

Zoom Meeting ID: **326 920 7504**

Call-in option: 1) Dial **646-568-7788** or **929-205-6099**, 2) Enter **326 920 7504 #** and 3) Press # for a participant's ID

Officiant Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you O Lord judge the peoples righteously and guide the nations on earth. *Psalm 67:4*

Confession of Sins

Officiant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All **We repent the wrongs we have done:**

We have wounded your love.

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness.

Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.

Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Officiant Eternal Spirit, living God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,
to the very secret of our hearts
and all that rises to trouble us.
Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth.
Amen.

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips, *+(you may cross your lips with a right thumb)*

Celebrants **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

All **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Officiant Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: Come let us adore him.

The Exalted Lord *Philippians 2:6-11*

All **Christ Jesus was in the form of God:**

yet he did not think to grasp at equality with God,

but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant:

and was born in our human likeness.

Being found in our human state he humbled himself:

and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted him:

and bestowed on him the Name above every name;

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow:

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord:

to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Officiant Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: Come let us adore him.

The Lesson

Reader A Lesson from *Matthew 16:13-20*

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, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Celebrants **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 124 *Nisi quia Dominus*

All

1 If the Lord had not been on our side, *
let Israel now say;

2 If the Lord had not been on our side, *
when enemies rose up against us;

3 Then would they have swallowed us up alive *
in their fierce anger toward us;

4 Then would the waters have overwhelmed us *
and the torrent gone over us;

5 Then would the raging waters *
have gone right over us.

6 Blessed be the Lord! *
he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.

7 We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; *
the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

8 Our help is in the Name of the Lord, *
the maker of heaven and earth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Shout to the Lord

Darlene Joyce Zschech

Reflection

Nancy Meyer

Today's gospel reading reminds me of when I met with Bishop Hughes in April. She asked to meet with me to discuss my formation and to see if I should proceed to the next step towards becoming a deacon. I was very anxious and nervous at the start of our meeting. I believed it was going to be like a job interview, thinking she would ask me questions to test my knowledge about Jesus, God, the Bible, what my ministry might be, etc. I believed that I would not be allowed to move forward with my formation if I did not provide articulate and intelligent answers. Her first question was: "What is your view of the divinity of Jesus?" My first reaction was "What? Huh? Couldn't I have been given a simpler question to answer?!" I paused for a while, thinking of what I truly believed. I gave her a very simple answer...that Jesus is the Son of God. And God brought Jesus into the world to save all people. I was relieved to learn that Peter gave Jesus a similar response.

Jesus and His disciples were in the region of Caesarea Philippi. Jesus has been ministering and performing miracles throughout the region. During Jesus ministry, people must have noticed that Jesus was different. However, the Pharisees and the Sadducees do not think much of Jesus. It is in the midst of the disdain of the Jewish leaders, Jesus asks the disciples "But who do you say I am?" Jesus is trying to have the disciples see who He is in all this.

Peter's inspired confession is that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Peter is confessing by his mouth that Jesus is the Messiah. And Jesus says it..." For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven". Jesus makes sure that Peter knows this was not his knowledge, but God's knowledge, planted within him. Then, Jesus blesses him. So, this passage begins with Jesus, not us, who initiates both blessing and knowledge. In the same way, the church begins and is built on God's initiation of blessing and knowledge...not ours. Peter is vocalizing what God has revealed to him. Only someone by the Holy Spirit can say this. Peter, this uneducated fisherman, who was to prove so shaky when Jesus was arrested, is rewarded with a new name, with a new role, leading people to God. Remember when, just before Jesus was arrested, Jesus told Peter that he would deny him three times. Peter said he wouldn't. But he did. Peter is not a safe place for the church to be built on. Peter's strength is not in his warm, sometime impulsive nature, but in the power of God.

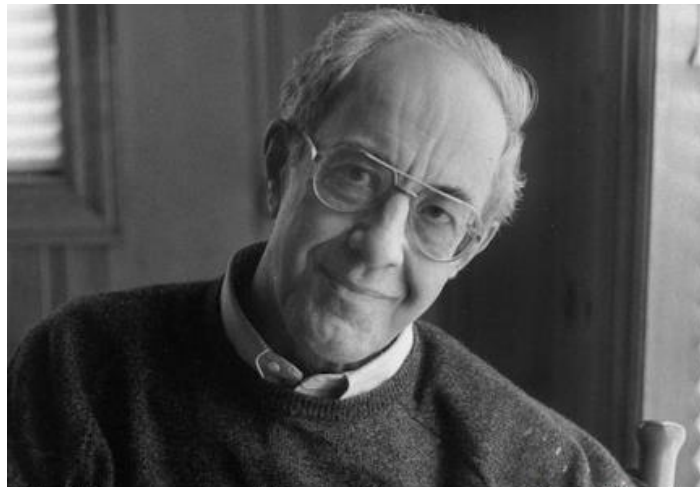
When Jesus tells Peter "On this rock I will build my church", Jesus is not referring to Peter. Jesus is referring to the truth that Jesus is the son of God. By the confession of the gospel, the church will storm the gates of hell. Jesus tells them that He and the church will even go to the gates of hell. Just like we pray in the Apostles' Creed: "He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead." Christ has gone to the ends of the earth. There is no place untouched by God.

