

VenTuRe

Who Speaks Up?

GARY SINISE

Gary Sinise is a musician, director, and actor who wants us to care for veterans. These are people who have served in the military. In 2011, he started the Gary Sinise Foundation. The organization builds “smart homes” and provides modified vehicles that meet the special needs of veterans and first-responders who have been hurt while serving others. Sinise says, “While we can never do enough to show gratitude to our nation’s defenders, we can always do a little more.” Sinise stands up for veterans.



POPE FRANCIS

Pope Francis is worried about Earth. He wrote a letter to the whole world about his worry. “Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which our children will never see, because they have been lost forever,” he wrote. The pope asks us to take care of Creation, to take public transportation or carpool, to plant trees, to turn off the lights and air conditioning, and to recycle. “What kind of world do we want to leave to children?” he asks. Pope Francis speaks up for earth.



QUEEN ESTHER

Queen Esther knew all of the Jews would be killed if the evil Haman had his way. Esther was forbidden to talk to the king unless he called for her, but she spoke up for her people.



SAMARITAN WOMAN

The Samaritan woman had a conversation with Jesus at a well. She was so impressed with him that she left her water jar behind and went to tell her whole village that Jesus was the Messiah. The Samaritan woman spoke up for Jesus.



SISTER NORMA PIMENTEL

Sister Norma Pimentel is a religious sister who stands up for people in need in Texas near the US border with Mexico. Sister Norma leads Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley. This organization helps people who may need a home or food, medical care or counseling, or are facing an emergency. Sister Norma is called “the Mother Teresa of South Texas.” She lives out her calling every day as a member of her order, the Missionaries of Jesus. Sister Norma wrote, “We witness daily how, working together, people of all faiths can focus on helping the person in front of us. Regardless of who we are and where we came from, we remain part of the human family.”



**Who do you
know who
speaks up for
children?
For refugees?
For Earth?**

**What do you
stand up for?**



Find JESUS in Your Neighbor



Kathleen Brissette used to stand outside the local grocery store asking shoppers for pennies—not for her, but for the poor. At least, that's what her family tells her. She doesn't remember much about it, because she was only four years old at the time.

Kathleen, who goes by Kat, does remember what she said when people told her she couldn't do that: "Why not?"

Kat had other questions: *Why can't I invite the poor over to our house for dinner? What's wrong with speaking up and asking people to help?*

It doesn't surprise her friends that Kat began speaking up for others at such a young age, because helping people runs in her family. Kat spent afternoons in her mother Reneé's office at a Catholic school in Providence, Rhode Island. Many students lived in homes that were unsafe, so they came to Reneé's office after school.

"My mom showed every kid that they were loved and valued," Kat says.

When Reneé joined the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP), one of the largest **lay** Catholic charitable organizations in

the world, Kat and her three brothers didn't think twice about helping—and speaking up to get others involved too.

They invited friends and classmates to come out after school to help fill backpacks for students in need and stock shelves in the food pantry.

Kat put her desire to serve others into even more action when she helped start a division of SSVP for young people in Rhode Island called NextGen. Members work on projects such as Necessities for Neighbors, which collects and packages basics like soap, shampoo, toothpaste, and deodorant, and adds notes of friendship and love.

Another project is MarchMassness, where members are challenged to invite friends to Sunday Mass during the month of March.

Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul are known as Vincentians. They are people of all ages who seek to grow in faith by serving others. They know

(Lay refers to people who are members of a religion but who are not part of the clergy like priests or deacons.)

that every time they help someone, they are meeting Jesus. Vincentians see Jesus in all people, especially the poor, sick, suffering, lonely, forgotten, imprisoned, and anyone who is in need.

It all began in 1833 with a French law student named Frédéric Ozanam. A friend challenged Frédéric to prove that the Catholic Church actually helped the poor. Frédéric responded by forming a small society of people who went around Paris doing good works for the poor, sick, and suffering. They chose Saint Vincent de Paul, who dedicated his life to the poor, as their spiritual patron.

