

Reading for the Feast of the Dedication of the Cathedral

May 23rd 2026

First reading

Acts 7:44-50

‘The Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands.’

In those days: Stephen said to the people and the elders and the scribes, ‘Our fathers had the tent of witness in the wilderness, just as God who spoke to Moses directed him to make it, according to the pattern that he had seen. Our fathers in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our fathers. So it was until the days of David, who found favour in the sight of God and asked to find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands, as the prophet says, “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?”’

Responsorial Psalm

1 Ch 29:10. 11a-c. 11d-12a. 12b-d. R13b

We praise your splendid name, O Lord.

Blessed are you, O Lord,

God of Israel, our father,

from eternity unto eternity.

Yours, O Lord, is greatness and power,

splendour, victory and majesty;

for all is yours in heaven and on earth.

Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom,

you are exalted as head over all.

Riches and honour are from you.

You have dominion over all.

In your hand is power and might;

your hand gives greatness and strength to all.

Gospel Acclamation

2 Chronicles 7:16

I have chosen and consecrated this house, says the Lord,
that my name may be there for ever.

Gospel

Matthew 16:13-19

‘You are Peter, and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’

At that time: When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

The traditional setting for this memorable encounter in Caesarea Philippi is a lovely riverbank under a huge rocky cliff. Jesus asks: /Who do people say that I am?/ Impetuous Peter, always ready to speak out and take risks, confesses Jesus as the Messiah. It is an inspired confession. This uneducated fisherman, who was to prove so shaky when Jesus was arrested, is rewarded with a new name, suggested by the great solid rock above them; and with a new role, leading the people of God. His strength is not in his warm, impetuous nature, but in the power of God.

The motley band of the twelve with Peter as leader would guide the future community of Jesus. They believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and later they would die for that. Our community today is somewhat similar - the motley group who are saintly and sinful, but who with firm faith believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

Peter is praised today within the church for his belief and faith in Jesus as the Son of the living God. This faith would lead him into times of doubt, of unfaithfulness, and eventually to martyrdom. The first call in his following of Jesus was to grow in the faith that would sustain his life. May our faith do the same.