

FAITH @ Home

23RD AUGUST 2026: 21ST SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore
www.waterfordlismore.ie



Find us on Facebook



Follow us on Instagram!



Subscribe to us on YouTube

Celebrating and supporting faith, hope and love in the heart of the family!

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION ALSO AVAILABLE

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Isaiah 22:19-23

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 138:1-3,6,8

Second Reading:

Romans 11:33-36

Gospel:

Matthew 16:13-20



Hole, William, 1846-1917, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Hear



Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one?
No worries, you can find this week's readings online [HERE](#).

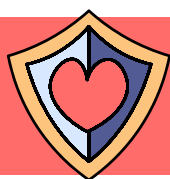
Reflect



In the Gospel today we hear Jesus speaking to His disciples, asking them who they say He is.

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- Who do you say that Jesus is? Spend some time with this question this week. It may be helpful to journal your responses.
- Do you see Jesus as your friend? If so, do you spend time with Him?
- Is He a teacher? If so, do you strive to learn from Him and follow His teachings?
- Do you see Him as your Saviour and Redeemer? If so, do your actions show your beliefs?
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the identity of Jesus to you in a deeper way this week.

Family Prayer



Dear Jesus, thank You for the gift of your Church, and for the gift of our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. Guide and direct him always as he guides and directs your Church. Amen!

Chat



In today's readings we hear Jesus appointing Peter as our first Pope, the Rock He would build His Church on.

- How much do you know about Pope Leo XIV? Can you discover more about him this week as a family? Do you pray each month for the Pope's intentions?
- Who are some other people who have been an inspiration for your family's faith journeys? How have they inspired you? Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for them this week! Maybe even reach out to thank them with a note, an email, a text or a call!

Family Challenge!



Pray for the Pope's Intentions this week! Each month the Pope designates particular intentions to pray for. Why not make a little space on your fridge to post what those intentions are each month?



THE ROCK

It is important to read today's Gospel and next week's Gospel as two parts of a single story. These readings are a turning point in Matthew's Gospel. This week we hear Jesus name Simon Peter as the rock upon which he will build his Church. Next week we will hear Jesus call this same Simon Peter "Satan" when he reacts negatively to Jesus' prediction about his passion and death.

In today's Gospel, Jesus asks his disciples what people are saying about his identity. The disciples indicate that most people believe that Jesus is a prophet of Israel. Then Jesus asks his disciples who they believe that he is. Simon Peter answers, identifying Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God.

Jesus commends Simon Peter for this profession of faith, indicating that this insight has come from God. Because of Simon Peter's response, Jesus calls him the "rock" upon which Jesus will build the Church. This is a word play on the name Peter, which is the Greek word for "rock." Peter is then given special authority by Jesus, a symbolic key to the Kingdom of Heaven. Peter will play an important role in the early Christian community as a spokesperson and a leader.

In today's Gospel, Peter's recognition of Jesus' identity is credited to a revelation by God. This will contrast sharply with Jesus' rebuke of Peter in next week's Gospel. When Peter rejects Jesus' prediction of his passion and death, Peter is said to no longer be thinking as God does but as humans do.

The use of the term church in today's Gospel is one of only three such occurrences in Matthew's Gospel. Peter in this Gospel is being credited as the foundation for the Church, a privilege granted to him because of his recognition of Jesus' identity. The Church continues to be grounded in the faith that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Loyola Press Sunday Connection



**POPE'S
INTENTION
FOR
AUGUST**

FOR EVANGELIZATION IN THE CITY

Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

Grásta Podcasts

Bishop Cullinan has recently begun to record Podcasts under the title of Grásta. We hope you will enjoy them. They can be found on our Diocesan Youtube Channel.



CARLO'S CORNER

JESUS IS....



It's never nice when people make assumptions about us; it's annoying when people presume to know

how we would speak and react, especially when they haven't taken the trouble to get to know us. How often do we do that to others though? How often do we even do that to Jesus?

Who is Jesus? Who do I say that He is? More importantly, who has He revealed Himself to be? If we reduce Jesus to "a nice guy" or "a good teacher" we miss the point. Jesus didn't come to reveal himself as "nice". He said and did a lot of challenging things - don't forget He called the pharisees white-washed tombs and drove the market sellers out of the temple for disrespecting God's house! He did teach, a lot in fact, but how aware are we of His actual teachings - or do we choose a more convenient "Jesus-light" version based on what we like and dislike, that keeps us cosily in our comfort zone and conveniently agrees with all our lifestyle choices?

Like in today's Gospel, we ultimately have to make a choice too: who do we believe Jesus is, and how will we have to live our lives according to that belief? The good news? He's worth every effort and sacrifice - anything we lose because of the demands of truly being a Christian are far outweighed by His generosity and blessings - and the promise of eternal life more importantly!



**Which Jesus is
the Real Jesus?
(Fr Mike Schmitz)**



**Jesus Messiah
- Chris Tomlin**



To the Heights Youth Resource also available



Have you subscribed yet to our Diocesan newsletters and events bulletin?
Click the Subscribe Button OR go to www.waterfordlismore.ie/resources

- Faith@Home / Let's Dive In (faithathome@waterfordlismore.ie)
- To the Heights (youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie)
- Check it Out! Diocesan Events Bulletin (events@waterfordlismore.ie)

SUBSCRIBE