Today, Blessed Frédéric is on the path toward becoming a saint. He was beatified in 1997. More than one million Vincentians around the world look to Blessed Frédéric's life and writings for guidance as they share Jesus' Gospel message of love for one's neighbor.

The heart of Vincentian service is a home visit.

Trained volunteers go out to meet people wherever they live—in apartments, homeless shelters, hospitals, and even



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Frédéric Ozanam founded the **Conference of Charity**, which is now known as the **Society of Saint Vincent de Paul**.

prisons. Vincentians respect and listen to people as friends and neighbors. They pray with them, offer comfort, bring food and supplies, and find out whatever additional resources people may need. Vincentians run thrift stores, food pantries, health care centers, homeless shelters, and many other charitable projects.

Youth branches like NextGen are growing and speaking up for others everywhere. In Boise, Idaho, for instance, young Vincentians divide into teams every Halloween night, knocking on doors and collecting as many food donations as they can in one hour.

“We may be young, but we can do a lot,” says Kat. She went to Salamanca, Spain, in 2018 to meet with other Vincentian youth leaders from around the world.

Like Blessed Frédéric, who studied law and worked to support his family while serving, Kat is now in her early twenties, works at a job, and recently started graduate school. Still, she serves others. It’s even a way for her to relax. “When I’m stressed about my job or anything else, I can go and sort donations or write notes to put in bags.”

When she’s asked if her employers and coworkers know about her volunteer work, Kat laughs. “People know me as that crazy girl who’s always helping people.”

People also know her as someone who gets to meet Jesus every day in the people she serves.



Kathleen (Kat) Brissette, right, joins other young Vincentians from around the world in Salamanca, Spain, for the 2018 International Youth Meeting of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



- 1** When did Kat begin speaking up for others?
- 2** How do Kat and other Vincentians meet Jesus?
- 3** Why do you think Kat finds serving others relaxing? What kind of service do you most enjoy?



Connecting GOSPEL and DOCTRINE

Believers Share the Good News

Jesus shocks the woman at Jacob’s Well by asking her for a drink. She could hardly believe that he, a Jewish person, would take a drink from a Samaritan.

In the Bible, wells are often places where courtships happen. Jesus makes friends with the Samaritan woman, not so she will be his wife, but so she will believe in him. This woman not only believes Jesus,

but becomes a missionary to the people of her town.

Every believer is called to share the Good News of Jesus. In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (28:19–20).

In Baptism, ordinary water gives us the life that Jesus tells the Samaritan woman about. All who believe in him share the gift of God’s own life, now and forever. God wants salvation for each of us.



- 1** How do you know that someone is being honest?
- 2** Who shares God’s truth with you?





SUNDAY GOSPEL

3rd Sunday of Lent

John 4:5-42

Jesus Talks to an Outsider

Narrator: On his way from Judea to Galilee, Jesus came to a town in Samaria named Sychar, not far from the piece of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's Well was there. Jesus, tired out by the trip, sat down by the well. It was about noon. His followers had gone into town to buy food. A Samaritan woman came to draw some water.

Jesus: Please give me a drink of water.

Woman: How can you, a Jew, ask me, a woman from Samaria, for a drink?

Narrator: Most Jews wanted nothing to do with Samaritans.

Jesus: If only you could see God's gift and who is asking you for a drink, you would ask him for a drink and he would give you living water.

Woman: Sir, you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where can you get living water? Our ancestor Jacob gave us this well; his family and flocks all drank from it. You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?

Jesus: Everyone who drinks this water will keep getting thirsty, but whoever drinks the water that I give will never be thirsty again. The water I give will become a spring within that wells up into eternal life.

Woman: Sir, give me this water so I will never be thirsty, and I won't have to come for water anymore.

Jesus: Go call your husband and come back.

Woman: I don't have a husband.

Jesus: You are right to say you don't have a husband. You have been married to five husbands, and the one you live with now is not really your husband. You have told me the truth.

Woman: I see that you are a prophet, sir. My ancestors worshiped God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should worship.

Jesus: Believe me, the time is coming when people will worship neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. Your people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the time is coming, and is already here, when real worshipers will worship God in spirit and truth. These are the worshipers God wants. God is Spirit, and those who worship God must worship in spirit and in truth.

Woman: I know the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ, who will tell us everything.

Jesus: I am he, the one speaking with you.

Narrator: At that moment, Jesus' followers returned. They were very surprised to find him talking with a woman, but none of them said to her, "What do you want?"

or asked him, "Why are you talking with her?" The woman left her water jar at the well and went off into the town.

Woman: Come and see the man who told me everything I have done. Do you think he could be the Messiah?

Narrator: Jesus' disciples urged him to eat.

Jesus: I am fed by doing the will of God and finishing his work. Do you not say, "In four months the harvest will be here?" I tell you, the fields are ripe, and soon the sower and reaper will rejoice. I am sending you to reap what you haven't worked for. You are sharing the fruits of their work.

Narrator: Many believed in Jesus on the strength of the woman's word. The Samaritans invited him to stay, so he did for two days. Many more believed in Jesus after listening to his teachings. They spoke to the woman.

Townsperson 1: We believe in Jesus now not because of your story, but because we ourselves have heard him. We know Jesus is the Savior of the world.



- 1 Why does Jesus talk to the Samaritan woman? How does he get her interested in knowing who he is?
- 2 What is the water Jesus is offering?
- 3 How is the Samaritan woman a disciple to her people?



The woman at the well is smart. She asks Jesus questions. She knows about religious customs and laws. Turn to page 30 in *What the Church Believes and Teaches* to read about the moral law. This is our shared understanding about what is right and wrong.

The Samaritan Woman Shares News of Jesus

Only John's Gospel tells the story of Jesus and the **Samaritan** woman. For more than forty years, Jesus' disciples and the early Christians shared Jesus' teachings by telling the stories aloud. As the people who witnessed Jesus' ministry aged and began to die, four writers collected his teachings and wrote down the Gospels.

The Gospel of John was the last one written. This Gospel comes from a Christian community that lived as followers of Jesus for almost seventy years, from A.D. 33 when Jesus died and rose, until A.D. 100.

The writer of John's Gospel doesn't tell the same stories about Jesus as Mark, Matthew, and Luke do in their Gospels. This Gospel tells new stories that are important to the Christian community that traces its beginnings to the Apostle John.



Catholic FAITH WORD

SAMARITANS The Samaritans live in the central area of Israel between Galilee in the north and Judea in the south. In Jesus' time, other Jewish people regarded them as heretics because they didn't worship at the Temple in Jerusalem.

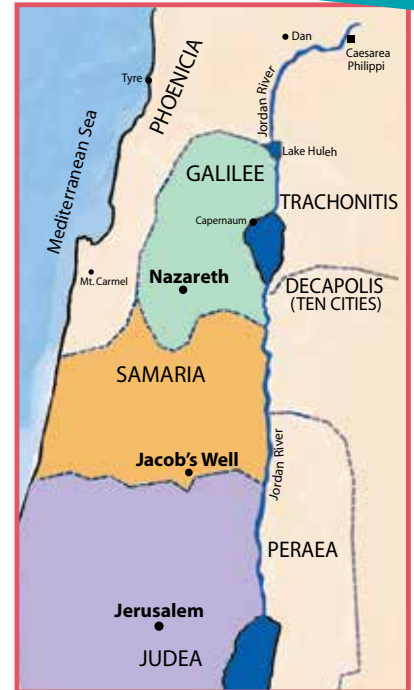
Samaria is a region in the middle of Israel. Samaritans have the same early history as Jewish people. The well where Jesus and the woman meet is named for Jacob, who is an ancestor that Jewish people and Samaritans have in common. Jacob's story is in the Old Testament Book of Genesis.

When Jesus meets the Samaritan woman, Jews and Samaritans have been fighting for 700 years. The trouble began when Assyria defeated the Jewish people who lived in Samaria. The Assyrians brought in settlers who did not worship Israel's God.

Some Samaritans married these settlers who worshiped their own gods. These marriages made them heretics in the eyes of other Jewish people. A heretic does not believe in or follow the rules and practices of a religion.

