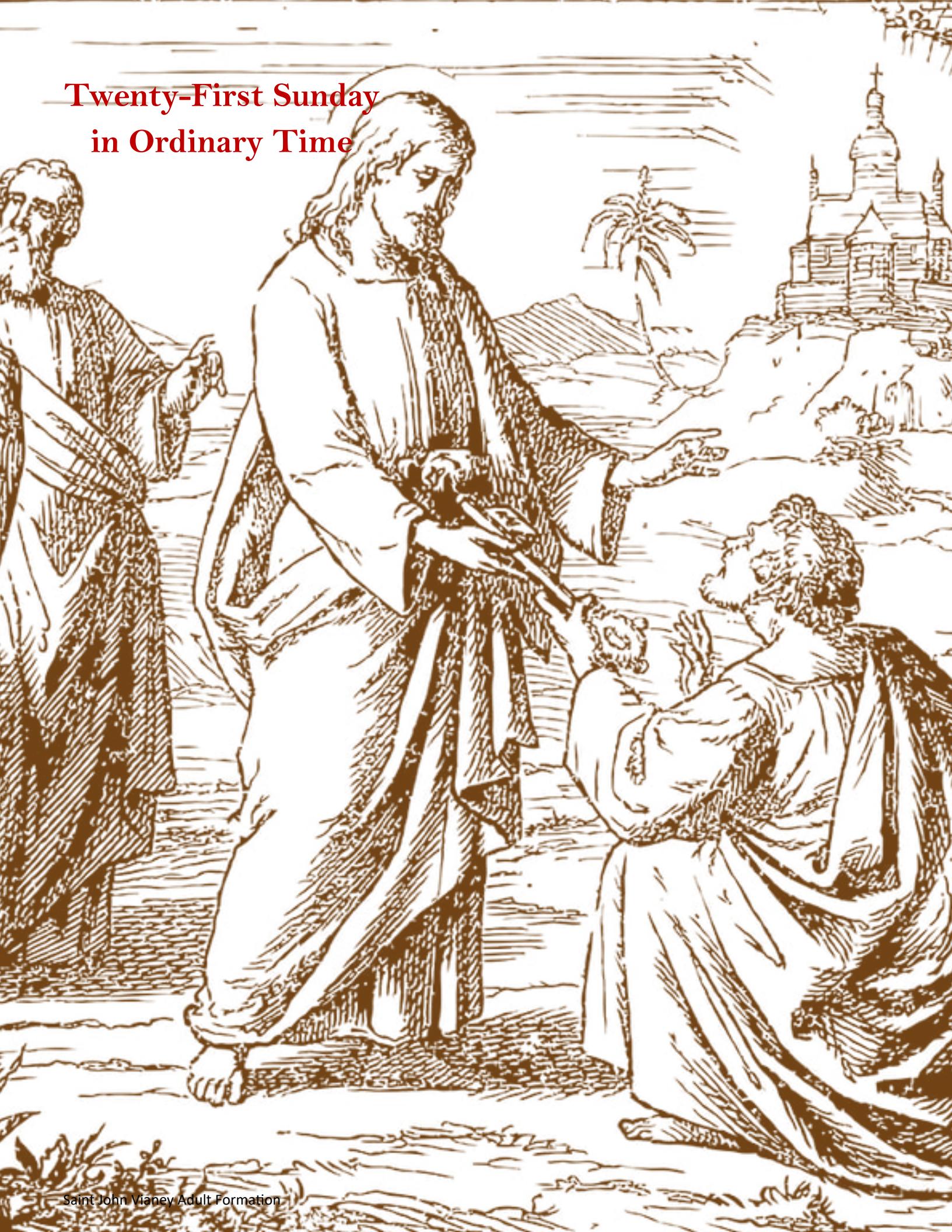


## Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time



## **Order for Liturgy of the Word**

### **Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A**

#### **Entrance Antiphon: Leader**

Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me; save the servant who trusts in you, my God. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.

**Cf. Ps 86 (85): 1 –3**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Sisters and Brothers, God desires to converse with us through his Word. Let us bless him for his goodness. Blessed be God forever. **Response:** Blessed be God forever.

#### **Introduction: Leader**

We gather today to celebrate the Lord's Day. One with our sisters and brothers and the entire Church, we will listen to God's Word and join in prayer. As we prepare to hear of God's love poured out through Christ, let us acknowledge that He is the source of pardon and strength:

#### **All: *The Confiteor***

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

**Leader:** In acknowledgement and thanksgiving for God's mercy we offer our praise:

#### **All: *The Gloria***

Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace to men of good will. We praise You. We bless You. We adore you. We glorify You. We give You thanks for Your great glory. Lord God, heavenly King, O God the almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only-begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the

Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**Leader:** Let us pray:

O God, who cause the minds of the faithful to unite in a single purpose, grant your people to love what you command and to desire what you promise, that amid the uncertainties of this world, our hearts may be fixed on that place where true gladness is found. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

**First reading:** A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:

**22:19-23**

Thus says the LORD to Shebna, master of the palace: “I will thrust you from your office and pull you down from your station. On that day I will summon my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah; I will clothe him with your robe, and gird him with your sash, and give over to him your authority. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. I will place the key of the House of David on Eliakim’s shoulder; when he opens, no one shall shut when he shuts, no one shall open. I will fix him like a peg in a sure spot, to be a place of honor for his family.”

The word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God.

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 138: 1-2, 2-3, 6, 8**

**R. (8bc) Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.**

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with all my heart, for you have heard the words of my mouth; in the presence of the angels I will sing your praise; I will worship at your holy temple. **R. Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.**

I will give thanks to your name, because of your kindness and your truth: When I called, you answered me; you built up strength within me.

**R. Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.**

The LORD is exalted, yet the lowly he sees, and the proud he knows from afar. Your kindness, O LORD, endures forever; forsake not the work of your hands.

**R. Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.**

## Second reading:

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

11: 33-36

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways! *For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has been his counselor? Or who has given the Lord anything that he may be repaid?*

For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

The word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God

## Gospel acclamation:

**R.** Alleluia, alleluia.

You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.

Mt 16: 18

**R.** Alleluia, alleluia.

## Gospel proclamation:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew:

16:13-20

Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi and he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

The Gospel of the Lord. **R.** Praise to you, lord Jesus Christ.

As often happens when hearing the verses in the First Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures, we need to read the full chapter from which the verses are taken. This is quite true in order to catch the full flavor of today's First Reading. Shebna has had a rather lofty image of himself as well as a lofty place in the palace. He has begun to immortalize himself by beginning to construct his own tomb in a lofty place on the mountain. God has told him he will be wadded up like a ball and thrown out of the country with all his finery. He will die there in disgrace.

In this oracle God not only takes away Shebna's symbols of domination, but calls somebody else from a different family to bless the people. Eliakim will be a "father" to the people of Jerusalem and all the people will be his family under God. Instead of warring with power and haughty presumption based on family of origin, Eliakim will be steadfast and use his authority for peace.

In the Gospel, Jesus travels with his disciples to a city whose name celebrates Roman power and its domination of Israel. Here he poses a big question for the purpose of eliciting a bigger answer. For the first time in their relationship Peter, speaking for the other disciples, declares publicly the name which is opposed to the power of Roman worldly forces, and all other ones. Jesus is the Christ and the son of God.

Peter, who comes from his earthly family, *bar Jonah*, or "son of Jonah," is given a new name and as with Eliakim, he is given a title and a power. Peter, the name in Greek and Aramaic means "rock," is to be the foundation of the group called together, or more commonly known as the Church.

As we heard last July 19th in the First Reading for the Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, from the Book of Wisdom, "your mastery over all things makes you lenient to all." ... "But though you are master of might, you judge with clemency." The "keys" which Peter receives are the instruments of governing as Jesus received that power from his Father. Those keys in the hands of Jesus opened ears, eyes, and hearts. Those "keys" in the hands of Jesus shut out darkness, evil, and death from dominating God's creation and God's family.

As followers of Jesus, with him, through him, and in him, we are to exercise his power to open ears, eyes, and hearts and to shut out the noises of false teachings, false posturing, and false temptations to identity.

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**Having listened to God's word in these passages from Holy Scripture we now profess our faith in all that He has revealed:**

**All—Profession of Faith:**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.  
  
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
and by the Holy Spirit  
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.  
  
For our sake he was crucified  
under Pontius Pilate, he suffered  
death and was buried, and rose

again on the third day in accordance  
with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated  
at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the  
Son,

Who with the Father and the Son is  
adored and glorified, who has spoken  
through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism  
for the forgiveness of sins and I look  
forward to the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

## Prayers of the Faithful—Leader



**Introduction:** Lord, we believe your love is eternal and you “do not forsake the work of your hands”. With humble confidence then, we offer these prayers:

### Intentions:

For leaders in religious, secular, and government organizations: that they will recognize God as the source of all authority and use their positions for promoting justice and the common good; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church: that we will boldly profess Jesus as Lord and help others to come to know and follow him; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For Pope Francis, successor to St. Peter: that the Holy Spirit will guide him in proclaiming the Good News, promoting unity in the Church, and inspiring us to greater love and service; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For those beginning a new academic year: that students and teachers will grow in wisdom, patience, and persevere with unshakable faith in God; we pray to the Lord.

**Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are discerning God’s call in their life: that they will recognize the promptings of the Holy Spirit and be open to how they can best love and serve in their life commitments; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who are sick: that inspired and buoyed by the Psalmist they will pray: “I will give thanks to your name, because of your kindness and your truth: when I called, you answered me; you built up strength within me”; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died: that they, together with the angels in the presence of our lord, will sing his praises in the heavenly temple; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Prayer:** Blessed are you Lord, God of all creation. Through our human labor you invite us to advance the work of your creating hand; may we do so in faith and with joy. We offer this and all our prayers through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

## **The Lord's Prayer:**

**Leader:** Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**Leader:** With the love of Christ, let us offer one another a sign of peace.

## **Leader: Communion Antiphon:**

The earth is replete with the fruits of your work, O Lord; you bring forth bread from the earth and wine to cheer the heart.

Cf. Ps 104 (103): 13-15

## **All—Spiritual Communion:**

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

## **Leader: Prayer After Spiritual Communion**

Complete within us, O Lord, we pray, that healing work of your mercy and graciously perfect and sustain us, so that in all things we may please you. Through Christ our Lord. **Response:** Amen.

## **Blessing—making the sign of the cross:**

**Leader:** May the Lord bless us, protect us, and bring us to everlasting life.

**Response:** Amen.

**Leader:** Let us go in peace.

**Response:** Thanks be to God.

## *Closing Thoughts*

George Bernard Shaw, said, “The church was founded with a pun.” He was right. The intent of that remark may have been dismissive but, as is usual with biblical puns, the wordplay of Jesus is far from trivial. In fact, the play on Simon’s nickname is just one of several rich biblical allusions at work in this key passage.

Peter was not a personal name in first-century Palestine. *Petros*, the masculine form of the Greek word *petra* (“rock”—reflected in our English words “petrify” and “petroleum,” oil from rock rather than olives), translates the Aramaic *kepha* (“rock”). *Kepha*, or Peter, is a special name that Jesus gives Simon bar Jonah to signify his appointed mission.

Why Rock? We might call someone Rocky today to refer to his physical toughness. In Simon’s case the name more likely has biblical roots. First, there is the precedent of Isaiah 51:1-2, where the founding ancestors of the people of Israel, Abraham and Sarah, are called, respectively, “the rock from which you were hewn” and “the pit from which you were quarried.” Then there is the fact that the expected messiah was to be the builder of a new temple, just as in 2 Samuel 7 the son of David was to build a temple; and even though the first son of David, Solomon, built the first temple, the end-time Messiah was also expected to build the temple of the messianic age. When Jesus speaks of “building” his Church on the rock of Simon, he is of course speaking of a community, but the image is that of a physical structure, a temple. And temple does indeed become a favorite image of the early Church to describe itself (as in 1 Cor 3:10-16, 1 Pet 2:2-8, and Eph 2:19-22).

But if the Church can be pictured as temple, it is also a household. That image comes into play when Jesus speaks of giving Peter the keys to the kingdom. Isaiah 22, the First Reading this Sunday, provides the background. King Hezekiah’s steward has abused his office and the prophet mediates the divine command that the king is to dismiss him and bestow the key of the house of David upon Eliakim. With the language of “keys to the kingdom,” Jesus appoints Peter as steward of the Church, now imaged as household—indeed, the spiritual household of the ultimate Son of David.

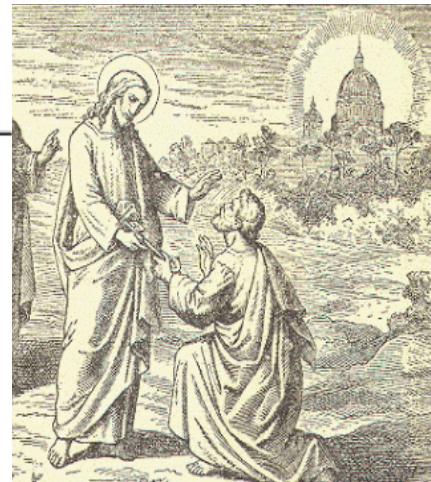
A further image comes into play when Jesus speaks of “binding and loosing” to describe Peter’s authority. Binding and loosing refers to the authority of the chief rabbi of a community. Sometimes it referred to the application of the Torah to a particular case (the apparent reference here). Sometimes it referred to the power to include or exclude a member of the community (see Mt 18:18). Thus Jesus makes Peter, in effect, chief rabbi of the community of the Church.

A strong consensus has emerged that the Petrine ministry of overseeing the unity of the Church is an essential part of the New Testament’s presentation of the Church of Christ. And so it is part of our discipleship to pray and work for the full realization of that ministry of unity, the reunion of a divided Church.

# Peter's Confession of Christ

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Matthew 16:15 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 16:13-20 (NIV)



I W H Q O X N F C T Z V D L M  
P V V P O E U A Z F U I B O M  
E R Y G V M S T S P S Y D R N  
O X O A R J R H B M E G O O M  
P P E P G E D E L G N T S C S  
L H I I H E L R B I S P E K E  
E K F R S E Y I K A V U V R U  
U T E S W I T J J O P I M O W  
M H E Y O E Q S E A A T N P I  
T L C T S A J I Z R H J I G M  
B A H Y P R P J S I E K O S L  
X P R J N T F E J A D M A H T  
I L I B U H D J L A J P I X N  
J J S Y L A J G A T E S T A T  
G L T E H U I S A C H U R C H

CHRIST	EARTH	SON	PROPHETS	PEOPLE
BLESSED	KINGDOM	CHURCH	GATES	BAPTIST
LIVING	ROCK	FATHER	HADES	ELIJAH
JOHN	HEAVEN	PETER	KEYS	JEREMIAH