



Who Do You Say That I Am?

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” An easy answer if you just report what other people say and what you have heard. No commitment. No revelation. No risk. But it all changes when the question is more to the point: “Who do *you* say that I am?” Tell me what you know, not what you heard. The silence is almost deafening. Vulnerability, not just anonymous reporting, is required in the asked-for response. No surprise—it is Peter who answers. Never one to hide his emotions or edit his thoughts, it is Peter who reveals what he knows, perhaps even what he is unsure of, perhaps the truth that he only hopes for but has not yet declared. “You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God” (Matthew 16:16).

Jesus responds with a prayer of blessing; the apostles, on the other hand, remain silent. Although we are very familiar with Peter’s assent of faith, his declaration was almost unheard-of or unexpected from a first-century Jewish man. It was dangerous to identify someone as Messiah. It was blasphemous to



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name someone as the Son of the Living God. Yet, in faith and humility, Peter made the declaration and, in the naming, entrusted his life, his hope, and all that he believed firmly into the hands of Jesus. This was no simple act. This was no ordinary day. ●

Simon Peter said in reply, “You are the
Messiah, the Son of the Living God.”

MATTHEW 16:16



Reflect

How would you answer if Jesus asked you, “Who do you say that I am?” (He is asking you!)

Dear Padre,

Can a non-Catholic serve and hold an office in a Catholic parish organization?

According to their knowledge, competence, and position, the Christian faithful have an obligation to assist in the necessary works of the Church and promote the common good of the parish—its worship, its apostolic mission, its charities, the care of its ministers, and its care of the poor. (See *Code of Canon Law*, 222.) In general, canon law and most diocesan regulations stipulate that members of primary decision-making entities must be active, registered Catholics who participate in the sacramental life of the Church. For example, members of a pastoral council must be “in full communion with the Catholic Church” (CCL 512 §1). However, non-Catholics—such as spouses of parishioners or experts in their fields (e.g., finance, law, architecture)—are sometimes invited to lend their skills by serving on advisory boards and committees or in other support roles that are usually in a non-voting capacity. In all cases, the pastor or bishop has the discretion to involve non-Catholics in specific initiatives. For instance, a bishop “can invite as observers to the diocesan synod other ministers or members of churches or ecclesial communities which are not in full communion with the Catholic Church” (CCL, 463 §3). A non-Catholic interested in serving should consult the local priest about available opportunities, based on the norms of a diocese. ●



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A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

I genuinely hope that our Christian lifestyle will always reflect this fraternal, “Samaritan” spirit—one that is welcoming, courageous, committed, and supportive, rooted in our union with God and our faith in Jesus Christ. Enkindled by this divine love, we will surely be able to give of ourselves for the good of all who suffer, especially our brothers and sisters who are sick, elderly, or afflicted.

MESSAGE ON WORLD
DAY OF THE SICK,
ROME, FEBRUARY 11,
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Monday

August 24
St. Bartholomew,
Apostle
Rv 21:9b–14
Jn 1:45–51

Tuesday

August 25
Weekday
2 Thes 2:1–3a, 14–17
Mt 23:23–26

Wednesday

August 26
Weekday
2 Thes 3:6–10, 16–18
Mt 23:27–32

Thursday

August 27
St. Monica
1 Cor 1:1–9
Mt 24:42–51

Friday

August 28
St. Augustine, Bishop
and Doctor of the
Church
1 Cor 1:17–25
Mt 25:1–13

Saturday

August 29
The Passion of St.
John the Baptist
1 Cor 1:26–31
Mk 6:17–29

Sunday

August 30
Twenty-second
Sunday in Ordinary
Time
Jer 20:7–9
Rom 12:1–2
Mt 16:21–27

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