

Do you know who you are?

*Whenever, couples come to me to begin preparations for their weddings, I sometimes ask them **why they want to marry the other person**. And it really is life-affirming for me to hear them say wonderful things about each other. I love her more than anything...I can't imagine my life without him...I can't imagine my life without him/ her...It's hard to hear these kinds of things and not recognize the goodness of God and the gift of **romantic love**.*

*And in situations, when the dating is short, I almost question, "Do you think you know the other person well enough to say these kinds of things about him or her?" silently, I answer the question for them. "**Of course not.**" Naturally, it's hard to persuade couples into pushing their wedding down the road a way, until more time has passed, until they have spent enough time together to truly "know" the other person, and what they are getting into.*

Most relationships are this way. Only after spending **a lot of time** with someone can we **discover who they are**. We need shared experiences with that person. We need to see them in various areas of their lives...works, school, play, romantic relationships. We won't be able to say things about a person until much more time passed, until we have seen enough and heard enough and experienced enough.

So, asks Jesus of his disciples. And as we know, Peter jumps in with his famous "answer."

"You are the Christ, the son of the living God." And in many ways, Peter is doing what all of us do. He comes to a conclusion about someone after a good deal of time has passed, after seeing and hearing much from his friend, Jesus. We don't have that same "luxury." We have **Faith**, and Jesus today is saying, **"Does anybody get it?" "Do you know who you are?"**

Jesus is absolutely delighted with Peter's response. **The Father** has opened the mind of Peter. The visible aspect of the Rock upon which Christ has built His church is Peter and his successors, the Pope with Authority -especially in the areas of **Faith & Morals** - and with that goes the promise that the "Gates of the Netherworld" shall not prevail against it."

For 2000 years the church has been trying to live up to it's calling of being One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. But because it is composed of sinners, like Peter who out of fear denied Christ, because it is composed of sinners like you and me it often fails. Because of its mistakes, its sins, especially of those at times in leadership roles, the church for many can cause doubts instead of Faith, darkness instead of light, sadness instead of joy. It is no uncommon that at times, like in marriage you will have a love -hate relationship with the church.

Few years back, I visited with a Presbyterian minister who was celebrating 50 years of marriage. I asked him if he ever thought of divorce. He replied, "Divorce, never! Never! Many times! "How well that sentiment is expressed by that minister.

So, today Jesus too is asking us, do we still have Faith, experience in Him?