

PRAYING *With* CHILDREN

SUNDAY LITURGY



21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

27 August 2023 - Year A

“You are Peter; to you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”

Something to Think About

The disciple, Peter, who features in today's gospel, was a fisherman. He had a wife and maybe a family. Like the other disciples, Peter often found it hard to understand Jesus and his message. In this story, Jesus calls him 'the rock', suggesting that Peter's faith was strong. But there are several bible stories about Peter in which his faith lets him down. Peter failed often but he kept coming back. Peter was fully human, as we are. Yet Peter was the one Jesus chose to lead his community. We do not have to be perfect to be a disciple or a leader! We just need to hang in there and stick with Jesus!

The Story

In this gospel story, Jesus is fishing for information - what are people saying about him? Who do they think he is? The disciples all have a go at answering but it is Peter who comes up with the correct answer: 'You are the Messiah'.

The Scriptures

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

16:13-20

When Jesus and his disciples were near the town of Caesarea Philippi, he asked them, "What do people say about the Son of Man?"

The disciples answered, "Some people say you are John the Baptist or maybe Elijah or Jeremiah or some other prophet."

Then Jesus asked them, "But who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter spoke up, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Jesus told him:

"Simon, son of Jonah, you are blessed! You didn't discover this on your own. It was shown to you by my Father in heaven. So I will call you Peter, which means 'a rock.' On this rock I will build my Church, and death itself will not have any power over it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and God in heaven will allow whatever you allow on earth. But he will not allow anything that you don't allow."

Jesus told his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Video

Watch the video: [Peter Declares Jesus to be the Christ](#)



Group Discussion

Invite the children to reflect on the question Jesus asked the disciples - 'Who do you say I am?' Encourage the children to share stories about Jesus... who were his friends / where did he live / where did he visit / who was his family / what kind of man was he?

The simple message for younger children is that Jesus is God's Son.

Praying For Others

Leader: Let us pray now for the leaders of our Church, our world, for those in our community and for our own needs.

Reader 1: We pray that our leaders will be strong, wise and faithful. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 2: We pray for all who teach us about Jesus. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 3: We pray for those who suffer because they believe in Jesus. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 4: We pray for faith to keep believing that Jesus is the Son of God. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 5: We pray that we will be confident in telling others about Jesus. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Invite the children to pray for their own special intentions.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

Leader: Loving God, listen to the prayers we make in the name of Jesus.

All: Amen.

Prayer



Dear Jesus,
Give us the strength to keep on following you. Help us to remember that we don't have to do it alone!
Thank you for being with us.
Amen.

Group Activity

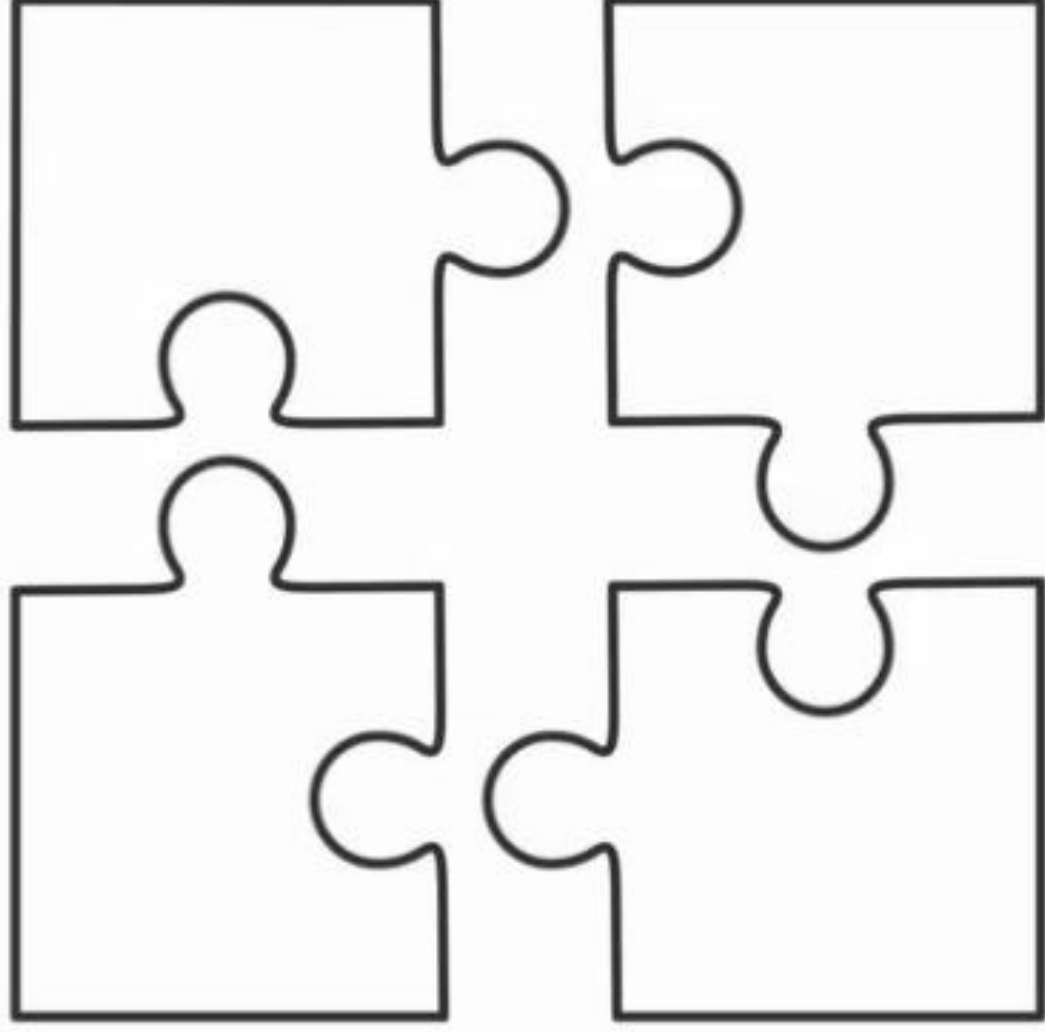
Who do you say you are?

You will need: puzzle template, scissors, envelope or sandwich bag to store the pieces, coloured markers or pencils.

- 1) In the gospel story today, Jesus asked the disciples, "Who do you say I am?" Now you can think about "Who do you say YOU are?"
- 2) Ask children to think about the people they love, the things they enjoy doing, their favourite colour, favourite food, things that make them who they are.
- 3) Encourage children to draw or write these ideas on the puzzle pieces, ideally one characteristic per puzzle piece.
- 4) Cut out the puzzle pieces and put the puzzle together.
- 5) Store puzzle pieces in an envelope or sandwich bag.



Who do you say you are?



Think about the people you love, the things you enjoy doing, your favourite colour, your favourite food, the things that make you who you are. Draw some of these on the puzzle pieces above.
Then cut out the pieces and assemble your puzzle.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE WORDS TO DESCRIBE JESUS?

BOLD. GENTLE. STRONG. LOVING. MERCIFUL. HUMBLE.

NOW DRAW YOUR OWN PORTRAIT OF JESUS

