

# MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

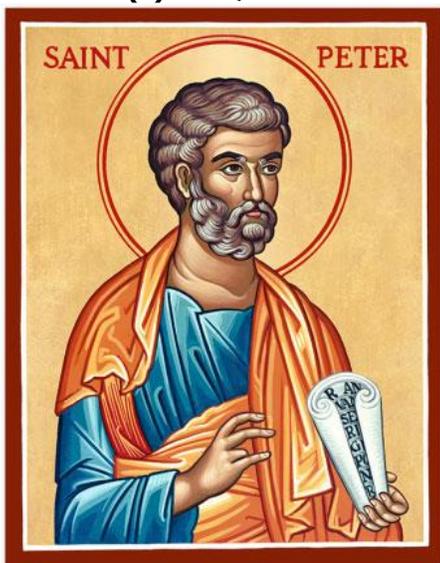
November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time

## Spirituality Ponderings

### Apostles

I am constantly amazed at how God speaks to us through the Sacred Scripture. His Word is old and yet new all at the same time. It is meant for all to read and hear and yet through prayer, it can speak to me and to the challenges of my life. With all of this in mind and with an appreciation for the evangelists who wrote the Scripture and awe for God the divine author of the same words, I would like to share with you how the Apostles help influence my life as a Christian and in my pursuit of holiness.

### (1) Peter/Simon



Many books have been written about St. Peter or at least have large sections devoted to his life. I am particularly fond of Bishop Sheen's account of Peter's life in his book: *A Priest is not His Own*. By tying the story of Peter walking on the water (Matthew 14:22-33) with the story of Peter at the end of John's Gospel (Chapter 21), I

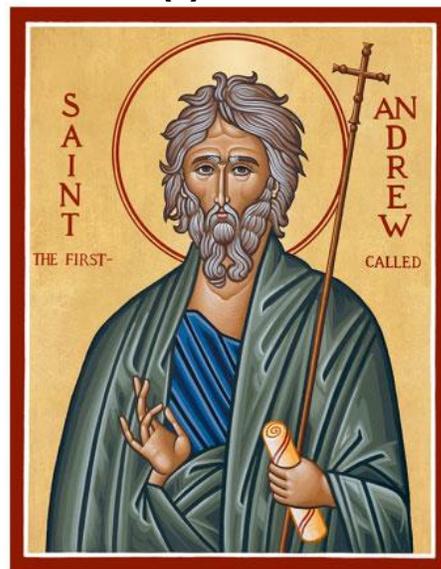
see in Peter a great development in his faith. In the first passage, I see Saint Peter trying to be showy in his faith by asking God to help him do something big like walk on the water. In the story that takes place after the Resurrection Peter no longer seems concerned about appearance or flashiness. When he discovers that he is in one place and Jesus is in another place, Peter wastes no time in trying to reach Jesus. I use this story to help motivate me to do whatever I need to do to be close to Christ even if I am going to end up looking like a fool to others.

### PRAYER TO ST PETER THE APOSTLE

O blessed St Peter, head and chief of the Apostles, thou art the guardian of the keys of the heavenly kingdom, and against thee the powers of hell do not prevail; thou art the rock of the Church and the shepherd of Christ's flock; thou art great in power, wonderful in thy heavenly bliss; thou hast the right of binding and losing in heaven and on earth. The sea supported thy footsteps, the sick upon whom even thy shadow fell were cured of their ills. By the memory of that right hand which supported thee on the waves of the sea, lift me from the ocean of my sins, and by those tears which thou didst shed for thy Lord, break the bonds of my offences and free me from the hand of all my adversaries. Help even me, O good shepherd, that I may in this life serve Christ Jesus and thee, that with thy help, after

the close of a good life, I may deserve to attain the reward of eternal happiness in heaven, where thou art unto endless ages the guardian of the gates and the shepherd of the flock. Amen.

