

St Peter and St Paul the Apostles



Matthew 16:13-19

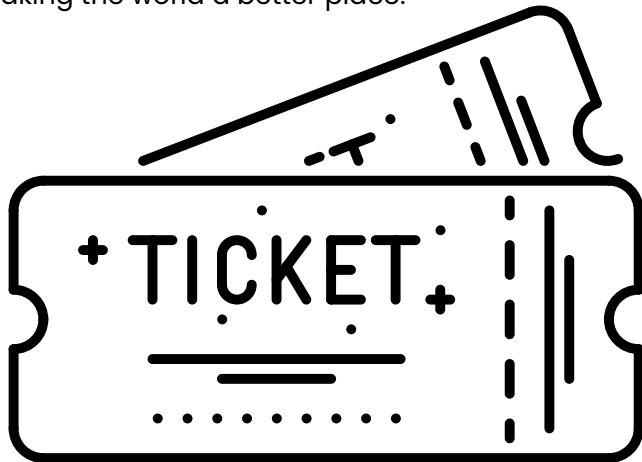
'You are Peter, and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.'

At that time: When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

Reflection

In this story, Jesus asks Peter, "Who do you say I am?" Peter answers, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus is so happy with Peter's answer that He tells him, "You are the rock, and I will build my Church on you." He gives Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, meaning Peter has an important job to do.

Just like Peter, we are called to follow Jesus and show love to others. As Vincentians, we help people in need, bringing God's love and kindness wherever we go. The keys to the kingdom remind us that we can bring hope to those who are sad or suffering. By helping others, we're opening the door to God's love and making the world a better place.



Activity

A while back, a mum of two lost her husband and was finding it tough to get by. The local SVP wanted to help her, but she was struggling with accepting charity and so turned down all their offers. So, the SVP group teamed up with the local butcher to hold a raffle for a year's supply of meat. The mum bought just one ticket, and guess what? She won! Everyone in the community thought it was a brilliant how 'by chance' the right person always won.

Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.

- How does the "Raffle" story show God's love in action?
- In what ways can we "open the door" to God's love for others, just as Peter held the keys to the kingdom?
- How did the SVP group embody the Vincentian value of respecting the dignity of those they help?
- What can we learn from the "Raffle" story about helping others in ways that respect their dignity and brings them joy?

Call to Action

Let's go out this week and be "keys to the kingdom" by bringing hope and love to someone in need. Whether it's a small gesture of kindness, a listening ear, or helping someone in a creative way like the SVP group in the "Raffle" story, we can make a real difference. Think about a person, a community, or situation that is in need of hope. What can you do to open that door of hope for them?