

Scripture Prayer For The Week

"Once...
when Jesus...
was praying alone..." (Luke 9:18)



Artwork Dorothy Woodward

Ordinary Time – Week 21 – Yr A

We Gather: In the prayer space, have the bible opened at the Gospel reading. Green is the appropriate liturgical colour. A rock might be placed on the table—a number of pebbles/rocks, enough for all, could be scattered on the cloth.

Leader: O God, before all the angels, I will bless you
All: I thank you for your faithfulness and love

We Listen: The Gospel. Matthew 16:13-20

Read the gospel passage reflectively. After a time of silent reflection, the line from scripture below could be repeated and the short commentary read.

"You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

The question and the response! Jesus is pointed in his demand. "But YOU, who do YOU say I am?" He is not asking the media, the CEO's of corporations, some civil servants, the local doctor, the checkout person at Woolies. Jesus is asking us. Peter, always game to be upfront, replies for all the disciples and for us. "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Jesus then responds to our declaration. Because, we have with Peter identified whom Jesus is for us, we too are named the rock, Peter/Cephas, the foundation stone of a living community, the church. It is too simplistic to leave this commissioning by Jesus to the Pope. Anyone, who says that Jesus is the Christ, enfleshed Word of the living God, is Church--steadfast, strong, visible, sheltering, secure, ongoing, viable, a grand design to declare the works of the living God to all. A living church with a living God. Have we the power, the energy, the faith to be that living expression of grace?

We Respond: **"..you are Peter and on this rock I will build my church."**

In silence, reflect on the questions below? You may wish to have a time of brief sharing. During the song or upon leaving, each person might take a small rock for holding in their heart.

- The Pope doesn't build the church: we do. With what? Why?
- A Living God is a God of fluidity, presence, pulsation, loving. Who is I AM for you?

Song: Church of God (Stotter/Daly-Gather Aust) or New People, New Life (H Beha-AOV1)

We Go Forth:

God you are alive, and are God of the living. There is no past, no diminishment, no loss, no death for us, because you are always and fully present. If, as Jesus knew, we are to pass from this living to another life, we do not fear. Rather, we take this time live gladly in your hope, proclaiming to a world of worry, the sureness of your salvation. Breathe your Spirit into us each day that we may be faithful. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Leader: Your love, O God, is eternal **All:** Do not forsake the work of your hands