

Meditation 2014-02-22
Today is the Feast of Saint Peter's Chair
Meditation Theme: "Am I In The Right Church?"

Place yourself in the presence of Jesus Christ. Make sure He knows that every thought, action, and experience of today is dedicated exclusively to Him.

The Scenario: From the Gospel of today's Mass

At that time, Jesus came into the quarters of Cesarea Philippi: and he asked his disciples, saying: Whom do men say that the Son of man is? But they said: Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.

Point 1. – By the time this conversation took place, the Apostles had been following Jesus for quite a while. Jesus, knowing perfectly well what was in their hearts and their minds, asked them these questions so that they would tell each other.

Point 2. – Peter answered truthfully, prompted to make so bold a statement by the Holy Ghost. God the Father had revealed this truth to Peter's mind. This is a truth that Peter grasped with his intellect. It was not the result of his emotions.

Point 3. – Jesus chose Peter to be the "rock" upon which He built his Church. It might have been because he had just made so profound a profession of Faith, but there was undoubtedly more behind this decision than that.

Point 4. – Jesus gave Peter, as the head of His Church the power to bind and loose. If Peter says that something is so, it is so! If Peter says that something is not, it is not!

Meditation: God has created His Church on earth. He put specifically chosen men in charge, and gave them authority over it. These Apostles didn't choose themselves, and they didn't choose Peter to be their head. He gave Peter the authority to say what is and what is not, and this authority does not depend upon the advice or consent of the other Apostles. The Pope is the supreme head of the Church on earth, even if he doesn't think he ought to be or refuses to accept the entirety of that position. The Popes, from Peter to Francis, rule the Church with an authority that Christ gave only to them. He did not tell Peter that he had to share it with his friends. All authority in God's Holy Church comes from the Pope to whom it is given, and it is delegated to the other Apostles, and the Bishops as their successors, only from him. To believe that the Church is, or even can be, a democracy is an error.

Do I accept the Church as God has built it? Do I agree with its form and structure? Do I understand that God did not ask for anyone else's input because He did not request or require it? Do I understand that anyone who believes that God made a mistake in the ordering of His Church's hierarchy is a heretic? If many in the Church say that its governance ought to be more democratic, or "collegial," can they possibly be right? Do I believe that God always does things correctly?

Colloquy: Take a minute or two to converse with God, in any of His three Persons, or the Triune God complete in Himself. Tell Him what you have learned from your meditation, and thank Him for it.

Hold the Gain: Consider what you can do to keep the fruits of your meditation. Try to plan how you can think of them through the day, and through the days ahead. Come up with ways you can apply your conclusions to what you do in your everyday life, conversations you engage in, the choice of what movie to watch, what books you choose to read.