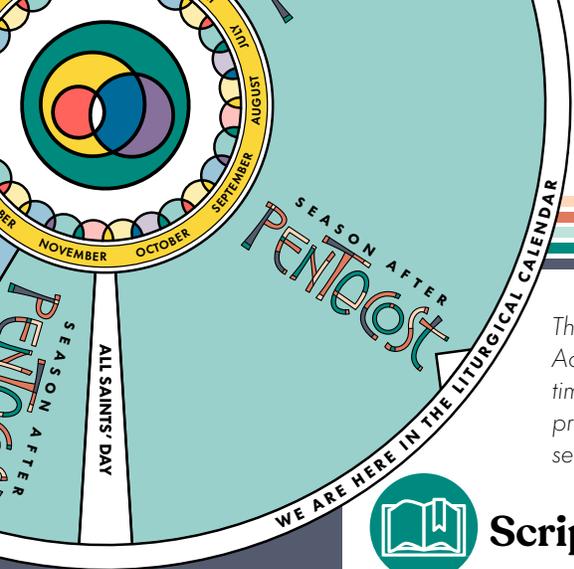


Mark 8:27-30

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday between September 11 and September 17



The Season after Pentecost is the period between the Day of Pentecost and the First Sunday of Advent. This season makes up half of the calendar year, and its liturgical color is green. It is a time to focus on the life and growth of the Church in the world, empowered by the gift of the presence of the Holy Spirit. 12th-century mystic Hildegard von Bingen captured the essence of this season when she wrote, "The Holy Spirit is the greening power of God. Our task is to blossom."



Scripture

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.



Questions

- Jesus asked two questions in this story. What questions did Jesus ask and to whom did he ask them?
- "Messiah" is the Hebrew name for someone God chooses to do something very special. What very special thing was Jesus doing?
- Identity is the way you are known. In the Mediterranean world of Jesus, identity was determined by what family one was born into, where someone lived, and how good they were at gaining more power. Today, we determine identity by the way you think about yourself, how you are viewed by the world, and characteristics that make you who you are. How do you identify yourself? What makes you **you**?
- Jesus changed or deviated from who people expected him to be when he left his family and village to travel and share the kingdom of God. What might that have been like for Jesus to change how he was known?
- As we grow and age, we can outgrow the way we have been known (like being a "little kid"), much like we outgrow shoes and clothes. How have you outgrown some ways you have been known? How have you grown into new ways you want to be known?

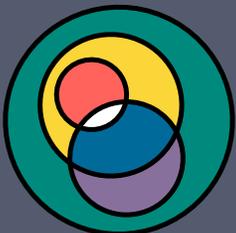
Look it Up!

When Jesus lived on earth, news spread through sending letters. There was a large Roman road system where people and mail traveled.

Explore a map of your country or state and calculate how long it would take to walk to various cities.



mini
REVOLUTIONS





Activity

Materials:

A whiteboard (or empty wall and post-its) Paper plates
Coloring utensils Bibles or hymnals (optional)

If doing this activity virtually, ask everyone to have a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Use a virtual whiteboard for the collaborative part.

Explain that in today's reading, Jesus talked about his identity with his disciples. Discuss how Jesus had many identities, such as "son of Mary" or "teacher," but his core identity was Messiah. Collaboratively, either on a board, a virtual whiteboard/screen, or using post-its on a wall, list as many identities of Jesus as you can. Use any resources you have to find more names to add, including Bibles (Bible storybooks too!), hymnals, songs, or the internet. After brainstorming, sort the names/identities from peripheral to central. Discuss which names are familiar to you, and which make you think differently about Jesus. Which names make you feel comforted? Safe? Joyful? Excited?

Then, discuss how we have many identities. List together some of our identities and roles we play. Include things such as: dog lover, music listener, sibling, athlete, cousin, and Christian. Discuss how some of our identities are more or less central to who we are. Give each participant a paper plate (or have them get their paper if virtual), and instruct them to draw two concentric circles to make the plate resemble a target with three layers. You may do this in advance to save time. In the outermost ring, have the participants list identities that are not central or permanent—for example, "likes pizza." In the middle ring, list more important characteristics. In the inner ring, list a few core identity words, including "child of God."

Alternate Activity

To simplify, play a game about personal identities.

Tell them Jesus has many names showing his identities. Explain some common ones, such as: Comforter, Prince of Peace, Good Shepherd, Light of the World, and Teacher. Discuss what other names they know for Jesus. Explain identities are things that make us who we are.

