



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



ordinary
time



lectionary
reading

Cycle A

The Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

Lectionary # 591

Reading I: Acts of the Apostles 12: 1-11

The Acts of the Apostles provides a history of the early church and in this account we are made aware of the fact that the early church paid a heavy price for their **faith**. In this particular passage we see the martyrdom of Saint James and the imprisonment of Saint Peter. As the reading proceeds we see that Saint Peter is miraculously released from prison in order to continue to give witness to the **faith**. It is an absolute truth that people of faith are called to witness to the **faith**. Although it does not call all to the giving of one's life Jesus makes it clear that there is always a challenge to all who would follow him. There will be great and unending joy but there will also be temporary trials and tribulations.

Reading 2: 2 Timothy 4: 6-8,17-18

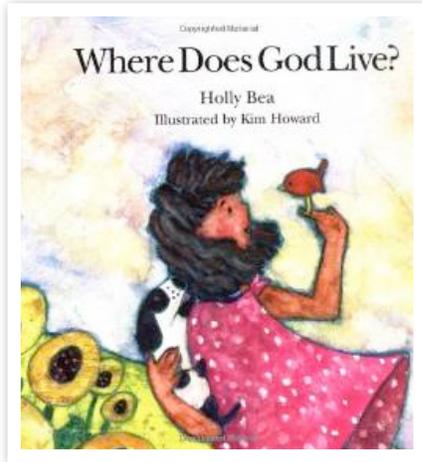
The Second Letter to Timothy is a sincere and direct communication from a veteran leader of the **faith** to a young protégé offering words of advice and encouragement. Saint Paul is certain that his life will soon come to an end, but his **faith** is strong and he wishes to bolster the **faith** of a young and upcoming leader of a **faith** community. Saint Paul uses the images of *fighting the good fight* and *finishing the race* to encourage Timothy, his community, and all of us to remain **faithful**.

Gospel: Matthew 16: 13-19

In this passage from the Gospel of Saint Matthew we see clearly the **faith** of Saint Peter. Jesus' inquiry regarding the opinion of the crowd is merely a prelude to posing the same question to the disciples. It is their opinion, not the crowd's, that Jesus wants articulated. As usual, Saint Peter takes the lead. Peter declares something he could not possibly know. And neither, of course, could the crowds. Saint Peter's response of *you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God* is seen as a God-given insight, neither merited or earned. But it is this unique privilege, granted to Saint Peter and not the other apostles, that qualifies him to be the foundation upon which Jesus will build his Church. It is Saint Peter's statement of **faith** and not a gift of oratory or leadership, courage or distinctive goodness that sets him apart as the *rock*. It is again, his **faith**.



children's story



Where Does God Live?

Written by Holly Bea

Illustrated by Kim Howard

Copyright 1997 H.J. Kramer

ISBN-10: 0915811731

ISBN-13: 978-0915811731



character
education
activity

**Faith is a gift given to us by
God, but like any gift it must
be unwrapped, nurtured and
shared with others.**

Where Does God Live?

This beautifully illustrated book follows a young, lively and inquisitive girl named Hope as she follows her favorite past-time of asking questions, all kinds of questions. She asks everyone she knows just about anything. One day her musings lead her to a really big question: Where does God live? First, she asks her mother and her talking animal friends. Each has a different answer and opinion thus causing her great confusion. Hope finally goes to Grandma Rose, a woman who has lived a life of **faith** in God. It is there that Hope finally receives an answer that is satisfactory. Grandma Rose helps Hope to see God in all things and to have faith that God is available to her in all things but most especially in prayer.

Activity

Preamble: The apostles, Peter and Paul were chosen by Jesus to be his friends and his witnesses to the **faith**. Throughout the ages Jesus has chosen many people to be his friends and that invitation is extended to each person. In this activity the students will make a special plaque to hang in their room to remind them that Jesus has chosen them to be his friend and loves them.

Step One: Each student will be provided a 6.5 x 6.5 square of poster board. Prior to the class, pencil in the letters of the words "Jesus Loves Me" in one inch block letters around the left, top and right sides of the poster board.

Step Two: Provide each student with the following materials: one square 6.5 x 6.5 piece of poster board, felt tip markers, a 1.5 inch square photo of the student, white glue, paper punch and string or yarn.

Step Three: Have the students trace over the letters with a felt tip pen. Their picture is then to be glued in the center of the square and allowed to dry. Punch two holes in the top of the poster board square and loop a piece of yarn or string for hanging the picture.

Faith is one of the three virtues that Saint Paul speaks of in his letters, the other two being "hope" and "love".



case study

Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.

What could you do today?

Think about the special gifts and talents God has given you. Knowing that you have these God-given gifts and talents, think about the fact that Jesus has chosen you to be his friend and his witness to others. How will you use the unique talents given to you to witness your **faith** to others? For example, you might be a really good story-teller. You might look at one of the stories of Jesus in the Bible or even a story that Jesus tells and learn how to re-tell the story in your own words! God may have given you the gift of wanting to be helpful to others and you could then choose to do something kind for someone in need and recognize to yourself that you are doing that kindness in the name of Jesus. There are so many ways to witness to your **faith** in Jesus.

Look Feel Know Act

We are all called to be a family of **faith** and a witness to our **faith** in Jesus. Ask your parents and other older members of your family who they have seen as the greatest witness to the **faith** in their lives. Recognize that **faith** makes its way from one age to another by individuals who are willing to share their faith with others. You might ask these same individuals if they have had trials or difficulties that made them stronger in their **faith**. Knowing these stories, the many stories of **faith** in The Bible, and the lives of the saints will help you to be strong in your faith when trials and difficulties come your way.

The little girl, Hope, has many questions and having questions is natural to all of us as human beings. Questions actually help us develop our **faith** and struggling with questions while relying on God can lead us all to a deeper **faith**. Saint Peter and Saint Paul kept their focus on their **faith** in Jesus and as such they were able to hold firmly to being Jesus' witness in the world. **Faith** is not a journey any of us makes alone. Others accompany us on the journey of faith but the one who is always with us, no matter what is God!

Pray this prayer of faith:

Footprints in the Sand

One night I dreamed I was walking along a beach with the Lord.

Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.

In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand. Sometimes there were two sets of footprints, other times there were one set of footprints.

This bothers me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life, when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow or defeat, I could see only one set of footprints. So I said to the Lord, You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always. But I have noticed that during the most trying parts of my life there have been only one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you most, have you not been there for me? The Lord replied, The times when you have seen only one set of footprints, is when I carried you.



**closing
tool**



**Santa Clara
University**

Character Education at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics

ethics programs for communities that learn, live, pray, or work together