Religion-

Reality is named John the Baptist

By JIM KYAN Second Sunday in Advent Dec. 9, 1990 Mark 1:1-8 Immersion Course in Reality

Part One

Advent is a time for Reality Therapy, and the Therapist who immerses us in Reality is named John the Baptist.

We have two appointments with him: one this week, and one next.

But we mustn't expect fifteen minute or half hour slots of time paid for by O.H.I.P. with some extra billing charges.

. In fact, we shouldn't expect a waiting room with nostalgic prints and Gourmet magazine. It is called Reality therapy

after all. It was a real concession on the



Religion and Reality By JIM RYAN

part of John the Baptist to go for two appointments. Even that's too formal for him.

Because where John takes his patients is to a place without form, a place without walls or boundaries of any kind.

It's a place most of us rarely visit; except perhaps during

birth, death, sickness, or rare moments in jazz clubs, and while wilderness camping.

Part Two John did a lot of wilderness camping in his time, only he used neither dome tent nor down-filled

If you watched Lost in the Barrens last Sunday evening on CBC, then you know the kind of camping John the Baptist liked.

sleeping bag.

He wore animal skins just like Jamie and Awasin in the movie. (They didn't have locusts or honey in the barrens or Keewatin District, otherwise I'm sure Jamie and Awasin wuld have followed John's dietary pattern as well).

Part Three

John's wilderness, like the barrens of Jamie and Awasin in Farley Mowat's novel on which the film was based, is not a friendly place. It's not a polite and orderly place. Normal society neither lives nor holidays there.

To the story-telling mind of the Israelite and the Cree, the wilderness is a place for demons and giants; a home for cannibals and monsters. This wilderness is a place of chaos and disorder. (For the modern mind, think of a place where nuclear waste has been dumped, to capture the fear of a story-telling culture for the wilderness.)

But it is here that John dwells; and it is here that he invites us. Part Four

And ad in the Travel Section of the Saturday Globe and Mail:

Immersion Course in Reality A travel opportunity unlike any

other. Not for those who are blinkered

or comfortable. We serve neither Perrier nor

smoked salmon. We use neither ATV's nor

helicopters. Space is unlimited.

> Signed: Agent for Reality, John the Baptist. Part Five

Jamle and Awasin offered a testimonial after their trip into the wilderness: Reconciliation between Cree and Inuit, and between Englishman and Cree. Renewed confidence and hope for the future.

Final Part

Ironically, visions for the Kingdom, and the power to bring those visions to life, come out of the chaos of the wilderness.

John preached a message of repentance. Repentance is the first stage of the Immersion course in Reality. Later stages will become clear as the liturgical year proceeds.

(In Advent, we spend two weeks reading about John the Baptist who prepared the way for the coming of Christ).

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Bible Digest

"Thus saith the Lord, Let'not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mightly man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23-24.

We should brag on the Lord at every opportunity. He is the One worthy of praise.

"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Galatians 5:9.-

A little sin or lie has a way of spreading its evil influence into other areas of your life. Live a holy life for the glory of God. Repent of sin and live for Jesus.

"If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." Proverbs 24:10.

The only way to be ready for the day of adversity is to put your faith in the Lord today. Remember, "the joy of the Lord is your strength."

"Neither give place to the

devil." Ephesians 4:27.

What good advice. Fill your heart with the Lord and His goodness. That will take care of the devil.

"A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring." Proverbs 25:26.

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Our world need men and women of God who will remain faithful to Him no matter what: may come. Be a Godly example for the glory of God.

"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Timothy 4:8.

The next time you do your workout remember that you should not forget to take care of your soul. Put your life into the hands of the Lord. He loves you.

"Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words." Jeremiah 36:24.

We must pray that our leaders have more respect for God than those mentioned in this verse. "Lord, give our government leaders wisdom from you during these difficult days."

"That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: Which say to the seers, See not: and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things: speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits." Isaiah 30:9-10.

The Bible will not always say what we want to hear but it will always say what we need to hear. Don't follow those who seek to please men instead of God. Follow those who will share the whole counsel of God.

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Wednesday 8:00 p m.

Carolfest '90, billed as an evening of Christmas music for the whole family, will be held Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. at St. John's United Church on Guelph Street in

Local church choirs and the Georgetown Choral Society, as well as a brass quartet, will provide vocal renditions of Christmas favorites, under the direction of Haydn C. Evans, church organist at St. John's United Church.

Rehearsals for the choirs have been scheduled for this coming Monday, at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 16, 2:30 p.m. at St. John's United Church.

CHURCH

Christmas carolfest

Georgetown.

Although there is no admission charge for the performance, donations will be accepted with proceeds from the concert going to the Georgetown food bank.

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