

Twenty-fourth Sunday of the Year

Jesus is the Son of God

INTRODUCTION

Today we hear Jesus asking his followers a difficult question: 'Who do you think I am?' Listen carefully, and see which disciple gave the right answer.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and read this prayer:
The candle flame is warm and bright,
it changes darkness into light.
We feel its warmth and see its glow,
and when we look at it we know.
The light of Christ is burning bright,
for we are children of the light.

SORRY

One day Jesus told this story (*adapted from Matthew 18:23-35*):

There was once a servant who owed his master lots of money. His master took pity on him and cancelled all his debts. Now the servant had a friend who owed him a small amount of money which he could not pay, so he had him thrown into jail. When his master heard this he sent for his unforgiving servant. 'Could you not forgive others as I forgave you?' he asked. Then he threw him into jail until he could repay all that he owed.

Help us Lord to remember this story so that we are always ready to forgive others just as you are always ready to forgive us. Amen.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Open our ears to hear the 'Good News' which Jesus shared with the world.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL (cf Mark 8:27-35)

One day, while Jesus and his disciples were walking along, he asked them, 'Who do people say that I am?'

'Some say that you are John the Baptist, or Elijah or a prophet sent by God,' they answered.

Then Jesus asked them, 'Who do you think I am?'

It was Simon Peter who spoke up and said, 'You are Christ, the Son of God.'

After this, Jesus began to tell them how he

would suffer and die, but would rise again after three days. Simon Peter argued with him, 'Lord we must not go to Jerusalem. These things must never happen!' Jesus said to him, 'Peter, we must do things God's way, even though it will not be easy.'

DISCUSSION

Why were people uncertain about who Jesus was?

Some people confused him with John the Baptist; some people had heard him preaching and thought that he was a prophet; to others he was simply the son of Joseph and Mary. Jesus appeared differently to different people.

Which apostle recognised who Jesus really was? What did Simon Peter say? – 'You are Christ, the Son of God.' The apostles had grown to know and love Jesus. On several occasions they had seen Jesus perform miracles which were only possible through the power of God.

If Jesus asked us the same question today, what would we say? – We know that Jesus is the Son of God, and saviour of the world. His love for us is unending and, he is our best friend.

Why did Simon Peter get upset and argue with Jesus? – When Simon Peter heard that Jesus would suffer and die in Jerusalem, he wanted to save him and protect him from harm.

How did Jesus answer Simon Peter? – Jesus told him that it is more important to follow God's way than the way we might choose, even though sometimes this can mean putting up with difficult times.

What does today's Gospel say to us? – We recognise Jesus as the Son of God. We are called to follow him like Simon Peter, but Jesus warns us that this will not always be easy. Just as he carried the cross for us before his death and resurrection, we will all have our own crosses or difficulties to bear in life. Our reward for this will be to share everlasting life with Christ Jesus.

ACTIVITY

Give each child a cross shaped badge. Help them to pin these on after they have been coloured or decorated.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

We ask you, O Lord,
to help us through difficult times
when our troubles seem almost too much to bear.
Give us the strength to carry on
and to always do our best.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.