

Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

Peter and Paul

INTRODUCTION

Today we celebrate the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. St Peter was the 'rock' on which Jesus built his Church; his faith was a great source of strength for the early Christians. St Paul was a missionary, whose aim in life was to share the Good News that had transformed his life. Together they were the greatest leaders of the early Church.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and then read (*cf Matthew 6:16-17*):

Jesus said, 'Let your goodness shine out like a light in the darkness, so that through you, the love of our heavenly Father will touch the lives of others.'

SORRY

Ask the children to close their eyes and make the words of this prayer their own:

Father, forgive us if we have hurt anyone by our thoughts or actions, and help us to forgive those who have hurt us. We ask this through Jesus our Lord.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 2: *Light up our hearts.*

GOSPEL (*cf Matthew 16:13-19*)

One day, Jesus asked his disciples, 'Who do people think I am?'

'Some say you are John the Baptist, others say the Prophet Elijah,' they answered. Jesus turned to his friends and said, 'Who do you think I am?'

Peter answered, 'You are the son of God!' Jesus smiled and said, 'Peter, you are a happy man, because my heavenly Father revealed this to you. You are the rock on which I will build my Church.'

DISCUSSION

What did Peter do for a living before he became a disciple of Jesus? – He was a fisherman, who many believe lived in Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee.

Why was Peter chosen as leader of the early

Church? – Peter had been with Jesus since the very beginning of his ministry, and he had witnessed all the marvellous things that Jesus had said and done. He *knew* that Jesus was the son of God, and in this way God chose him to be the shepherd of his flock on earth.

What do we know about St Paul? – Paul was a Jewish Pharisee, and was well educated and very religious. He lived in the city of Tarsus, and never actually met Jesus. He wanted to uphold the Jewish law and traditions and so he had many of the followers of Jesus thrown into prison.

What happened to Paul to make him change? – One day, whilst on his way to a place called Damascus, to arrest some Christians, God appeared to Paul as a brilliant light and asked him to stop hurting the followers of Jesus. Paul changed his ways and instead of being one of the greatest enemies of Jesus, he became one of his greatest friends.

Did Peter and Paul know each other? – They eventually met and became good friends when they realised that they were both working for Jesus. They travelled far and wide preaching the Good News about Jesus and sharing the Christian faith with others.

Why do we have a special day when we remember Peter and Paul? – They are the greatest leaders of the early Church, and they spent their lives working endlessly for Jesus. Both of them suffered for their faith and spent time in prison, but even then they continued their work by writing many letters that we can still read today. We remember their courage and faith, and thank them for sharing Christ's message with the world.

ACTIVITY

Copy and colour the pictures of St Peter 'the Fisherman' and St Paul 'the Missionary'.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, give us the faith and courage of Peter and Paul, and help us in our own way to carry the word of God to others.