

21<sup>st</sup> Sunday A

In the Gospel Jesus is traveling with his disciples.

He has been teaching, healing the sick, raising the dead... and now he asks the disciples  
"What are the people saying about me?"

Some of the people thought he was his cousin John the Baptist.  
Some of the people thought Elijah has come back from the dead.  
Some of the people thought he was a great prophet

But Jesus wanted to hear what he meant to his close friends.

Has he made a difference to them?

What was it that made them follow him ?

It was more important that Jesus hears from his disciples, so he asks,  
"But who do YOU say that I am?"

Peter steps forward and makes a bold confession of faith

He tells Jesus who he is to Peter,  
"You are the Christ, the Son of God"

Then Jesus tells Peter WHO HE IS...and WHO HE IS TO BECOME.  
A ROCK... .a LEADER... STRENGTH for the others  
And the FOUNDATION of the church.

He will be given authority ....given the KEYS...  
to open or to close...to bind or to loose.

Keys... so important.....they secure, they lock, they open  
They are so small but have such power.  
A tiny key can start a truck that carries tons of material across the country.

Almost all of us have two very important keys,  
our car key or our house key and it's frustrating when you lose them.  
We are careful who we give them to.  
We don't want to be locked out!

Keys allow you to do something  
Keys allow you entrance to somewhere  
Only those with keys can enter.  
The giving of a key is a symbol of power, authority, trust

The first reading: Shebna was the master of the palace of the king.  
He was like the Prime Minister, the keeper of the keys.  
But he abused his power and was removed from his office.  
He had to turn in his keys.

Eliakim took his place and was given the authority to open the door or close the door

What does that mean in our lives?

What keys are we given? There are two of them:

The key to grant forgiveness

The key to withhold forgiveness

We can open or shut..... We too can bind or loose

We have the opportunity to use the key of forgiveness often

For our spouse,

our children,

our co-workers

Our kids,

our friends,

our neighbors

As we use the key to our car or our house often,

we must use the key to grant forgiveness often

To open the door of peace to one another.

The other key is to withhold forgiveness

This keeps the other locked inside where there is no peace or unity.

The keys given to Peter are also given to us.

We have the chance every day to be CHURCH

Just as much as Peter, the apostles, or Pope Francis

TO FORGIVE.....OR WITHHOLD FORGIVENESS.

Pray God we forgive.