

# SS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES

YEAR C

## PRAYER OF THE DAY:

You are our rock,  
O God.  
We know you are there  
when we need you.  
Help us to learn  
from the strength  
of Peter and Paul.  
Let us never forget  
your love.  
We ask this  
through your Son,  
Jesus Christ.

## FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The readings focus on the special mission of two of the greatest leaders of the church. The first reading is somewhat of a farewell discourse. Paul seems certain that, having gone the limit, he will be killed for the faith. As he approaches his martyrdom, Paul is confident and even joyful. The Gospel gives us the beginning of Peter's ministry. Having professed faith in the person of Christ, he is assured of the permanence of the church and his role in it.

FIRST READING: *2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18*

*A reading from Paul's second letter to Timothy.*

I am sure that I am going to be killed,  
because I preach about Jesus.  
I have done my best in the race,  
and I have stayed faithful.  
So I know that the Lord will give me a crown  
on that special day when he comes back.  
He will reward everyone who loves him  
and stays faithful.  
The Lord has always been with me  
and made me strong  
so that I could proclaim the Word of God  
to people everywhere.  
The Lord has always helped me,  
and he will save me from every evil  
and keep me safe for heaven.  
May everyone give praise and glory to the Lord,  
forever and ever. Amen.

*The Word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSE: *Psalm 71*

RESPONSE:

1 I will pro-claim your pow - er. 2 I will pro-claim your won-der-ful  
3 deeds! I will pro-claim sal - va - tion, and your faith - ful love! 4

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Je - sus asked them: "Who am I?" 1. Pe - ter an-swered:  
2. Al - le - lu - ia,  
1-2. "You are \_\_\_ the Christ, you are \_\_\_ the Son of the Liv - ing God!"

GOSPEL: *Matthew 16:13-19*

*A reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

When Jesus and his disciples  
were in the area of Caesarea Philippi,  
he asked his disciples,

“Who do people think I am?”

They said,

“Some people think you are John the Baptist,  
and others think you are the prophet Elijah.  
But there are others  
who say you are Jeremiah  
or some other prophet.”

Jesus asked them,

“And who do you say I am?”

Simon Peter answered,

“You are the Christ.  
You are the Son of the living God.”

Jesus said,

“Simon, you are blessed.  
You did not learn that  
from any human being.  
No, God told you that.  
From now on you will be called Peter,  
which means rock.  
I will build my Church on this rock,  
and it will be strong.  
Nothing will be able to destroy it.  
I will give you the keys  
to the kingdom of heaven,  
so that what you decide on earth  
will be the same in heaven.”

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

#### REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Since the Gospel reading appears elsewhere in the Sunday readings (Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time/Year A), it would seem appropriate today to concentrate on the two men themselves. Peter and Paul stand out among the saints, and even the apostles, as two giants of the early church. Their common feast has been celebrated in the church since the year 258.

There are several books for children which contain the lives of Peter and Paul which may be useful for presenting the highlights of their lives. We will want to avoid, however, pictures and stories which do not correspond to the Biblical presentation. For example, many books for both children and adults show pictures of Paul falling from a horse on the road to Damascus. There is no indication in any of the several accounts of Paul's conversion which suggests that. The accounts of their lives should focus on reality and the great contribution of these two men.