Jesus said He would give Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven. How do we receive the keys of heaven? What is it that unlocks heaven on earth? Our keys to heaven are in the absolution of our sins. Our confession includes: "Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you, in thought word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone." After confession we are given absolution by our faithful priest.

The church does not rise and fall, based on one man. It was not built by Peter. The church is built on the truth that Jesus is the Son of the Living God. As expressed in hymn # 525:

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord.
She is His new creation by water and the word.
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride.
With his own blood her bought her
And for her life He died.

Amen.



"God, however, is neither a policeman nor a Santa Claus. God does not send us to heaven or hell depending on how often we obey or disobey. God is love and only love. In God there is no hatred, desire for revenge, or pleasure in seeing us punished. God wants to forgive, heal, restore, show us endless mercy, and see us come home. But just as the father of the prodigal son let his son make his own decision, God gives us the freedom to refuse God's love, even at the risk of destroying ourselves. Hell is not God's choice. It is ours." - Henri Nouwen

The Apostles' Creed

All I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Officiant The Lord be with you.
Celebrants **And also with you.**
Officiant Let us pray, singing

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Supplication *Pray responsively.*

- V. For the hungry and the overfed
- R. May we have enough.**
- V. For the mourners and the mockers
- R. May we laugh together.**
- V. For the victims and the oppressors
- R. May we share power wisely.**
- V. For the peacemakers and the warmongers
- R. May clear truth and stern love lead us to harmony.**
- V. For the silenced and the propagandists
- R. May we speak our own words in truth.**
- V. For the unemployed and the overworked
- R. May our impression on the earth be kindly and creative.**

- V. For the troubled and the sleek
- R. May we live together as wounded healers.**
- V. For the homeless and the cosseted
- R. May our homes be simple, warm and welcoming.**
- V. For the vibrant and the dying
- R. May we all die to live.**

The Collect for Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

All **Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

For Transformation

Celebrant We pray you, Jesus, take the old water, our busy conscientious lives, and turn them into gospel wine, that everyone may see your life and thirst; for the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**

For the Will of God

Celebrant Jesus our Lord, you have taught us that judgement begins at the house of God; save us from our self-satisfaction, rigidity, and corruption, so that we may stand ready to do your will; for the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**

For the Light of Christ

Celebrant We praise you, God, that the light of Christ shines in our darkness and is never overcome; show us the way we must go to eternal day; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Unity

Celebrant Creator God, you have made us not in one mold, but in many: so deepen our unity in Christ that we may rejoice in our diversity. Call us together, call us to eat and drink with you. Grant that by your body and your blood we may be drawn to each other and to you. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. **Amen.**

For Good Use of Leisure

Celebrant O God, you rested the seventh day and are still at work; in the course of this busy life give us times of refreshment and peace; and grant that we may so use our leisure to rebuild our bodies and renew our minds, that our spirits may be opened to the goodness of your creation. **Amen.**

For Peace

Celebrant O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts. **Amen.**

For Educational Institutions

Celebrant O Eternal God, bless all schools, colleges, and universities that they may be lively centers for sound learning, new discovery, and the pursuit of wisdom; grant that those who teach and those who learn may find you to be the source of all truth. **Amen.**

A General Thanksgiving

All **Creator God,**
We praise you for your love in coming to us,
unworthy though we are.
Give us grace to accept the Christ who comes in your name,
and the courage to be Christ for others.
We praise and thank you, Creator God,
for you have not left us alone.
Each year you come to us, Emmanuel,
God with us in a manger.
Each time you come to us
in the broken bread and the cup we share.
In time or out of time you will be revealed
and we shall see you face to face.

Give us courage, God our strength,
to see your Christ in all who suffer,
to be hands to the helpless,
food for the hungry,
and rescue for the oppressed.
Through Christ, Amen.

Officiant God's power, working in us,
Celebrants **does more than we imagine: Glory to God!**

Officiant Breathe in us, O Holy Spirit,
That our thoughts may all be holy.
Act in us, O Holy Spirit,
That our works, too, may be holy.
Draw our hearts, O Holy Spirit,
That we love but what is holy.
Strengthen us, O Holy Spirit,
To defend all that is holy.
Guard us, then, O Holy Spirit,
That we always may be holy.
Amen. (St Richard of Chichester)



Saint Agnes Church
65 Union Ave, Little Falls, NJ 07424
Serving people of Little Falls and surrounding communities since 1896,
Saint Agnes Church is a part of the Episcopal/Anglican branch
of the Jesus Movement in the Diocese of Newark, striving to be a contemplative community.