



a Kendall Hunt Company

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Isaiah 22:15, 19-23

Matthew 16:13-20

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, you give each of us important work to do in the Church.

Help our faith to be as solid as a rock.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The topic for today is Petrine Ministry, a ministry that comes from the Church's understanding that the leadership of Saint Peter is passed down to each successive pope. To begin, divide into small groups of three and provide one telephone book for each small group. The object of the activity is to have every person in the group supported by a solid foundation, a telephone book. Instruct the people in the groups to arrange themselves on the foundation so that everyone has one foot on the book, while keeping their other foot from touching the floor. Discuss:

- Why is a solid foundation important to support a structure?

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- What is the structure of leadership within the Catholic Church?
- How is the Church built on a solid foundation?

Allow time for discussion. Peter was the first leader in the Church. Jesus gave him the name, Peter, which means, "rock."

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading, listen to the prophet Isaiah describe God's chosen leader.

Read Isaiah 22:15, 19-23.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How will God make a change in leadership?
- Who is God's chosen leader?
- What key will God give to his leader?

In the gospel today listen to how Peter is given the keys to God's kingdom.

Read Matthew 16:13-20.

Allow for silence.

- What does Jesus ask his disciples?
- How does Simon Peter answer Jesus?
- What does Jesus tell Peter about building his Church?
- What keys will Jesus give to Peter?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the **Catechist Background** section.

In today's first reading from the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah prepares the people for a change in leadership. Isaiah brings God's message that Eliakim will replace Shebna. God will put great trust in Eliakim and give to him the "key to the House of David." Eliakim will do all things in the name of God. Along with leadership comes responsibility. God chose Eliakim to be a caring leader who treats the people with respect.



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In today's gospel, Peter professes his faith in Jesus. Jesus asks his friends what they believe about him. Peter replies, "You are the Messiah." For this statement Jesus gives Peter the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," and calls Peter "Rock," the foundation stone upon which Jesus will build his Church.

Peter's faith in Jesus' identity is a gift from God. Peter is given the task of passing on the faith. Jesus entrusts the keys to Peter and God's power is given to the entire community of believers.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Why does leadership come with responsibility?
- What do you believe about Jesus?
- Why does Jesus call Peter the foundation stone upon which to build his Church?



[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in Life**.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starter

Petrine Ministry in the Church

Peter is the foundational leader upon whom Jesus built his Church. Catholics believe that the charge of shepherding the Catholic Church has passed down from Peter to successive holders of the office of bishop of Rome.

The pope is the bishop of Rome and the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Our Church teaches that as pastor of the entire Church, the pope has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church. Bishops are successors to the apostles in their role as teachers and pastors. Together with their leader, the pope and never apart from him, they have full authority over the Church.

The pope is a spiritual leader. His leadership is modeled after the Good Shepherd, Christ, who is compassionate and loving. The pope witnesses to Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit by spreading love, justice, peace, and holiness throughout the world.

- What is the name of our current pope?
- What kind of a leader is the pope?
- How has our present pope worked to spread justice and peace throughout the world?

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Sacrament Connection

The sacrament of Holy Orders celebrates the ordaining of a man as a bishop, a priest, or a deacon, to serve the People of God in the name of Jesus. From the days of the apostles, bishops, priests and deacons have served the Church.

The Gospel in Life

This week find out how you can get involved in serving the people of God in your parish.

