

# Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



F A M I L I E S   R E C L A I M I N G   S U N D A Y

Read aloud: Acts 12:1-11  
2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18  
Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19

Something caught everyone's eye under the cross in the dining room. What was that? It looked like a scroll of rolled up paper in funny shapes. Now what were Mom and Dad up to this time?

Dad gathered the family to read the Scripture reading for this morning. It was the beautiful and telling passage when Jesus asks His disciples, *"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"* (Matthew 16:13b)

When Dad was finished, he asked his family a question.

"Now, who can tell me what solemn day of the Church it is today?" he asked, looking at their faces for a hint of an answer.

"It is the solemnity of Peter and Paul!" little Hillary determinedly stated, as she jumped up.

Dad was astonished. "Hillary, you are only 4 years old! How did you know that it was the solemnity of Peter and Paul?"

Now she looked shy. "Mom whispered it to me ..." she said reluctantly, as Mom sank sheepishly in her chair.

"I should have known!" Dad laughed, eyeing his embarrassed wife. "Well, it's true! Today, we honor two great saints of the Church!"

"But, wasn't the reading only about Peter?" Vincent asked.

"Right, Vincent," Dad told him. "Our reading today tells us of Peter being selected as the one to head up the building of the Church on earth."

"He's the first Pope, right?" Lucy asked her father.

"Exactly right, Lucy," Dad replied. "And now, Mom, if you will ..."

Mom walked over to the scrolled up wrap of paper under the cross and started unrolling it. It was colored paper shaped as keys, all stapled together. Mom began unwinding, and unwinding ... and unwinding. Soon, the unwinding took her down the stairs, past the family room, and into the laundry room. The kids followed excitedly!

"Wow, Mom! What is this?" they screamed as they chased after her. Then, they noticed

that each paper key had a name on it. There were 266 of them!

"These are all the names of the Popes throughout history!" Mom explained to them. "From the cross of Jesus, to the last key on our chain, we have an unbroken line of succession. Who can read for me this last name?"

Lucy volunteered. "It's Pope Francis!" Lucy shouted. "He is on this end of the chain, and Peter and Jesus are in the beginning part way up in the dining room!"

"That's right!" Dad said. "There has been an unbroken link of Popes."

"And Peter was called the 'rock,' or the foundation, on which Jesus would build His Church," Mom told them. "He was given the keys of the kingdom."

So, what exactly is with the keys, Mom?" Vincent asked her. "Why keys?"



"Good question, Vincent!" Mom answered. "When you have a key, you use it to open and close things, or to be custodian over something. That's the same with Peter! Jesus gave Peter the power to open and close or, spiritually speaking, to allow or forbid. Jesus also gave him the spiritual 'custodianship' over His people."

"Okay, so now what about Paul?" Vincent began wondering.

"Well, Vincent, we all know the story of how Paul was on the road to Damascus and heard the voice of Jesus asking him, "Why do you persecute me?" Paul was one of the most anti-Christian people around. But then, he became passionate for the Lord. Paul wrote most of the second readings we hear at Mass ... his letters to the Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Thessalonians, and other letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon."

"These letters are filled with testimony and teachings," Mom added.

"Didn't he travel a lot and even wind up in jail?" Mary Clare asked.

"Sure did!" Dad replied. "Saint Paul had three missionary trips all around the Mediterranean Sea."

"What makes this solemnity day so special is that both Peter and Paul were martyrs for the faith," Mom told them. "They died proclaiming the Word of God and testifying to the Resurrection of Jesus."

"So, to end our family Sabbath Scripture time before going to Mass, let's circle up and finish with this prayer out of the Divine Office of Readings," Dad instructed.

The Pauline's joined hands as Dad prayed,

*"God our Father, today You give us the joy of celebrating the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Through them, Your Church first received the faith. Keep us true to their teaching. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen."*