

## Twenty First Sunday in Ordinary Time – 27<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Headings	Gospel (Matthew 16:13-20)	1st Reading (Isaiah 22:19-23)	2nd Reading (Romans 11:33-36)
<b>Context</b>	As part of His ministry, Jesus teaches the people about God's values and the kingdom of heaven. In doing so, Jesus was aware that many people did not recognise him as the promised Christ (Messiah), however, He was not yet ready to share this information with everyone as many people were against Him.	Isaiah is generally regarded as being the greatest prophet of the Old Testament. He predicted that God would send a Messiah (Jesus) to save his people by dying to take away sins.	St Paul's letter was written at a time when he was planning to visit Rome. St Paul teaches the early Christian church about God so that they can understand how they should live, as well as how they fit into God's plan for his people. This section of the reading is a prayer of praise to God.
<b>Key verses</b>	<i><b>"You are the Christ..."</b></i> <i><b>"...on this rock I will build my Church"</b></i>	<i><b>"I placed the key of the House of David on his shoulder"</b></i>	<i><b>"How rich are the depths of God."</b></i> <i><b>"All that exists comes from Him..."</b></i>
<b>Key themes/ messages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The disciples answered Jesus' question by offering a common view that He may have been a prophet brought back to life.</li> <li>• Peter spoke with absolute clarity and certainty that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah.</li> <li>• Peter's accurate response led to Jesus appointing Peter to build his church – a community of like-minded believers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Lord revealed that Shebna would be replaced by Eliakim. At that time, Shebna was the palace administrator in Jerusalem – a position of senior authority.</li> <li>• It may have been due to his pride that Shebna was ousted. He may also have been ignoring Isaiah's advice.</li> <li>• It may also be noted that verse 22 (key verse above) is also quoted in Revelations, Chapter 2, Verse 7.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Paul praises God for the wisdom of his plan.</li> <li>• God's knowledge is beyond our comprehension.</li> <li>• God has absolute power and authority over mankind – he does not depend on others for help.</li> <li>• God has endless power over the universe and our lives.</li> </ul>
<b>Questions/ application to our lives</b>	If Jesus asked you the question of who he is, how would you respond? Do you recognise Jesus as your Lord and Messiah?	Do we recognise and value the power of God's influence in our daily lives? For those who occupy positions of authority, it is important to remain humble in the knowledge that job security ultimately depends on God.	When we pray to God, do we place enough emphasis on giving him the praise and glory He truly deserves? Are we sometimes guilty of being proud of personal achievements which would not have been possible without God's help?
<b>Further reading</b>	<i>Catechism 551-553, 880-887</i>		

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