### (2) Andrew



Andrew, Peter's brother, whom we hear in St. John's Gospel (John 1:40) was the first Apostle to follow Jesus, teaches me through his life about humility. In spite of the fact that he was the first apostle to follow Christ, he is often left out from the core group. For example, Peter, James and John are the ones Jesus takes with Him for the Transfiguration (Matthew 17) and the curing of the official's daughter (Mark 5:31). Andrew is never recorded as complaining. When I see, others being promoted or getting special treatment, I pray to St. Andrew for help and assistance in remaining humble.

Prayer to St. Andrew:  
O Glorious Saint Andrew, you were the first to recognize and follow the Lamb of God. With your friend Saint John you remained with Jesus for that first day, for your entire life, and

now throughout eternity. As you led your brother Saint Peter to Christ and many others after him, draw us also to Him. Teach us to lead others to Christ solely out of love for Him and dedication in His service. Help us

to learn the lesson of the Cross and to carry our daily crosses without complaint so that they may carry us to Jesus.

## Breaking Open the Word

### November 5, 2017 Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 151 Gospel MT 23:1-12

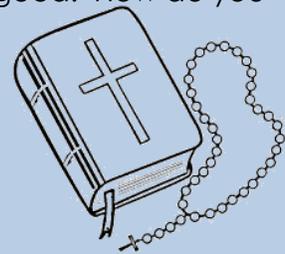
Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens hard to carry and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.' As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

#### Spiritual Reflection: "

"The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things." - Ronald Reagan. I have always felt that any leader who tries to force others to do things his ways always has the potential of becoming a bully or a dictator. A true leader motivates people to see that the action that the leader is proposing is ultimately the best option in the current situation and will serve a greater good. How do you inspire others?

#### Spiritual Questions

1. What are some qualities of a good leader?
2. What are some qualities of a bad leader?
3. Was Jesus a good leader?
4. How can you follow Jesus' example of leadership?
5. Where is God calling you to stand up and serve?



## Prayers for the Week

The Church invites us to pray for those who have died and now find themselves in Purgatory. Here are a few prayers from the Church's tradition.

### PRAYER FOR SOULS IN PURGATORY #01

My Jesus, by the sorrows Thou didst suffer in Thine agony in the Garden, in Thy scourging and crowning with thorns, on the way to Calvary, in Thy crucifixion and death, have mercy on the souls in purgatory, and especially on those that are most forsaken; do Thou deliver them from the terrible torments they endure; call them and admit them to Thy most sweet embrace in paradise. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY #02

O gentle Heart of Jesus, ever present in the Blessed Sacrament, ever consumed with burning love for the poor captive souls in Purgatory, have mercy on them. Be not severe in Your judgments, but let some drops of Your Precious Blood fall upon the devouring flames. And, Merciful Savior, send Your angels to conduct them to a place of refreshment, light and peace. Amen.

### PRAYER FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY #03

Good and gentle Jesus, Whose loving Heart was ever troubled by the sorrows of others, look with pity upon the holy souls in Purgatory. Eternal rest grant unto them, O, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

### PRAYER FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY #04

Father, God of all consolation, in Your unending love and mercy for us You turn the darkness of

death into the dawn of new life. Through Your Son, Jesus Christ, we ask you to deliver the souls in Purgatory, especially those for whom we now pray... (Mention them here.) Welcome them into Your presence and bless them with eternal light and peace. Raise them up to live forever with all Your saints in the glory of the Resurrection. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Catholic Trivia



