



FATHER SAVIO OFFERS

"Who Do You Say That I Am?"

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

If Jesus were standing before you today and asked you only one question, what do you think it would be? In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus asks His disciples the most important question anyone can answer: **"But who do you say that I am?"** (Matthew 16:15).

This question is at the heart of our Christian faith. Jesus is not asking for public opinion; He is inviting each of us into a personal relationship with Him. Before entrusting Peter with the keys of the Kingdom, He first asks for a profession of faith. That same question echoes in our hearts today.

Knowing About Jesus or Truly Knowing Him?

The disciples first repeated what others were saying about Jesus: John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. Today, many people know about Jesus through the stories of His life and may even attend Mass regularly. But knowing **about** Jesus is different from truly **knowing** Him.

Jesus desires more than our admiration. He desires our friendship. He wants to be the center of our lives. Faith begins when Jesus is no longer someone we have merely heard about but someone we have personally encountered.

Peter's Answer Must Become Our Answer.

Peter boldly confessed, **"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."** His answer came from walking with Jesus, listening to Him, trusting Him, and loving Him. Jesus tells Peter that this faith is a gift from the Father. Our faith is also God's gift, but it must be accepted, nourished, and lived. Every prayer, every act of kindness, and every decision we make either strengthens or weakens our answer to Jesus.

Our Lives Should Answer the Question.

It is easy to call Jesus our Savior while we are in church. But who is Jesus in our daily lives—when we face difficulties, make decisions, forgive others, or carry our crosses?

Jesus chose Peter not because he was perfect but because He saw the love in his heart. In the same way, God calls each of us as we are and transforms us through His grace. The greatest answer we can give Jesus is not only with our words but with the way we live. Our families, friends, and neighbors should recognize Christ's love, mercy, humility, and joy reflected in us.

As St. Mother Teresa said, **"I follow Christ. Jesus is my God, and I see Jesus in every human being."** May that also become our witness.

Think About and Pray This Week

- If Jesus asked me today, **"Who do you say that I am?"**, what would my honest answer be?
- If someone watched the way I live each day, would they recognize that I belong to Christ?
- What one change can I make this week to deepen my relationship with Jesus and become a more faithful witness of His Gospel?

May we never stop answering the Lord's question with our words and our lives: **"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**

Father Savio Yerasani



“WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?”

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today Jesus asks His disciples—and each one of us—a very personal and important question: “Who do you say that I am?” Our answer tells us not only what we believe about Jesus, but also how deeply Jesus has become part of our daily life.



1. THE KEY IS GIVEN FOR SERVICE



In the first reading from the Prophet Isaiah, we hear about Shebna, an official who failed to fulfill his responsibility faithfully. God removes him and appoints Eliakim, who will take fatherly care of the people of Jerusalem and Judah. God tells him, “I will place the key of the House of David on his shoulder.”

This authority is not given for personal power or honor. It is given for service, justice and the care of God’s people.

This image of the key prepares us for today’s Gospel, where Jesus gives Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

2. WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING ABOUT GOD

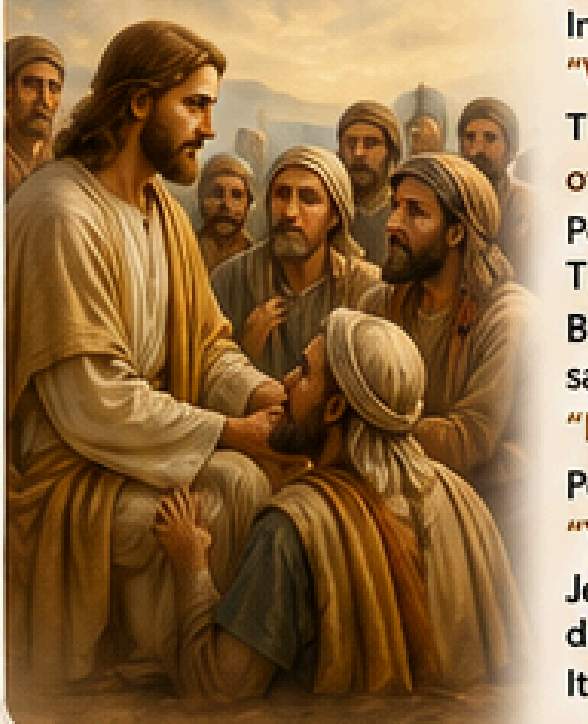
In the second reading, St. Paul stands in wonder before the greatness of God: “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!”

There are many things in life we cannot understand. Sometimes we ask, “Why, Lord? Why did this happen? Why was my prayer not answered? Why am I going through this difficulty?”

We may not always receive an answer. Our human understanding is limited, but God’s wisdom is infinite. Faith does not mean that we understand everything God does. Faith means that even when we do not understand, **we continue to trust Him.**



3. “WHO DO PEOPLE SAY THAT I AM?”



