

# 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:     Isaiah 22:19-23  
                       Romans 11:33-36  
Gospel:            Matthew 16:13-20

“Okay, Family! Everyone into the living room!” Dad called out. “It’s time for our Sunday Gospel reading!”

Thundering footsteps soon filled the stairs from both levels of the house. Pretty soon seven new smiles and 14 bright eyes answered Dad’s call.

“What have you got for us?” Vincent asked quizzically, eyeing the safe in the middle of the room.

“Good question, Vincent!” Dad answered. “This strong box, or safe as I call it, is going to be the focus of our Gospel reading for this morning!”

“Huh?” they all shrugged. But somehow, they knew that Dad was going to use the family safe to teach another Church lesson. Dad was just being Dad!

Mr. Pauline read aloud the Gospel of Matthew to the family. The Gospel tells the marvelous event when Jesus Himself hands over the keys of the Church to Saint Peter and to all his successors.

After Mr. Pauline finished reading, he looked over to his family. Mary Clare seemed to be calculating something in her mind.

“Do you have the first question, Mary Clare?” Dad asked his oldest daughter.

“Okay,” she began, “I understand that this safe needs a key to open it, but what’s the connection beyond that, Dad?”

“Yeah,” Vincent added with a grin. “Did Jesus just give Peter some keys, or did He give him a box like that too?”



“Excellent thoughts!” Dad smiled. “Jesus did both!”

“Huh?” the family sighed again.

“You see, Kids,” Dad replied, “the safety box represents the Church that Jesus founded here on earth. The contents of the Church are all the truths of the kingdom of God. Jesus presented all these truths to Saint Peter for his safe-keeping.”

“I get it!” Vincent laughed. “Safe ... safe-keeping!”

“That’s right, Vincent!” Mom stated. “Saint Peter was given the keys to the kingdom and to the Catholic Church. Peter, and all future Popes, were charged with the mission of the Church’s perpetual safety!”

“They have the keys that unlock all truths from generation to generation,” Peter added, referring back to one of his college theology classes. “Because of this power, the Popes speak the truth over the whole Church according to the plan of Jesus Himself!”

Then Mom spoke again. “I’ve always been fascinated with the line from our reading today when Jesus says, ‘*You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.*’ (Matthew 16:18) That seems to say that the Church is indestructible!”

“That’s right, Therese,” her husband agreed. “And that brings me back to our safe here!”

“How’s that?” little Lucy asked.

“Well,” her dad answered, “over the centuries, the Catholic Church has come under fire from different groups who have different ideas. But the good news is that our safety box here is flame retardant! And the Church is *flame-retardant*, too! Fire storms may try to destroy it, but the contents of the safe won’t be destroyed!”

“Pretty cool, Dad!” Vincent laughed, obviously enjoying his hot/cold analogy. “So the truths that Peter acquired for safe-keeping will never *burn* out!”

“Yeah!” the pint-sized Hillary shouted, rubbing her small hand over the safe with the keys still in the latch. “Daddy, you call it a safe, but I call it something else!”

“What’s that, Sweetie?” Dad asked, scooping her up in his arms.

With a little smile she cooed, “You call it a safe, but I call it a *treasure chest*!”

“Absolutely right, Honey!” Dad declared. “Jesus gave Saint Peter and all the Popes who followed him a *treasure chest of truth*!”