

Aug 23-24
21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today marks a turning point in Peter's life. Today, Peter makes his profession of faith. When Jesus looks at Peter and asks him, "Who do **you** say that I am?" Peter replies, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

This moment comes to each of us. One day in all of our lives there comes a moment when Jesus asks us "Who do **you** say that I am?" When we state our faith as Peter did and answer Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," our world changes. In that moment of acceptance, we join our faith with Peter's, and our faith becomes the foundation of the Church, as we sang in our Gathering Hymn, "Faith of our Fathers."

From this point forward, we no longer live just for ourselves. When we come to the place in our hearts at which we truly claim Christ Jesus as our God, we come home to the God within us. Like Peter, our profession of faith calls us to commitment, a way of living that reflects our faith.

When we say to Jesus, "You are the Messiah, the one who will establish justice on the earth," then we must also say "Lord, I will work with you for justice." When we say to Jesus, "You are the Messiah, who will ensure that the vulnerable of

society will not be exploited,” we commit ourselves to stand in their defense.

When we are asked to give up our own wills and our plans for our lives to serve where God is calling us, then each of us must reply, “Here I am, God. I have come to do your will.”

There is a joke “If you want to hear God laugh, tell him your plans....”

As Christians, we cannot cling to “what is;” nor can we cling to what we think might be, we must open ourselves to transformation. Whew, Lord, that is easier said than done. Will we doubt ourselves? Sure we will. Will we think, “Gee, God, I’m not sure I can do what you are asking of me?” You bet we will. Will we fall short, even though we have the best of intentions? Unfortunately, sometimes we all will. But the fact remains that on the day we professed our faith, we entered into a sacred covenant with Jesus. Like Peter, when we step out of the boat, we will walk on water. No matter how weak we are, God’s power will work through us. Whenever we begin to sink, we have only to reach out to Jesus.

The first reading from Isaiah tells us that God has chosen us to follow him. God will place a mantle on our shoulders and give us the grace we need to perform the works he is calling us to. God will fix us like a peg, in a sure spot, to be a place of honor for our church.

God chose Peter from among all the disciples not because there was no one else to whom responsibility could be given. Jesus could have chosen any of the disciples, but he chose Peter, not because Peter was the perfect human, but because Peter was perfect for God's plan.

God chooses those who are weak, so there will be no question about the source of any success we may experience. We all have the inclination to say "God, choose someone else!" but our God prevents us from using our own weakness as an excuse for not committing ourselves to God's service. God calls us to open ourselves to God regardless of our own limitations and weaknesses. We are to commit ourselves to God's plan and make ourselves the instruments of God's work. We have to show up, try our best and leave the outcome lies with God.

As many of you know, I have been called back to Ferdinand to assume the position of Director of Mission Advancement. When Sr. Kristine Anne my prioress asked me, I knew in my heart that God is calling me to entrust St. Mary into His care and to be open to this transformation in my life.

In this transition, I ask you to stand firm in your faith. I ask you to stand firm knowing God's love for St. Mary Parish. Rather than struggle with thoughts of "who will we ever get to replace Sr. Barbara" or "what will happen to our plans now?" I ask you to draw your strength from the example of Peter and look forward with prayerful anticipation for God to guide us. God has called me back to Ferdinand and by our faith we can trust that God will call the person we need to serve St. Mary at this time. Amen.