

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Built on “The Christ”
August 23, 2020

Acknowledging Jesus as the Christ is central to our confession of faith as individual Christians and vital in our worship as the gathered people of God. In our use of that divine title, we echo the words of the angel who spoke to the shepherds in the field outside of Bethlehem with the Gospel message, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11). We are blessed in knowing that Jesus, the Christ, is not only God in person in human form but that He is God for us. St. Patrick poetically spoke his confession with the words “Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me.” As we confess Jesus as the Christ this day, we are joining with saints and angels as well as with the sisters and brothers that surround us gathered for worship!

“Built on the Rock” [LSB 645]

1 Built on the Rock the Church shall stand, Even when steeples are falling.
Crumbled have spires in ev'ry land; Bells still are chiming and calling,
Calling the young and old to rest, But above all the soul distressed,
Longing for rest everlasting.

2 Surely in temples made with hands, God, the Most High, is not dwelling;
High above earth His temple stands, All earthly temples excelling.
Yet He who dwells in heav'n above, Chooses to live with us in love,
Making our bodies His temple.

3 We are God's house of living stones, Built for His own habitation.
He through baptismal grace us owns, Heirs of His wondrous salvation.
Were we but two His name to tell, Yet He would deign with us to dwell
With all His grace and His favor.

4 Here stands the font before our eyes, Telling how God has received us.
Th'altar recalls Christ's sacrifice, And what His Supper here gives us.
Here sound the Scriptures that proclaim, Christ yesterday, today, the same,
And evermore, our Redeemer.

5 Grant, then, O God, Your will be done, That, when the church bells are ringing,
Many in saving faith may come, Where Christ His message is bringing:
"I know MY own; My own know Me. You, not the world, My face shall see.
My peace I leave with you. Amen."

HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 16:13–20

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ 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.” ²⁰ Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

“Consider the source.” I heard that a lot when I was growing up. The source for something is the determining factor upon its trustworthiness. We trust that something is true from history because we have good sources of information like eyewitness accounts for instance as well as many other kinds of evidence. Being able to believe something is true has more than simply great significance. It determines who and what we are. Jesus confronted His disciples with a question. “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus’ answer to Peter told him why he could trust what he said to Jesus was the truth. “Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.” When Jesus says that, “on this rock I will build my church,” He is talking about Peter’s confession of faith that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. The confession of faith is the rock upon which the Christian Church is built. Christ is the sole reason for the church’s existence. So when we wonder if something is appropriate for the church to do or to teach, the answer can only be is it founded on Christ. The source for everything we know about Christ is God’s very words found in the Bible. The Bible’s source is God Himself. This is why faith in Christ, faith in His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life, is to be trusted. Its source is God Himself. So you can trust your faith because the source is God and it returns to God.

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.