conversation that is strictly literal: "We say Jesus is the light of the world because in the picture he's holding a thing with a flame on it." "I *don't* like the light when it's hot in the summer and it hurts my eyes, so I wear sunglasses." There is no need to push for answers that seem more spiritual: your child's ability to talk about symbol and metaphor will develop at its own pace, and if you have an extremely literal-minded child, she (or more likely he) may never feel really comfortable using symbolic language. All the more reason to make sure your child is exposed to non-verbal images—picture books, films, and above all, good liturgy, with its powerful use of light, movement, sound and *things* such as water, bread and wine.

©2006 by Gretchen Wolff Pritchard. All rights reserved.
THE SUNDAY PAPER, 19 Colony Road, New Haven, CT 06511, USA
203 - 624-2520 ♦ www.the-sunday-paper.com

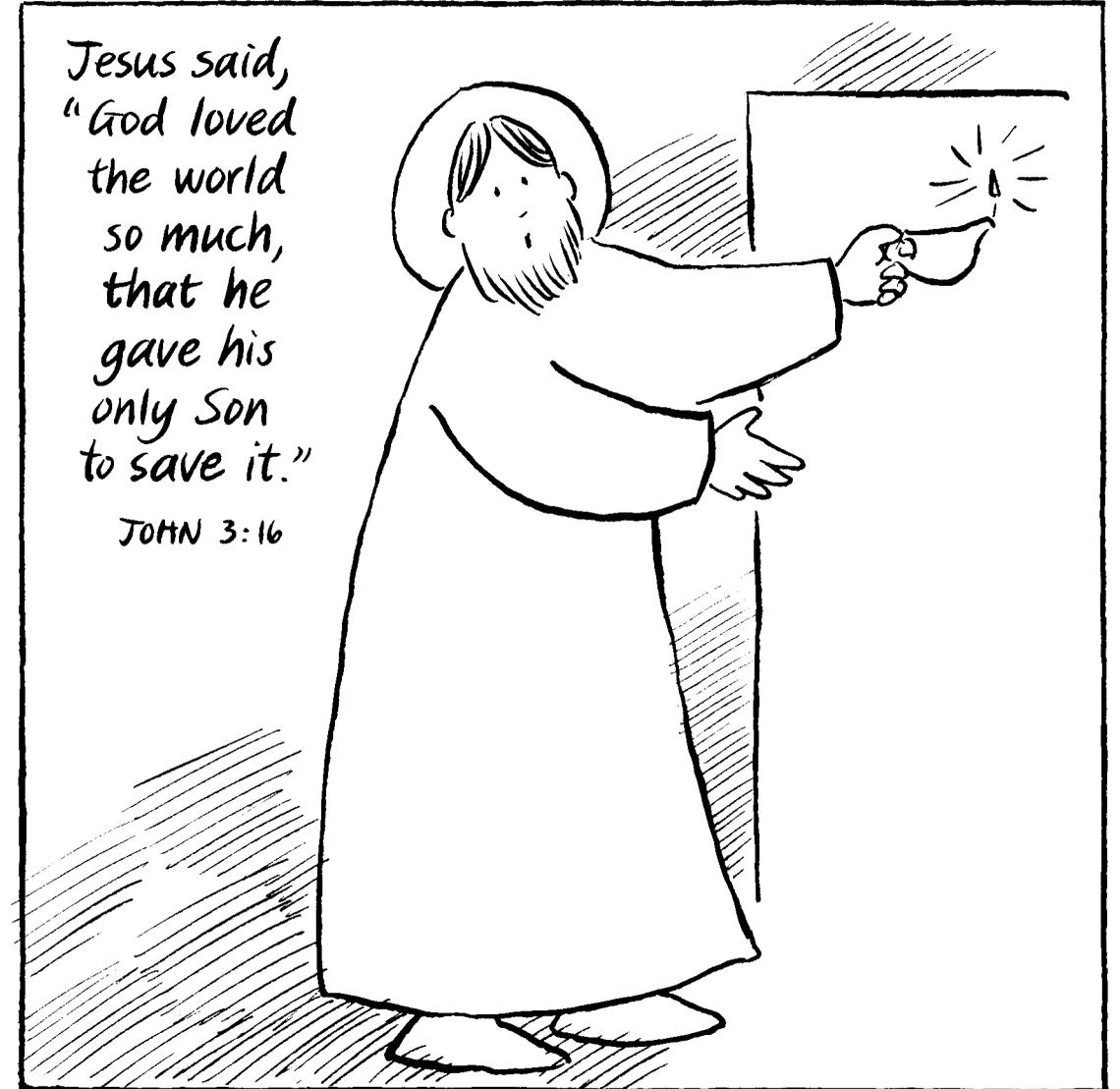


THE SUNDAY PAPER JUNIOR

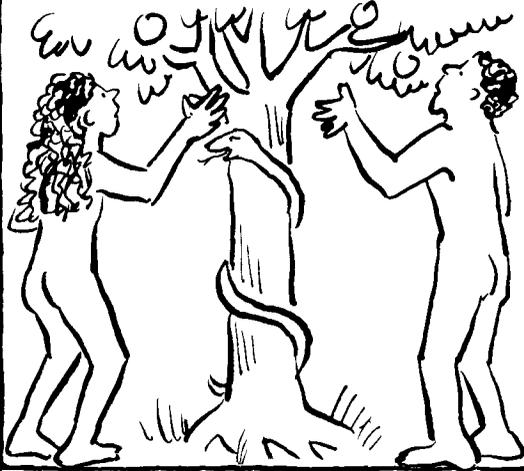
Year B
4th SUNDAY
in LENT

Jesus said,
"God loved
the world
so much,
that he
gave his
only Son
to save it."

JOHN 3:16



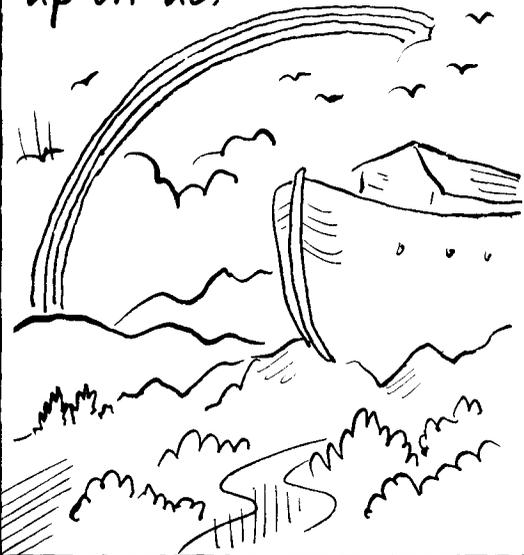
Ever since the beginning, people have done things that are wrong.



They have broken God's laws, and hurt each other.



But God has not given up on us.



Finally, God sent Jesus, his Son, to live and die for us.



When Jesus came, he showed us the way to God. He said, "God's light has come into the world." But he also said that some people would rather hide in the dark than see God's light.

Help this boy come out of the dark and find Jesus.

