

SUNDAY PLUS



See the person

A Year of the Word

The Petrine figure in the Church

by Fr Denis
McBride C.Ss.R.



In today's Gospel Matthew shows us that Peter is chosen by God to receive enlightenment about Jesus – not flesh and blood, but the Father in heaven is the source of revelation. In response to God's choice of Peter, Jesus elects to build the Church on this rock. Like Eliakim in the first reading who is given the keys which open and close access to the king, Peter is given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He is given authority "to bind" and "to loose", terms which mean to forbid and to

permit. This makes Peter the ruler of the Church, the one whose decisions in faith will be confirmed by God.

Given the division in the Church today, the universal community of Christians clearly needs the Petrine figure who will summarise in himself the unity of the whole Church. That is why the role of the papacy is at the centre of discussion between Roman Catholics and other Christians. We believe that being in communion

with the Pope, the Petrine figure, is as important today as it was in the early Church. Too often, however, we tend to see the figure of the Pope as the one who uses his keys, the symbol of his authority, to keep people out. But keys open doors as well as close them; they give access as well as prevent it. Many non-Catholics are hoping that the Petrine figure can still become the great symbol of unity in the Church by using his authority in the service of unity.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk.

Image: Attila JANDI / Shutterstock.com

When I fall in love...

by Emerald
O'Hanrahan

My husband and I were best friends for a few years before we got together and I tried everything to block my, in retrospect, clear love for him from myself, him, and everyone around us. This had mixed success. When he was in a play, I went to see it. Five times! His cast members told him, "That girl is in love with you." I was adamant that I was not.

When my dad became terminally ill, it clarified a lot.

I remember realising one day, during that time, that I had to admit the truth to myself. That my best friend was the only person for me and that I really loved him: body, mind, heart and soul. That even if we never got together, this was what I was committed to – and I had to fully commit, out in the open. I had to surrender to what this was, and actually be honest. I stopped hiding from the truth, and started living it.

Emerald O'Hanrahan, actor and voice-over artist, is best known as Emma Grundy in the long-running BBC radio series, *The Archers*.

Lord, it can be hard to see faces in a moving crowd, especially when I'm rushing in the opposite direction for a bus or train. Yet everyone in the crowd has his or her own story, with unique gifts, talents, joys, sorrows, family, friends and acquaintances. Help me not to lose sight of the miracle of every man, woman and child. Slow me down, Lord. 🙏 Amen.

"Conflict is resolved with respect for each person's identity. When we watch TV or read the newspapers, we see conflicts that fail to be resolved and result in war: one culture does not tolerate the other... true social conflicts, cultural too, are resolved through dialogue, but first with respect for the other person's identity... conflicts are resolved with respect for the identity of others."

Pope Francis

See inside

by Fr Paul Douthwaite

When someone you know very well surprises you by doing something exceptional, you would often say they have "hidden depths". From that moment on you might see them in a new light. In history there are many people whom we would know as famous because they did exceptional things: artists, scientists, musicians, all will at some point have been described as having "hidden depths".

Throughout the course of his mission, through his words and

deeds, Jesus very subtly and very gradually revealed himself as "the Christ, the Son of God". In seeking the disciples' understanding of who he was, he was not having an identity crisis but rather he wished to know if they had yet recognised his "hidden depths".

Jesus' invitation to look deeper, to see inside was not restricted to his disciples: it is an invitation to all people of all time to recognise his "hidden depth", to see in Jesus one who is the Christ of God.

Fr Paul Douthwaite is the National Catholic Chaplain for Prisons for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Today:
Isaiah 22:19-23
Romans 11:33-36
Matthew 16:13-20

Monday:
Apocalypse 21:9-14
John 1:45-51

Tuesday:
2 Thessalonians
2:1-3, 14-17
Matthew 23:23-26

Wednesday:
2 Thessalonians
3:6-10, 16-18
Matthew 23:27-32

Thursday:
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
Matthew 24:42-51

Friday:
1 Corinthians 1:17-25
Matthew 25:1-13

Saturday:
Jeremiah 1:17-19
Mark 6:17-29

Next Sunday:
Jeremiah 20:7-9
Romans 12:1-2
Matthew 16:21-27

redemptorist

Sunday Plus. Edited by Denis McBride C.Ss.R. and Sr Janet Fearn FMDM. Copyright © Redemptorist Publications, Chawton, Hampshire GU24 2HQ. A registered charity limited by guarantee. Registered in England 02961721. www.rpbooks.co.uk. Printed on FSC approved paper.

www.facebook.com/sundayplus