List some identities and interests and tell the participants to respond in a certain way if they share that identity. For example, tell them to pat their nose if they like pizza. Tell them to raise a hand if they have a sibling, or smile big if they have a dog. Some include: sibling, swimmer, cousin, likes cats/dogs, plays a sport. Let the participants contribute some identity words. End with "child of God," and tell them that is our #1 identity.



Micropractice

Our names and identities are important. We may have names like Kate or Devon, but we may also be known as "sibling," "parent," "student," "artist," or "swimmer." Whenever you write your name, take a moment to be thankful for one of your names.



Download a graphic to share with your community and on social media. You can download it here: illustrdm.in/minirevBAP16



Prayer

Dear Jesus, empower us to share your message of life and love through our words and actions. When we doubt your love and acceptance, help us remember your love. Amen.

JESUS
ASKED

HIS DISCIPLES

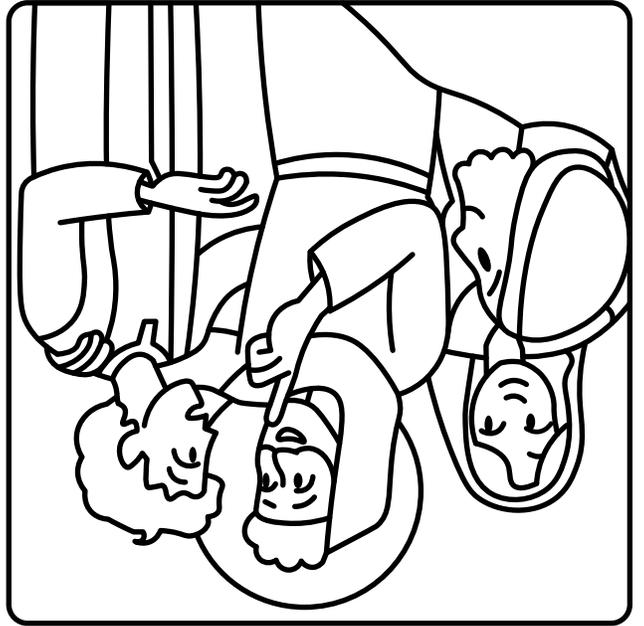
“WHO

DO PEOPLE SAY THAT

I AM?”

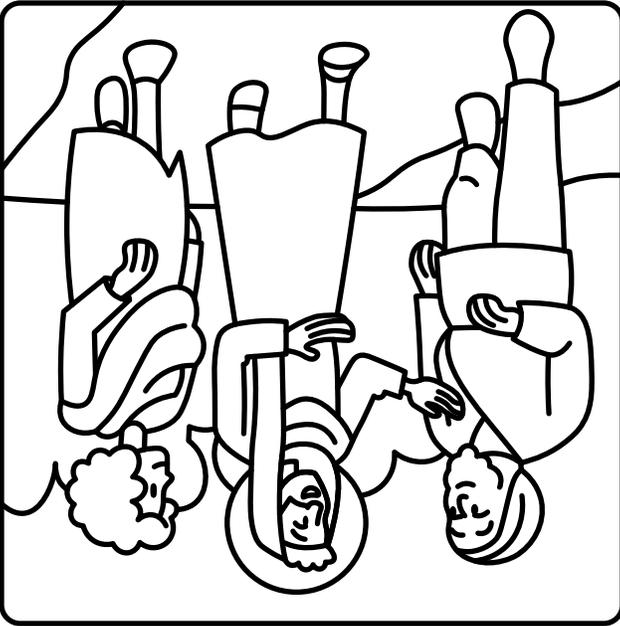
anyone.”

4. Jesus immediately said, “Shhh! You are right, I am the Messiah—I’ve come to save not only you, but the whole world! So please don’t tell



all these people think I am?”

walked to a new town, he asked them, “Who do you think I am?” One day, while Jesus and his friends followed Jesus and his friends everywhere they people were starting to notice. Large crowds, and 1. Jesus had been doing a lot of miracles,



3. Jesus paused and wondered, “But who do you think I am?” And Peter exclaimed, “You are the Messiah! The one we’ve been waiting for to save us since even before my great-great-grandparents were born.”



2. Jesus’ friends had three different answers: “John the Baptist! The one who told everyone to turn back to God.” “Elijah, the prophet who showed everyone how amazing God is.” “They aren’t sure, but say you have a special connection with God, like the prophets from a long time ago!”