

Confession

Saturday 18th January - Confession of St Peter, Apostle



Pietro Perugino's Christ Giving the Keys to St. Peter, c. 1481-2 (Cappella Sistina, Vatican.)

Scripture: Matthew 16.13 - 19

Now 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.’

To reflect

To confess in the faith context means to declare one's religious faith. On this day the Church remembers St Peter's confession of faith to Jesus, Simon Peter's recognition of who Jesus really is: *'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'* (Matthew 16.16).

Confession in communal worship (in the context of Eucharist) is a word used in two places – Confession and Absolution and confessing our faith in the words of the Creed. The most often used Creed is the Nicene Creed, an early version of which was agreed at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD, so is 1700 years old this year. There are other Creeds – the Apostle's Creed is sometimes used, particularly in Evensong. The Nicene Creed was accepted by an Ecumenical Council and its words are used across the Western and Eastern Church and across Christian traditions, including the Reformed churches.

The Nicene Creed is a response to the Arian controversy, which considered Jesus to be a creation of God so separate and distinct from God – rejecting Trinitarian ideas.

On this day when the church remembers Peter's confession of faith you're invited to reflect what your confession of faith would be. How would you confess your faith in one sentence, one paragraph, or one page?

Collect for the Confession of St Peter

Almighty Father, who inspired Simon Peter,
first among the apostles, to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the living God:
Keep your Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith,
so that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord,
our Savior Jesus Christ;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

[From The Episcopal Church BCP 1979]

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOtQY3q78Rj2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587>)

- 'We Believe (Apostle's Creed)' this is a setting of the Apostle's Creed by Stuart Townend, Keith Getty, and Kristyn Getty (one version is by Stuart Townend).
- 'Creed' by Rich Mullins, this is a setting of the Nicene Creed.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.