

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.

LOOK

If someone on the street asked you who Jesus is, how would you answer?

What is the difference between knowing about God, and knowing God?

BOOK

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.

- 1) Why do you think Jesus asked the disciples these questions? Was he really curious? Or was he teaching them? Testing them?

- 2) The disciples had already seen Jesus walk on water, heal, and feed huge crowds. How could they not know Jesus is divine?
- 3) Jesus does not ask the disciples to explain his theology or endorse his teaching. He asks 'who do you say that I am?' What does he want to know?
- 4) 'Messiah' means liberator. From what were the disciples hoping to be liberated? How does Jesus liberate us now?

TOOK

Across the centuries, people have described Jesus as a wise teacher, a spiritual leader, a moral example, an enlightened being. How would you answer the question Jesus asks: "who do you say that I am?" Answer not from the Creed or catechism but personally.

Perhaps Jesus wants to know if his friends and followers really know him, really 'see' him. How does transformation happen when we really see Jesus and let him see – and love – us?

Jesus calls us not only to profess our faith but to live it out. Our world seems to be filled with violence and fear. Can we risk actively standing up against hatred? How do our responses to that violence and fear bear witness to who Jesus is for us?

Has your answer to this question been affected by the COVID pandemic and all the related uncertainty in our lives? Who is Jesus to you in these strange times? How is Jesus calling you to more deeply show your discipleship in the world?

Write your own answer to the question:
'who do you say that I am' and share next
week.