



ST. PAUL'S PARISH BULLETIN

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The Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Cycle C

First Reading

Acts of the Apostles 12:1-11

Now I know it is indeed true: the Lord has saved me from the power of Herod.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 34

The angel of the Lord will rescue those who fear him.

Second Reading

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

All that remains now is the crown of righteousness.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 16:13-19

You are Peter; and I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Mark places this incident at Caesarea Philippi. Luke, because of the importance he wishes to give to prayer in his Gospel, places it in the context of Jesus praying. But Matthew keeps it at Caesarea Philippi. In today's Gospel, Jesus asks the disciples for a "field report" by asking what people are saying about him. He refers to himself as the Son of Man, a term derived from the Jewish Scriptures, found in the book of Daniel and in other apocryphal writings. Many scholars suggest that "Son of Man" is best understood to mean "human being."

As Jesus turns the question directly to the disciples and asks what they believe, Peter speaks for all of them when he announces that they believe Jesus to be the Christ. "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word for "messiah," which means "the anointed one." At the time of Jesus, the image of the "messiah" was laden with popular expectations, most of which looked for a political leader who would free the Jewish people from Roman occupation.

Because Jesus has referred to himself a number of times in Matthew by Christological titles this moment is not the revelation of who Jesus is as in Mark. Instead, it marks an important moment in the development of the Church. Jesus uses this occasion to bless Peter, who represents all the disciples but also has a unique role to play in the founding of the new community. Peter is blessed not because of a personal insight but because God revealed to him who Jesus is. Peter is the rock on which Jesus will build the Church.

Sunday Connection, Loyola Press thru Diocese Bulletin

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Monday to Friday from 9:00am to Noon