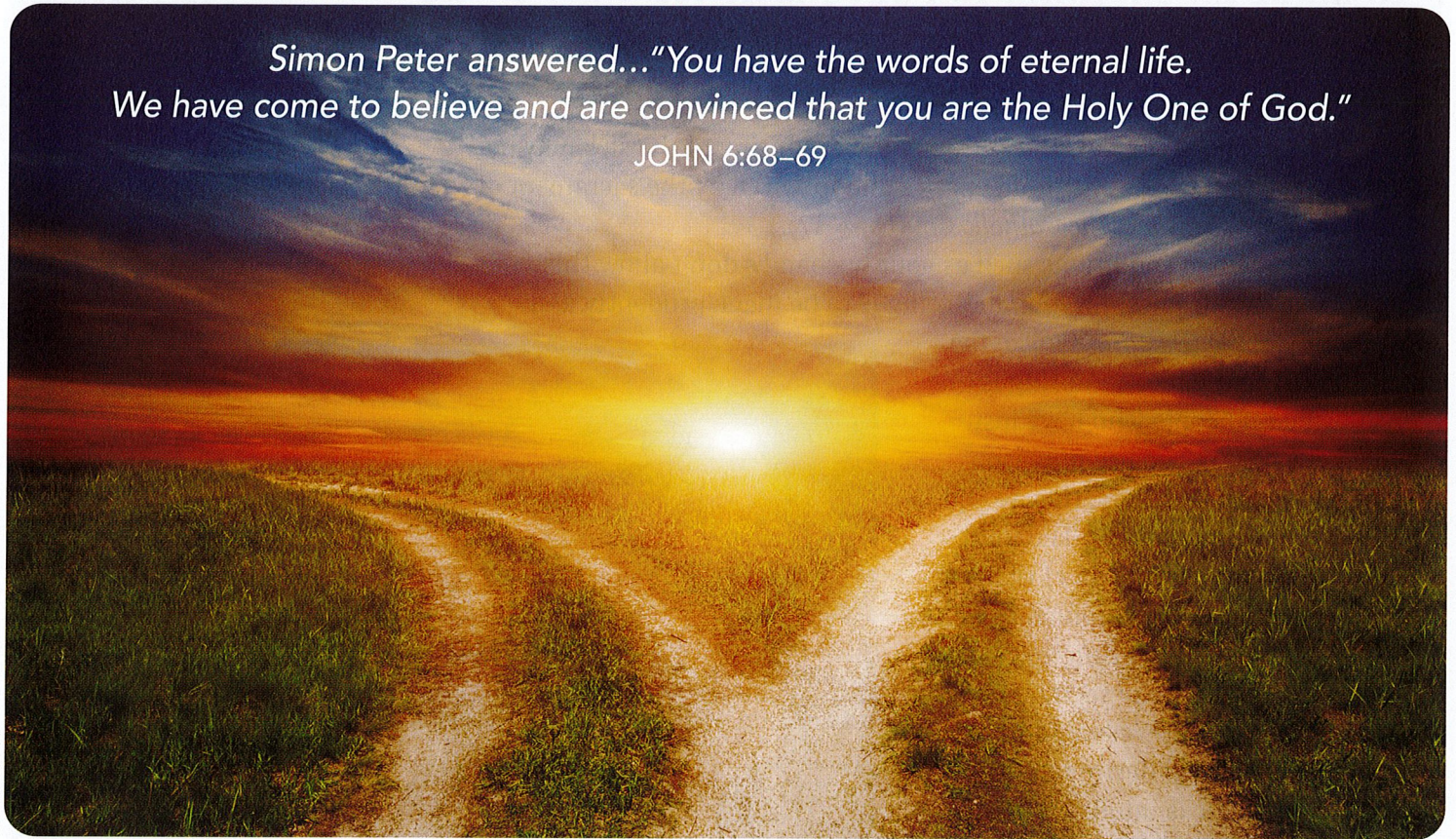


*Simon Peter answered...“You have the words of eternal life.
We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.”*
JOHN 6:68–69



Make Up Your Mind

One can say that life is a series of choices. You have to make up your mind; which shall it be? Some of these choices are insignificant: red or green? Others are much more important: To what shall I commit my life? Shall I get married? There are some choices that are even more momentous: What kind of a person do I want to be—trustworthy or crafty? Should I even bother with God and religion?

