

Saint Peter's play

The life of St. Peter compiled from the four gospels by Rita Malkoun.

Saint Peter was the first Pope of the Catholic Church. He is the Patron Saint of fisherman, net makers and shipbuilders as well as our own beloved church. He was designated by Christ the "Rock" of the church. His feast day is June 29.

Peter was born at Bethsaida near the Sea of Galilee. He was a fisherman with his brother Andrew struggling to catch fish. Jesus noticed them and said:

Jesus: Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.

Peter: Master, we have been hard at it all night long and have caught nothing; but if you say so, we will lower the nets.

Upon doing this, they caught such a great number of fish that the nets were at the breaking point.

At the sight of this, Simon Peter fell at the knees of Jesus saying,

Peter: Depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man.

Jesus replied:

Jesus: Do not be afraid. From now on, you will be catching men.

Part 2:

Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits and to cure sickness and disease of every kind.

The name of the twelve apostles are these: first Simon, now known as Peter, and his brother Andrew, James and John the sons of Zebedee, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector, James, son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Jesus.

Part 3: Peter's Profession of Faith:

One day, after Jesus finished praying, he put this question to the disciples:

Jesus: Who do people say the son of man is?

The disciples answered:

Disciples: John the Baptizer and some say Elijah while others claim that you are one of the prophets.

Jesus asked them:

Jesus: But you – who do you, say I am?

Peter replied

Peter: You are the Messiah, the son of the living God.

Jesus replied:

Jesus: Blest are you, Simon son of Jonah! No mere man has revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. I for my part declare that you are Peter, and on this rock I build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. I will entrust you with the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you declare loosed on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Part 4

After this, Jesus continued to preach and to teach his disciples until His triumphant return to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

Jesus knowing that his hour was coming assembled his apostles on Holy Thursday in the upper room where he instituted the Holy Eucharist. During the last supper, Jesus said to the apostles,

Jesus: Tonight your faith in me will be shaken, for Scripture says "I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will scatter". But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

Peter replied:

Peter: Though all may have their faith in you shaken, mine will never be shaken.

Jesus replied:

Jesus: I give you my word, before the cock crows tonight, you will deny me three times.

Peter replied:

Peter: Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you.

After this, Jesus went out to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. He took Peter, James and John with him.

There Jesus was arrested after being identified by Judas with a kiss.

As Jesus was being led away by the soldiers, Peter and John followed him. Jesus went in to face Pilot, and John accompanied him. Peter remained in the courtyard and was warming himself by a charcoal fire. A servant girl approached Peter and asked:

Servant Girl: You too were with Jesus the Galilean.

Peter denied it in front of everyone.

Peter: I do not know what you are talking about!

When he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those nearby,

Girl: This man was with Jesus the Nazorean.

Again, Peter denied it with an oath:

Peter: I do not know the man!

A little while later, some bystanders came over to Peter and said:

Bystander: You are certainly one of his disciples. Even your accent gives you away.

At this, he began cursing and swore:

Peter: I do not even know the man!

Just then, a cock began to crow (Put the sound of the Rooster) and Peter remembered the words of Jesus. He went out and began to weep bitterly.

Part 5

After the resurrection Jesus appeared to the apostles in the following manner:

Peter said to the other apostles:

Peter: I am going fishing.

The other apostles replied:

Others: We will come with you.

They went off in the boat, and all through the night they caught nothing.

At day break, Jesus was standing on the shore and yelled out to the apostles,

Jesus: Children, have you caught anything to eat?

They replied:

Disciples: Not a thing.

Jesus told them:

Jesus: Cast your nets off the starboard side and you will find something.

They caught so many fish; they could not haul the nets in. Then the disciple who Jesus loved said to Peter:

John: It is the Lord!

Upon hearing this, Peter jumped into the water and swam to shore. The other disciples came in the boat and hauled the fish to shore. When they got to shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish and bread. Jesus invited them to have breakfast and Peter brought some of the fish they caught.

When they had eaten their meal, Jesus said to Peter:

Jesus: Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?

Peter replied:

Peter: Yes, Lord, you know I love you.

Jesus said

Jesus: Feed my Lambs.

A second time, Jesus said:

Jesus: Simon, son of John do you love me?

Peter again said:

Peter: Yes Lord, you know that I love you.

Jesus said:

Jesus: Tend my sheep.

A third time, Jesus asked him

Jesus: Simon, son of John, do you love me?

Peter was hurt because he was asked a third time Do you love me, so he said to Jesus:

Peter: Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.

Jesus replied

Jesus: Feed my sheep. I tell you solemnly, as a young man you fastened your belt and went about where you pleased; but when you are older you will stretch out your hands and another will tie you fast and carry you off against your will.

Jesus said this to indicate the sort of death by which Peter was to glorify God. When Jesus had finished speaking, he said to him

Jesus: Follow me.

Part 6

Following Pentecost the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to spread and preach the Gospel.

Peter baptized people and helped spread the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Part 7

Roman Emperor Nero captured Peter for his good deeds and Peter was sentenced to death by crucifixion. Saint Peter was crucified upside down because he did not consider himself worthy to die in the same manner as Jesus. Peter stretched out by his hands, he was dressed in prison garb, he was taken where no one wanted to go (a crucifixion), and was crucified.

From an arrogant, cocky, man of thunder, he became a humble, willing, obedient servant of the Lord even to death. He rejoiced in that day of his death, knowing that he would be reunited with his beloved Savior.

Part 8

Following his death Peter was buried on Vatican Hill in Rome. In 1950 bone shards were discovered and Pope John Paul VI announced they belong to Peter. Today art works depicting St. Peter show him as an old man holding a key and a book. His symbol also include an inverted cross, a boat and a rooster.

St. Peter the patriot Saint of our Church, Bless our parish and keep your church standing on a "Rock" for generations to come.

St. Peter, Pray for us.