

FEBRUARY 22, 2017 WEDNESDAY

Reading 1 1 PT 5:1-4

Beloved: I exhort the presbyters among you, as a fellow presbyter and witness to the sufferings of Christ and one who has a share in the glory to be revealed. Tend the flock of God in your midst, overseeing not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Responsorial Psalm PS 23:1-3A, 4, 5, 6

R. (1) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

In verdant pastures he gives me repose;

Beside restful waters he leads me;

he refreshes my soul.

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Even though I walk in the dark valley

I fear no evil; for you are at my side

With your rod and your staff

that give me courage.

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

You spread the table before me

in the sight of my foes;

You anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Only goodness and kindness follow me

all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD

for years to come.

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Alleluia MT 16:18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church;
the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel MT 16:13-19

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Reflection:

One of the parable of the kingdom alludes to the church. This present text openly refers to the church. It tells us what its foundation is: faith in Jesus, the Christ and son of God. It points to the primary of Peter among all the apostles. It suggests that the church will always need a visible head. This, Catholics believe, is the successor of Peter, the Pope. Faith in Christ, the son of God, which Peter among the apostles is the first to proclaim, really comes from God. This faith is not a human opinion or a sentimental attachment. It does not come from flesh and blood, and expression which for the Jews meant what is purely human, what a human being does and understands by his own capacity.