

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: Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17
 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28
Gospel: **Matthew 25:31-46**

How great it was to have Peter home from Franciscan University of Steubenville for the Thanksgiving break. All the other Pauline kids looked up to their big brother. Dad and Mom were both really proud of Peter, too. He was working hard on his theology major and always came home with new insights for them.

"Peter," Dad began, "how about you leading us through our Scripture reading for this morning? I know you'll do a great job!"

"Sure, Dad," Peter answered. "I know this is the feast of Christ the King." Then with a smile he added, "I'm sure I can come up with *something!*"

It was Peter's voice gathering the family together a few minutes later. "Okay, Everyone," he said, "I'm going to help us understand our Gospel reading for today and a little bit about the feast of Christ the King. Is everyone ready?"

"You betcha!" Vincent blurted in his best Minnesotan phraseology.

"Okay, then," Peter went on as he grabbed the Father Tim paper doll from the mantel. "This is a very special feast day in the life of the Church. It is the feast of Christ the King!" Then, to Lucy, he said, "Lucy, can you please put the right color vestment on our Father Tim paper doll?"

Without hesitation, Lucy went over and grabbed the white chasuble from the Father Tim vestment "clothes pile." It took her only seconds to change the green one to the sparkling white one.

"Now," Peter continued, much like a polished professor, "who can tell me why we celebrate the feast of Christ the King and what this feast brings to a close?"

Hands shot up in the air. "I know," Mary Clare volunteered. "This feast day celebrates Jesus as our King, and it is the end of the liturgical year. Next week we start Advent!"

"Outstanding, Sis!" Peter said. "You know, every time we look at a crucifix, we can see that Jesus is a King. That is what the four letters I*N*R*I mean in Latin. Remember, Pilate asked Jesus, "Are You a King?" Jesus told him that He was a King and that His kingdom is a kingdom of love, truth, holiness, and peace."

"So, now that we all know something more about our feast day," Peter went on, "let's go through our Gospel reading."

Peter read aloud the passage from Matthew, Chapter 25. It is the reading of the last judgment with Jesus as just Judge, seated majestically on His throne, surrounded by angels. Jesus is separating the just from the unjust according to their merits.

Peter closed the book and began. "Jesus is separating the charitable ones from the uncharitable ones in this reading. Who can tell me why Jesus used the illustration of sheep and goats for this?"

Not everyone was ready to answer this question. Silence filled the room. "Because sheep are ... fluffier ... ?" little Hillary finally offered.

The family started to giggle until Peter spoke up. "Right, Hillary!"

"Huh?" they all wondered.

Peter now was chuckling. "It is because they are fluffier! Jesus used the illustration of sheep and goats because He knew that it was something His audience understood. You see, every night the ranchers of that time had to go out in the fields and separate the sheep and the goats. They could graze together during the day, but at night, unlike the *fluffier* sheep, the goats would need shelter from the cold! This concept was something everyone understood!"

"How interesting, Peter!" Dad commented.

"And also in our reading, it tells us the importance of our sins of omission," Peter continued. "Jesus makes it very plain that we all must care for one another. The 'sheep' cared for the needs of others and went on to everlasting life. The 'goats,' on the other hand, rejected the needs of others and went on to eternal damnation. Jesus tells us that we can't omit anyone, even the least of our brethren!"

"Excellent, Peter!" Mom and Dad said together. Then Dad added with a grin, "I never doubted that our tuition money was being wasted!"

Then, to the family, Dad proclaimed, "Let us now go forth to celebrate the feast of Christ the King! All hail, King Jesus!"

And the rest of the family enthusiastically responded, "AMEN!"



"The king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'"

(Matthew 25:40)