

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

THEME: **ALL POWER BELONGS TO GOD**

The main message for today's liturgy of the word is that God is the source of all power. God shares his authority to elected civil leaders to serve the people and to the Pope and the other church leaders for the material and spiritual welfare of his children.

Prophet Isaiah in our first reading tells us how God hates unfaithful and selfish officials by describing how he removed the proud "master of the royal palace," Shebna from his office and promoted the humble and faithful Eliakim. The robe, the sash, and the keys are the insignia of this office. In today's psalm, David thanks God for having raised him from lowly origins and given him authority as king over the people of Israel.

And in the second reading, St. Paul praises God for the depth of his wisdom and knowledge and correct judgments, and asserts that he is the source of all authority on earth and in heaven.

Today's Gospel passage describes how Peter confesses Jesus as his Lord and Savior and how Jesus, in turn, approves it and gives the teaching and ruling authority of his Church to Peter, thus establishing a leadership role in his Church to serve the spiritual and physical needs of the Church. By his statement: "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven" Jesus gives Peter and his successors the power to bind and to loose (make laws; exercise authority) in the Church, and the assurance that their decisions will be ratified in heaven.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, God has also given us power to lead in different ways in our families and in the Church. He is expecting us to carry out our duties faithfully by leading the people he has placed in our care according to his plan and purpose.

Our first reading today shows us that God is watching on how we are carrying out our duties in our different capacities; as teachers, politicians, parents, doctors, business owners, priests, or whatever position we have, we must understand that we will be held responsible for our decisions and leadership.

God expects us to be faithful leaders in whatever capacity he has placed us. Let us reflect and ask ourselves how faithful we have been in our different leadership positions? We must understand that whatever position we are today is not all about us, we are only sharing from God's authority, and should be able to lead those under us according to the mind of God.