In Jesus' time, people needed to collect water often. People met and visited at wells like we do at restaurants and malls today. But even at a well, a Jewish man would not talk to a Samaritan woman. Jewish people and Samaritans weren't on speaking terms.

In the Sunday Gospel, Jesus and his followers are going to Galilee when they stop



at Jacob's Well. Jesus' disciples go into the nearby village to buy food. Jesus hangs out at the well and invites the Samaritan woman to talk with him.

Review what Jesus and the Samaritan woman say to each other on page 4.

At the end of their conversation, Jesus says to the woman, "I am the Messiah." When Jesus starts a sentence with "I am," he is echoing the name that God told Moses, "I am who I am" (Exodus 3:14). The woman leaves her water jar—just as Peter, Andrew, James, and John left their fishing boats—and goes to tell her neighbors she has met the Messiah. Her word brings the people of the town to Jesus so they can hear him themselves.

The Samaritan woman invites the townspeople to come and see Jesus.

She is the apostle or **missionary** to these Samaritans. Many of them take her word that Jesus is the Messiah.

We learn the Good News of Jesus in many ways. From the day of our Baptism, people, things, and places support our faith in God.

Start your Scavenger Hunt for Believers in class. Then take your *Venture* lesson home, and ask family members to help you complete it.



When you complete three items on the list, color in all of the 1 spaces in the stained-glass window. When you complete three more, color all of the 2 spaces; continue in the same way every three items. Complete the window to discover the hidden picture.

Bring your scavenger hunt to class next week for the fun of comparing what you and your classmates found out about who and what calls you to be a Christian.

Name of the priest or deacon who baptized me:

Name of a favorite saint of my family and why we pray to this person:

Date on the cornerstone on my parish church:

Someone who makes me proud to be a Catholic:

A favorite prayer of one of my grandparents or other relative:

Number of young people in our school or in our parish school of religion:

A person who drives more than ten miles to church:

Signature of a person who is proud to be a Christian and says so:

Street, school, hospital, or other building in our town named after a saint or another Christian:

Mountain, river, or lake in our state named after a saint or another Christian:

Signature of a person who can pray the Apostles' Creed by heart:

Signature of a lector or Eucharistic minister in my parish:

Year my parish was founded:

