



"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY – AUGUST 23RD, 2026

MAY WE DISCERN THE WILL OF GOD

Are We the Rock?

Who is Jesus for us?

This question can be asked from a pulpit, or from a public stand during an evangelistic event, or in a pamphlet or flyer. The answer may vary, according to the familiarity of the person with theological definitions, and the sincerity of their reply.

For many who have been raised in church ambiances and consider themselves believers it will not be hard to reply to this question with a theological accuracy that will surprise many: "our Savior, the Christ, the Messiah, God's only-begotten Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Second Person of the Trinity, God's Perfect Lamb, the Way, the Life, and the Truth, etc., etc."

All of these phrases and many others are found in the Bible, in the Creeds (the doctrinal confessions of the Church), or in theological treatises on Christology. Actually there is nothing wrong in choosing one of these defining phrases if it resonates with our convictions about Jesus' identity. In fact, once we become familiar with them it would be hard not to make use of them in relation to our faith in Christ.



But one thing is defining and a totally different thing is living out what we define. If we declare in all honesty that Jesus is our Lord, how does this declaration correlate with the way we align our daily lives with His Way of Love?

Or if we declare without hesitation that He is our Savior, to what degree do our lives show that we live as someone who has been saved? First of all, what do we show we have been saved from? From sin and death? If that is the case, then our lives must necessarily show an authentic inner joy, an abundance of true generosity towards others, and an unquenchable endeavor to sanctify our lives.

I am not suggesting that we abstain from using these phrases unless we are able to show a 100% commitment to what they imply for our lives. One can start with an aspiration towards a goal, and gradually move purposefully toward its fulfillment. What we should try hard not to do is use such phrases lightly, especially when answering a personal question about who Jesus is for us.

In most cases it is only thanks to the revelation given to us directly by the Holy Spirit, rather than using learned phrases, that we begin to experience who Jesus actually is for our lives. This is exemplified in the Gospel reading for this Sunday (Matthew 16:13-20) when Simon replied to Jesus' question about His identity, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus immediately answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven."

Right after that Jesus named Simon "Peter", which means stone or rock. And He told him he would build His church on that rock, and the gates of Hades would not prevail against it.

I am not going to enter the discussion of whether this validates the Roman Catholic Church's claim about Peter being the first bishop of Rome. There is not much historical evidence to sustain this claim. One thing is certain from the Gospels themselves and the Book of Acts though: Peter did hold a preeminent position among the first followers of Christ.

The main question for us as present-day followers, however, should be a different one. Are we also the rock? Can Jesus still count on us to continue to build His church? Can we still make it safe from the assaults of the gates of Hades?

The words of the apostle Paul to the converts in Rome are as relevant today as they were then: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

As he continued to admonish them, let us never be "conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds, so that we may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito, Rector

READINGS FOR THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Isaiah 51:1-6 + Romans 12:1-8 + Matthew 16:13-20
+ Psalm 138

CALENDAR

Note: We worship in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10:00 AM. Tuesday Noon Mass is held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

SUNDAY August 23rd, 2026 The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
10:00 AM Mass in All Saints' Church
Join Zoom Meeting from our website at www.allsaintschurch.org
Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children
Ages 5 to 12 in the Parish Hall, from 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Christian Formation for Adults (the 2nd and 4th Sundays)
Youth and adults around noon after the Mass in the Library
Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally