

Our Lady of Loretto & St Michael

TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YR A)

The Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people 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, 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

First Reading A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord of hosts to Shebna, the master of the palace:

I dismiss you from your office,
I remove you from your post,
and the same day I call on my servant
Eliakim son of Hilkiah.
I invest him with your robe,
gird him with your sash,
entrust him with your authority,
and he shall be a father
to the inhabitants of Jerusalem
and to the House of Judah.
I place the key of the House of Davon
on his shoulder;
should he open, no one shall close,
should he close, no one shall open.
I drive him like a peg
into a firm place;
he will become a throne of glory
for his father's house. **The word of the Lord.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands.

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,
you have heard the words of my mouth.
Before the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple. **R/-**

I thank you for your faithfulness and love
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
you increased the strength of my soul. **R/-**

The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly
and the haughty he knows from afar.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands. **R/-**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – and how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be his counsellor? Who could ever give him anything or lend him anything? All that exists comes from him; all is by him for him. To him be glory for ever! Amen. **The word of the Lord.**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled. **Alleluia!**

THE GOSPEL A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Who do you say that I am?

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Phillipi 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?'

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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.' Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to tell anyone that he was the Christ. **The Gospel of the Lord.**

The Nicene Creed

**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,
(*all Bow until man*)
*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**

Two Sundays ago, we heard Peter cry out, 'Lord save me'. Where Jesus became the solid ground for Peter's faith in the midst of the stormy lake. In today's gospel extract we see that Peter's faith has matured. Maybe because he experienced at first hand Jesus saving power it is Peter who first answers Jesus' question, 'Who do you say I am?' It is a question which all Christians must answer. Peter speaks up and declares his belief, perhaps also shared by the others, that Jesus is the promised Messiah. What is special in Matthew's story of Peter's profession of faith is the commissioning of Peter which follows. Faith leads to a mission.

The words of Jesus to Peter 'You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church' have been understood as the basis for the special role of the bishop of Rome, the successor of Peter, in relation to the whole church. In their varying ways each of the gospels testifies to the leadership role of Peter. The words of Jesus to Peter in Matthew's gospel are words of assurance, for it is Christ who will build the Church and Christ who endows Peter with authority.

Peter (like St Paul) will die in the early 60's AD in the city of Rome under the persecution instigated by the Emperor Nero. The faith of the Roman community will become the touchstone that other Christian communities will turn to for advice and reassurance. In this way the bishops of Rome will come to exercise Peter's ministry for the whole Church.

The reading ends with Jesus instructing the disciples to tell nobody he was the Christ. The title of 'Christ' or 'Messiah' was understood in various ways, and Jesus had reservations that he might be misunderstood as a worldly leader. The true role of the Messiah will be taken up again in next Sunday's gospel reading.