Hunt for Believers

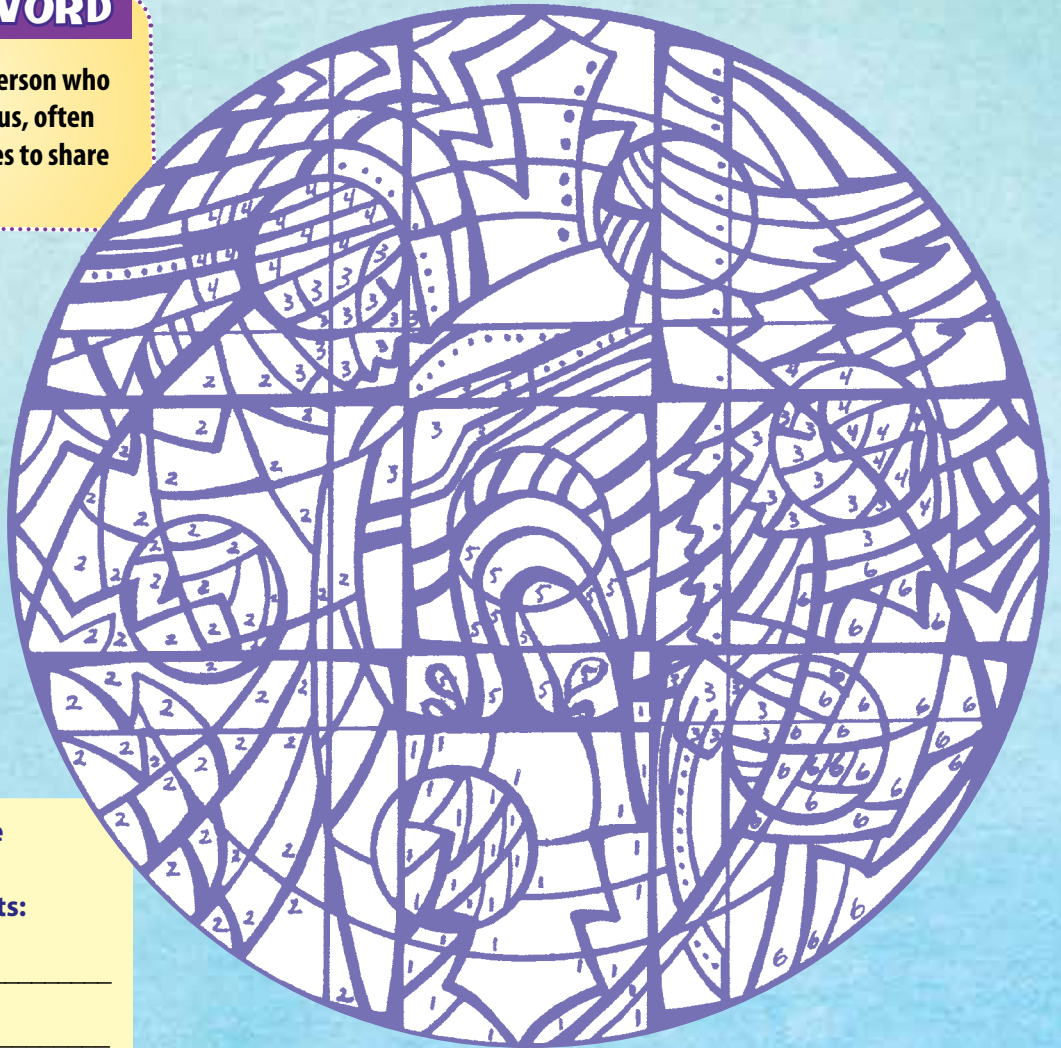


Catholic FAITH WORD

MISSIONARY A person who teaches others about Jesus, often traveling to distant places to share the Gospel message.

Color Code

1. Yellow or Gold
2. Red
3. Brown
4. Black
5. Blue
6. Choice



A person who can write a keyword for each of the Ten Commandments:

Name _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Someone who contributes to a local food pantry:

Someone who helps peacefully settle arguments in my family:

The feast day of my parish patron or my patron saint:

My favorite church song:

My religion teacher's signature:

Saint Patrick

Bishop • Missionary • Patron Saint of Ireland

Roman Britain, early 400s. At age sixteen, Patrick was kidnapped from his father's country estate by pirates.

A fine, strapping lad! We'll sell him as a slave in Ireland.

And a good price he'll bring.

For six years, Patrick worked as a shepherd slave.

Somehow I must escape. I miss my family and my home.

I heard you playing your pipe, Patrick. You sound like one of us.

Patrick finally escaped by begging for passage on a ship. He studied for the priesthood in Gaul (now France) and later became a bishop. But he could not forget the Irish.

I dreamed of Ireland again last night. The people seemed to be calling me.

Patrick returned to Ireland as that country's first missionary.

Druids and magicians, put your faith in Jesus Christ.

Patrick is destroying our old religion.

Come study at our monastery. Patrick says that we need more of our own teachers.

Patrick will baptize me at Easter, along with many others from the village.

For more than thirty years, Patrick traveled and taught in Ireland, especially in the west and north where no one had preached the Gospel before. His followers converted the Scottish people to Christianity, established schools in Britain, and sailed to France to begin new monasteries.

ARMAGH:
SITE OF
PATRICK'S
CHURCH

BELFAST

IRELAND

DUBLIN

SCOTLAND

BRITAIN

Fifteen centuries later, Patrick's work still lives in the strong faith of the Irish people. His feast day, March 17, is a holy day in Ireland and is celebrated in many countries throughout the world.

With My Family and Friends

Scan here for parent resources.



Pray

Thank you, Jesus, for sharing your gifts. Help me to share these gifts with others. Amen.



Think

How do you share the Good News of Jesus with others?



Act

Search for all of the places where holy water is available in your church. Holy water is sometimes called "living water" because the Holy Spirit lives in it. Bless yourself with holy water before leaving the church.

For free at-home activities, visit



gospelweeklies.com/seasonal