In today’s Gospel, Jesus first asks His disciples: “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

They answer: “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” People had many good opinions about Jesus. They respected Him as a prophet and a man of God. But Jesus is not satisfied with what other people say. He makes the question personal: “**But who do YOU say that I am?**”

Peter immediately answers:

“**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**”

Jesus praises Peter because this confession of faith did not come simply from human knowledge. It was a revelation from the heavenly Father.

4. “UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH”



Jesus then tells Simon:

“**You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.**”

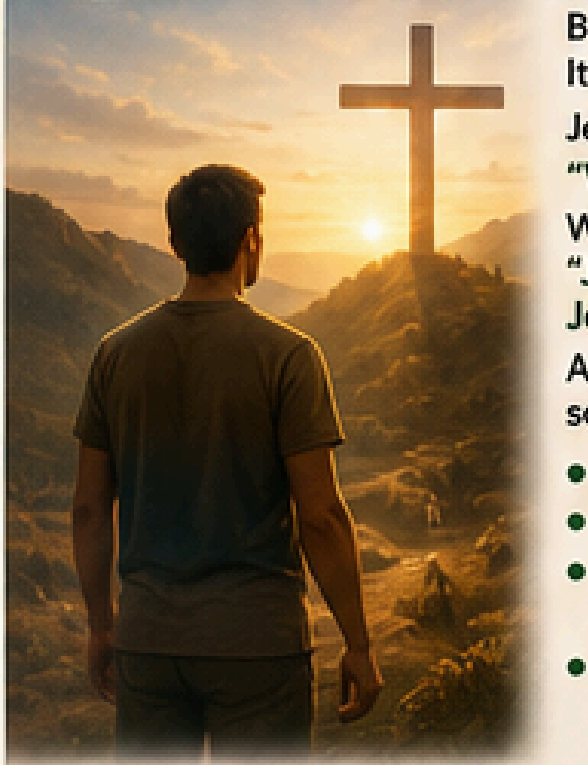
He gives Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven and the authority to bind and loose.

There is a beautiful connection between the first reading and the Gospel. Eliakim receives the key of the House of David; Peter receives the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. In both cases, authority comes from God and is given for the **service and care of His people.**

As Catholics, we believe that this mission entrusted to Peter continues through Peter and his successors. The Church does not have authority to change God’s truth according to the changing opinions of the world. Rather, **she has the responsibility to faithfully preserve, teach and apply what Christ has given us.**



5. NOW JESUS ASKS YOU AND ME



But today’s Gospel is not only about Peter. It is about you and me.

Jesus stands before each of us today and asks: “Who do you say that I am?”

We can easily give the Catechism answer: “Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is our Savior.”

All these answers are correct. But Jesus wants something more personal.

- Who is Jesus to me?
- Is He only someone I meet on Sunday?
- Is He someone I remember only when I am sick, afraid or in trouble?
- Or is Jesus truly my Lord, my Savior, my Good Shepherd, my friend and the center of my life?

As we grow in life, our understanding of Jesus should also grow. Perhaps as children we knew Jesus through the faith taught by our parents. But through the years, through our joys and sorrows, answered and unanswered prayers, sickness and healing, success and disappointment, we begin to experience Jesus personally. Jesus becomes not simply someone we have heard about, but Someone we have experienced.

7. WHAT IS MY ANSWER?

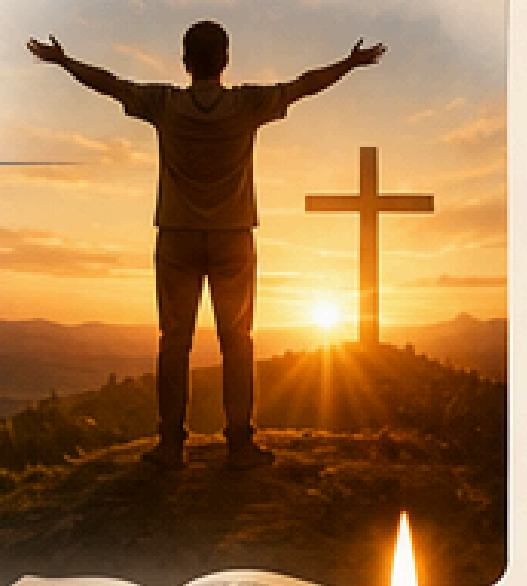


Dear brothers and sisters, today Jesus is not asking, “What does your priest say about Me?” He is not asking, “What do your parents say about Me? What do other people say about Me?”

Jesus looks directly into our hearts and asks: “**Who do YOU say that I am?**”

May our answer come not only from our lips, but from our lives:

- ♥ Jesus, You are my Lord and my Savior.
- ♥ You are my Good Shepherd when I am lost.
- ♥ You are my strength when I am weak.
- ♥ You are my mercy when I fall.
- ♥ You are my peace when I am troubled.
- ♥ You are my hope when life becomes difficult.
- ♥ You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.



Let us profess our faith with our lips and live it with our lives.

Fr. Savio Yerasani

