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August 23, 2020 | Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 22:19-23 | Rom 11:33-36 | Mt 16:13-20

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Imagine being in Peter's shoes. We have listened to the Sermon on the Mount and been comforted and sometimes challenged by Jesus' teachings. We have watched him heal the sick and forgive sinners. We've faltered at times and seen Jesus face down skeptics. Then Jesus turns to us and asks: "Who do you say that I am?" How would we answer? Peter, not yet knowing that Jesus will suffer, die, and rise, proclaims: "You are Christ, the Son of the Living God." For Peter, this would be the beginning; he would devote his life to building up the Church. Centuries later, we proclaim his words in the Nicene Creed that Jesus is the Son of God. As with Peter, this is just our starting point. Knowing who Jesus is compels us to devote our lives to building up the kingdom of God on earth.

PRAY Jesus, you called and chose Peter, with his strengths and his weaknesses, to be the rock on which your Church was built. You call and choose me, with my unique strengths and weaknesses, to build your kingdom in the world I live in today. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and help me to speak boldly as Peter did, proclaiming your Good News to the world. Amen.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We know more about learning styles now, but most of us can remember two kinds of students: The front-row students who shot up their hand before a teacher finished asking the question ("Call on me, please!"), and the back-row kids who avoided eye contact, wishing they were invisible. Peter seems to have been one of those front-row students. When Jesus asked, "Who do you say that I am?" he didn't hesitate. If Jesus asked that question today, would we hold back, check Google, or speak boldly as Peter did? As Jesus goes on to say, God put those words in Peter's heart. God speaks to us, too, through the Scriptures, silent prayer, and the examples of saintly men and women who have touched our lives. We don't have to worry about being "called on," but we are all called to answer by sharing Jesus' saving message with those around us. Like Peter, none of us is perfect; we don't have to be. If we open our hearts and minds to Jesus and his words, we, too, can build up the Church through service, welcome, and generosity.