



Our Parish

COMMUNITY

August 27, 2017

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Is 22:19–23

Rom 11:33–36

Mt 16:13–20

Piece: *The Throne of Saint Peter*, 1647–53

Artist: Gian Lorenzo Bernini

Location: St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City



Upon This Rock

Saint Peter's Basilica is built on the tomb of Peter, which literally serves as the rock on which the church is built. Peter states his faith, acknowledging Jesus as Messiah and Son of God, in the name of the other apostles. In reply, the Lord reveals his intended mission for Peter: to become the visible foundation of the Church.

This account also tells us that Peter's act of faith did not come through "flesh and blood," that is, through his human abilities, but through a particular revelation from God. By contrast, right afterward, as Jesus foretells his passion, death, and resurrection, Peter "began to rebuke him," denying that this would ever happen (Matthew 16:22). Jesus scolds him in return.

Peter shows his human weakness and what he is: a stone along the path on which men can stumble. In this scene, the drama of each soul and the history of the papacy and Church itself are anticipated. There is the joint presence of divine assistance by which the papacy constitutes the Church's foundation throughout history, and human weakness, which is also evident through the centuries and can be transformed only through abandonment to God's action.

In today's Gospel, Jesus clearly promises the forces of evil will not prevail. Prophets such as Jeremiah (1:18–19) were threatened only by human enemies, whereas Peter will have to be defended from a supernatural evil. Jeremiah receives a promise that affects him as a person and his prophetic ministry; Peter receives assurances concerning the future of the Church and the new community founded by Christ "upon this rock."

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

For Reflection Peter's mission is to confirm the faith of the other apostles. How willing are you to let the pope, Peter's successor, confirm your faith today? What are you doing to ensure your faith is built on a solid foundation?

"You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

Calendar

Monday

August 28

*St. Augustine,
Bishop and Doctor
of the Church*

1 Thes 1:1–5, 8b–10

Mt 23:13–22

Tuesday

August 29

*Passion of St. John
the Baptist*

1 Thes 2:1–8

Mk 6:17–29

Wednesday

August 30

Weekday

1 Thes 2:9–13

Mt 23:27–32

Thursday

August 31

Weekday

1 Thes 3:7–13

Mt 24:42–51

Friday

September 1

Weekday

1 Thes 4:1–8

Mt 25:1–13

Saturday

September 2

Weekday

1 Thes 4:9–11

Mt 25:14–30

Sunday

September 3

*Twenty-Second Sunday
in Ordinary Time*

Jer 20:7–9

Rom 12:1–2

Mt 16:21–27

Dear Padre,

I am a huge fan of Pope Francis. However, I know some people feel his messages to be against Church teachings. How can the people criticize the pope when we believe our Lord has put Pope Francis in the chair of St. Peter?

Spoiler alert: I'm a big fan of Pope Francis, too! I believe he's doing much to bring people back to the Church. If you look closely at the pope's message, I think you'll find the difference is not one of content but of emphasis. Pope Francis has not changed any Church teaching, but he is shining the spotlight on some areas in particular.



GIULIO NAPOLITANO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Pope Francis has put a great deal of emphasis on mercy, simplicity, the poor, and immigrants. These things have always been part of the Catholic Church. Our pope has decided that today these things need to be brought to the forefront.

As Catholics, we are free to say things like, "I wish the pope would put more emphasis on doctrine," or, "I wish he would talk more about what we need to do to be saved." There's even nothing wrong in saying, "I liked Pope Benedict better." But, because Francis is in Peter's chair, we must always first ask ourselves, "What is Jesus saying to me through the messages of Pope Francis?"

Fr. Patrick Keyes, CSsR
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



A Word From Pope Francis

"Peter knocks at the door. Behold! There is joy, there is fear.... 'Do we open, do we not?'...Fear paralyzes us, it always paralyzes us; it makes us close in on ourselves, closed to God's surprises. This detail speaks to us of a constant temptation for the Church, that of closing in on herself in the face of danger. But we also see the small openings through which God can work....Prayer enables grace to open a way out from closure to openness, from fear to courage, from sadness to joy....from division to unity."

—Mass and blessing of the sacred pallium for new archbishops,
Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul, June 29, 2016