### Last Week's Answers

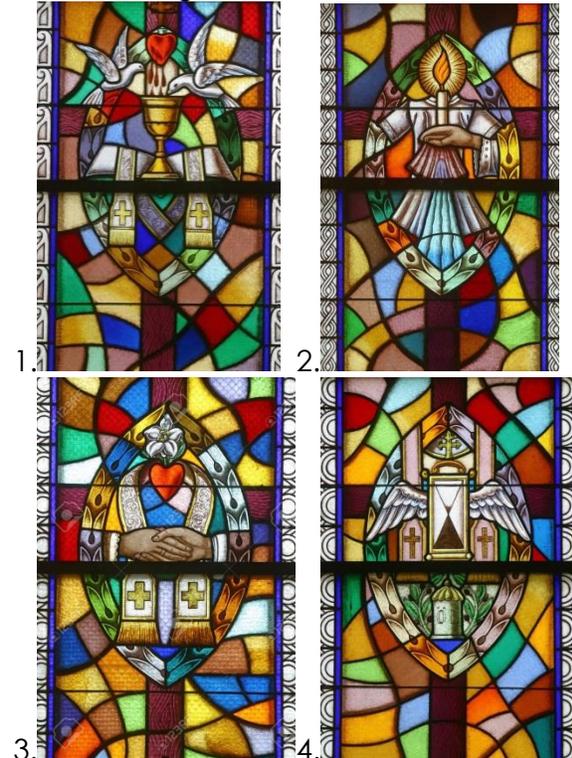
True or False

1. True - Pope John Paul II traveled to more than 129 different countries, logging more than 750,000 frequent flyer miles, which is about three times the distance to the moon.
2. True - The "Devil's Advocate" or *Advocate Diaboli*, is a real position within the Catholic Church. (His job in the Vatican is to prevent people from being canonized.)
3. False - The pope lives in Italy. (The Pope lives in Vatican City which is its own country)
4. True - The Big-Bang theory was proposed by a Catholic priest, Monsignor Georges Lemaitre.



### This Week's Questions

Identify the Sacrament that is the inspiration for the following Stained Glass Windows



## Quotes of the Week – Quotes About Purgatory

Our souls demand Purgatory, don't they? Would it not break the heart if God said to us, It is true, my son, that your breath smells and your rags drip with mud and slime, but we are charitable here and no one will upbraid you with these things, nor draw away from you. Enter into joy? Should we not reply, With submission, sir, and if

there is no objection, I'd rather be cleansed first. It may hurt, you know-even so, sir. - C. S. Lewis  
Purgatory basically means that God can put the pieces back together again. That He can cleanse us in such a way that we are able to be with Him and can stand there in the fullness of life. Purgatory strips off from one person what is unbearable and from another the inability to

bear certain things, so that in each of them a pure heart is revealed, and we can see that we all belong together in one enormous symphony of being. - Pope Benedict XVI

We must empty purgatory with our prayers. - Pio of Pietrelcina

Even convicts, with whom I have spent some time, are not won over in any other way. Whenever I happened to speak sharply to them,

I spoiled everything; on the contrary, when I praised them for their resignation and sympathized with them in their sufferings; when I told them they were fortunate to have their purgatory in this world, when I kissed their chains, showed compassion for their distress, and expressed sorrow for their misfortune, it was then that they listened to me, gave glory to God, and opened themselves to salvation. - Vincent de Paul

## Pro-Life Corner

**Pro-Life Quote:** It's not good for women to go through the procedure [abortion] and have something living sucked out of their bodies. It belittles women. Even though some women say, 'Oh, I don't mind to have one,' every time a woman has an abortion, it just crushes her self-esteem smaller and smaller and smaller. —Dolores O'Riordan

### Pro-Life Prayer

Heavenly Father, in Your love for us, protect against the wickedness of the devil, those helpless little ones to whom You have given the gift of life. Touch with pity the hearts of those women pregnant in our world today who are not thinking of motherhood. Help them to see that the child they carry is made in Your image - as well as theirs - made for eternal life. Dispel their fear and selfishness and give them true womanly hearts to love their babies and give them birth and all the needed care that a mother can give. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.

## Saint Monica Society Prayer For November

### ACT OF FAITH & PLEA FOR THOSE WITHOUT FAITH

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Please help those who do not believe in you. I believe that your divine son became man, died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. Please help those who do not believe in you I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches,

because you who have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Please help those who do not believe in you especially \_\_\_\_\_ !

### St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

## Catholic Humor

