

Children's liturgy – Saint Peter and Saint Paul (Year A)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: red

Props: key shapes cut out of card

Today we hear how Jesus gave Peter the keys to the kingdom of Heaven. Let's find out why, and what it means for us.

Opening prayer: Christ Jesus, help us to be faithful to you, like Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Inspire us to show that faith in everything we do. Amen.

First reading (optional): Acts 12: 1-11

Psalm: Ps 33:2-9 r. 5 or 8

Gospel acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia !

Lord you know everything; you know I love you.

Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19

Jesus went to the territory near the town of Caesarea Philippi, where he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

"Some say John the Baptist," they answered. "Others say Elijah, while others say Jeremiah or some other prophet."

"What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

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

"Good for you, Simon son of John!" answered Jesus. "For this truth did not come to you from any human being, but it was given to you directly by my Father in heaven. And so I tell you, Peter: you are a rock, and on this rock foundation I will build my church, and not even death will ever be able to overcome it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven, and what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven."

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from today's reading?

Today we hear how Jesus was so impressed with Simon that he gave him a new name. Can you remember what that new name was?

Jesus said that he would build his church upon Simon Peter. Jesus also gave him the keys to the kingdom of Heaven.

Why did Jesus give Simon Peter a new name and the keys to the kingdom?

Simon Peter recognised and believed that Jesus was the Son of God. He had great faith and was willing to put that faith into words but also into actions.

Because of Peter's great faith, Jesus gave him the keys to the kingdom of Heaven. What are keys usually used for?

Keys lock doors, but they also open them. As a disciple, Peter spent his time sharing Jesus' message with other people. He opened their hearts to God's love, just like a key opens a door.

We can open our hearts by taking some time to stop and listen, to pray and to try to hear what Jesus is asking us to do. We can show our faith in our prayers and in our actions. We can try to follow Jesus' commandments to love God and to love our neighbour. We can be kind and generous to others and we can try to make the world a fairer place where all people get what they need.

Can you think of some key words that show us what Jesus asks us to do? (*eg. love, believe, forgive, give, share, hope etc*)

These are just like the keys to God's kingdom – which open us up to God's love.

This week let's try to be more loving, more forgiving and more generous to others. Let us try to bring hope to others. And let's try to open our hearts to welcome Jesus in.

What will you do this week to show your faith in Jesus and to welcome him into your heart?

Intercessions: *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers, or use the suggestions below.*

We open our hearts to God as we pray together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may be a place of welcome and safety for all people. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all our brothers and sisters around the world, especially those who are poor: that they may be able to change their lives for the better. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may open our hearts to Jesus and love our neighbour, wherever in the world they are. Lord, in your mercy...

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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Closing prayer: Living God, help us to live with love, faith, generosity, fairness and hope, so that our hearts may be open to you and to all people in need. We ask this through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying optional illustration and to write in the key ring some of the “key words” that sum up what Jesus asks us to do, or what they will do to open their hearts to Jesus in the coming week.

Give the children key shapes cut out of card or paper and ask them to write or draw what they will do to open their hearts to Jesus in the coming week or the “key words” that sum up what Jesus asks us to do.

Discuss as a family all that you have heard and thought about today. Think about how you could open your hearts to Jesus and live according to some of the “key words” in the coming week.

This summer, like never before, we are called to be signs of hope for our world. You and your family are invited to be part of a Summer of Hope which will ensure clean water and food reaches some of the poorest families in the world during this global emergency. Visit cafod.org.uk/summerofhope to find out more.

See cafod.org.uk/primary for more child-friendly activities.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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