

Prayerful preparation for The Apostles Peter & Paul

Matthew 16:13-19 *You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church.*

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.'

'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?'

Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said 'the Son of the living God.'

Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.

'So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it.

'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.'

Reflection

'But you,' Jesus said 'who do you say I am?'

Jesus directly challenges his disciples with these simple words in a question, which when answered, is deeply revealing of our faith.

So... who do you think Jesus is?

Peter gets it right, spot on. 'You are the Christ,' he said 'the Son of the living God.'

Jesus replied, 'Simon, son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven'.

Peter's answer impels Jesus to choose Peter as the man on whom he would build the Church.

Peter's answer defined the rest of his life for him. He accepted the responsibility Jesus laid upon him.

And now fast forward to June 2020.

If Jesus were to ask you the same question "Who do you say I am?" Would you, like the disciples, find it hard to answer?

How would you reply?

Would your reply impact your life? Is your answer impacting your life without you being aware of it?

Who is Jesus/God? Who is God for you?

What is your image of God? Is it a fearful or a loving image?

Prayer suggestions

Lectio Divina

Read the Scripture. Pray for the faith of Peter. Anything struck you about your life today and how you live it?

Ignation

Imagine the Scripture scene. Watch, listen to what happens. Become one of the people there. What feelings or memories arise in you? What difference to your life, your family your parish, does it make for you if you are spoken to by Jesus?

Franciscan

Think about creating a space in your home where you can be quiet. Gather together objects that have a special meaning for you. How do you want to arrange them? Change things until you are happy your space helps you feel restful. How often will you use this space? Will it help you listen to God calling you?

Thomistic

What is being given to Peter in the Scripture passage? Why is he chosen? Who will this affect? Where will it lead? When will Peter live out this call? What helps do I need to live out my call?

Sources. *Prayer and Temperament*, C.P. Michael & M.C. Norrissey, 1984. *Explore yourself through Art*, V. Barber, 2002.