

I can easily see myself in St Peter this Sunday. So very quick to claim God as my friend and myself a person who proclaims I follow Christ but some persecution, some hardship there is the danger of falling apart, misinterpreting the message to suit myself. It follows close on last Sunday's readings where Peter is proclaimed the holder of the keys. We are readily reminded this was not because of any of Peter's personal qualities but the work of the heavenly Father. "You are a happy man because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven..."

There seems to be an ambiguity also in this meaning of the Rock. It could be a foundation stone, but Peter at times is a scandal, a stumbling stone. Here we see Peter apparently for whatever reason avoiding the suffering that is to come. The irony with Peter, is he is the one who undertakes the suffering of Christ. Tradition has it, he is crucified upside down because he is not worthy to be crucified as Christ.

I think there may be Peter in us all, the faults in us all. The challenge is to appreciate this and allow the Holy Spirit to work through us. And with Christian hope we will stand with Peter at the gates of heaven, asking for a place there, not because we are worthy but because we trust in God's overpowering love.

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