Having spent a lifetime in the wilderness, the Israelites were poised in the land of the Amorites, ready to enter the land promised to them by God. Before they moved forward, a pressing decision had to be made. Which god were they going to worship? A Canaanite god who presumably made the land before them fertile and inviting? Or the God who delivered them from Egypt, fed them in the wilderness, brought them safely to this point, and yet with whom they

quarreled throughout their wilderness sojourn? Joshua voiced his decision: “As for me and my household, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15).

Jesus’ declaration of himself as “the bread of life” (John 6:35) troubled many people. It was then, and still is today, a difficult saying. It was repulsive to many, and they thought that Jesus sounded blasphemous. Those who could not accept his claim, left him. He asked his closest followers, as he asks us today: “Do you also want to leave?” Speaking for all, Peter replied: “Master, to whom shall we go?” (John 6:67–68). How might you answer?

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR *Reflection*

- ✦ *What decisions of conscience has life placed before you? How did you decide?*
- ✦ *Trust in God’s care and protection even if you might have chosen better.*

Dear Padre,

My husband has vascular dementia and is unable to make an examination of conscience. Part of the anointing of the sick involves the confession of sins, so will it be valid when he receives it?

If circumstances permit, the sacrament of anointing of the sick may be preceded by the sacrament of penance and followed by the sacrament of the Eucharist (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1517).

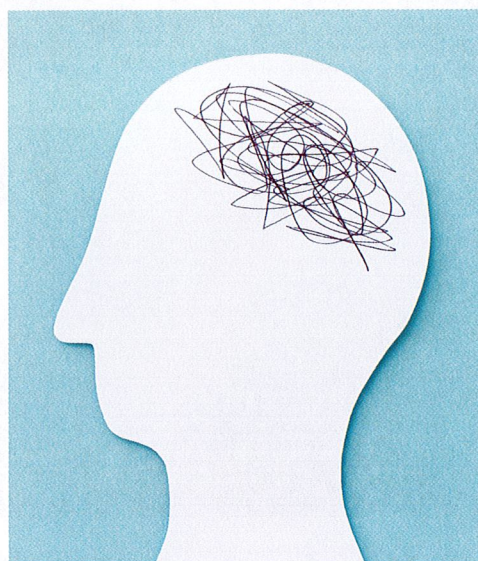
However, when conditions such as your husband's don't allow this, judgment on the suitability for anointing is to be made prudently and without scruple (*Pastoral Care of the Sick*, 8). For example, anointing is conferred on people who have lost consciousness or the use of reason if, as Christian believers, they would have "at least implicitly asked for it when they were in control of their faculties" (*PCS* 14). Therefore, because of the degree of brain-function loss in this circumstance, the sacrament of anointing also absolves any sins.

When a habitual desire to die as a faithful Catholic is implied before a person's illness, the special grace of the sacrament of anointing has this as one of its effects: "the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance" (*CCC* 1532).

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR | Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to submit your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



SHUTTERSTOCK

A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

When someone is sick, we at times think: "Let's call for the priest to come"; "No, then he will bring bad luck. Let's not call him."...The idea is floating about that the undertakers arrive after the priest, and this is not true....It is Jesus himself who comes to relieve the sick person...and also to forgive his sins.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, FEBRUARY 26, 2014



Calendar

Monday

AUGUST 23

Weekday

1 Thes 1:1–5, 8b–10

Mt 23:13–22

Tuesday

AUGUST 24

St. Bartholomew,
Apostle

Rv 21:9b–14

Jn 1:45–51

Wednesday

AUGUST 25

Weekday

1 Thes 2:9–13

Mt 23:27–32

Thursday

AUGUST 26

Weekday

1 Thes 3:7–13

Mt 24:42–51

Friday

AUGUST 27

St. Monica

1 Thes 4:1–8

Mt 25:1–13

Saturday

AUGUST 28

St. Augustine,
Bishop and Doctor
of the Church

1 Thes 4:9–11

Mt 25:14–30

Sunday

AUGUST 29

Twenty-second Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Dt 4:1–2, 6–8

Jas 1:17–18,
21b–22, 27

Mk 7:1–8, 14–15,
21–23