

Our Parish COMMUNITY

August 23, 2020

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Is 22:19-23

Rom 11:33-36

Mt 16:13-20

Who's in Charge?

There are lots of reasons one could be in charge.

You might be the only one left to do the job. Or, in the case of babysitting, you might simply be older. You could be in charge because you are a bully with the biggest fists, sticks, or guns. Or you might be in charge because you are the best qualified for the job. Today's readings offer us two stories about being chosen for leadership.

In the Old Testament reading, Shebna, an official in King Hezekiah's court, overreached his position of authority. He was demoted and replaced by Eliakim. Carrying the key symbolizes authority over the entire household. Placing it on the shoulder suggests an investiture ceremony. In the Gospel, entrusting Peter with the keys to the kingdom of heaven suggests similar authority, though in a significantly different household.

In both instances the position of authority is meant to be exercised for the benefit of the members of the

respective household. It was precisely because of his failure in this matter that Shebna was demoted and Eliakim placed in charge. What about Peter? The Gospel tells us that the choice of Peter followed his remarkable statement of faith: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).

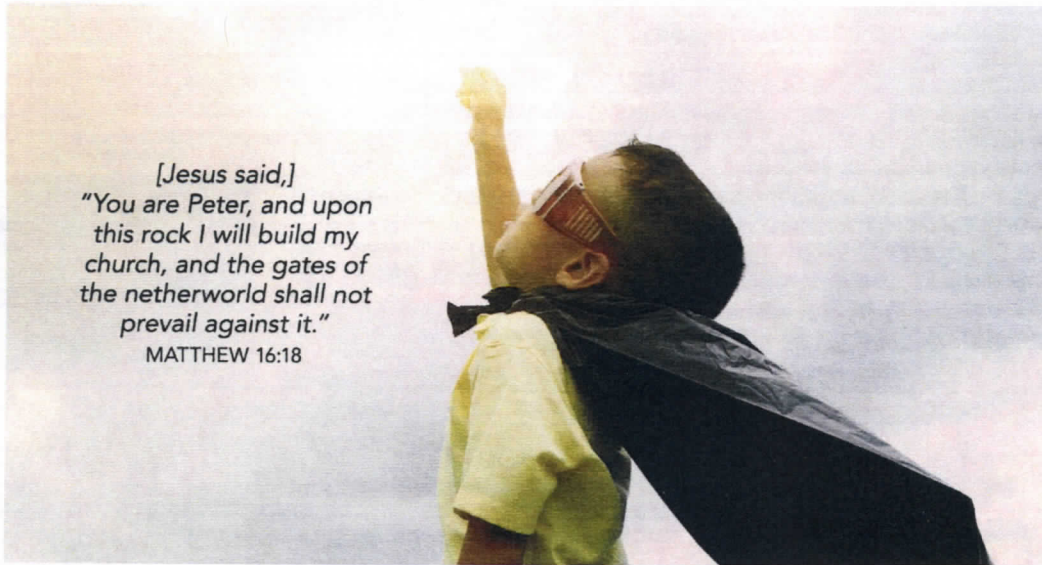
These stories tell us that God chooses very ordinary people for positions of leadership. Why them? Are they the only ones left? Are they the oldest? Were they the best qualified? It was not because they were bullies.

Obviously God thought they could do the job.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- It's not easy being a leader of God's people. Pray for those who have been called to that role.
- Have you ever thought of volunteering to serve on a church committee?



© 2020 Liguori Publications • Liguori, MO 63057-9999

Dear Padre,

What does the Church teach about body art?

I'm a bit squeamish when I see a piercing in a place other than an ear, and when I see a tattoo covering a large part of a person's body I wonder what that person will think about that tattoo in twenty years. But these things are a matter of taste; for example, I don't think there is anything wrong with earrings, but others might.



GOLDEN/SHUTTERSTOCK

The Church has no teaching on tattoos, piercings, or shaping (when a body part is purposely reshaped to fit a cultural ideal). "Do not lacerate your bodies for the dead, and do not tattoo yourselves," say Leviticus 19:28, clearly outlawing piercings and tattoos. But it also says, "Do not...spoil the edges of your beard" (Leviticus 19:27). I broke that law this morning when I shaved.

In their introduction to the Book of Leviticus in the *New American Bible*, revised edition, the bishops teach that the laws in this book are "not merely legislative." They were designed to instill "a way of life in the book's hearers and readers."

We may not have the same obligation to adhere to those rules, but it is important for Catholics to remember 1 Corinthians 3:16: "You are the temple of God." We should do nothing to deface the temple of God. So if you do get a piercing or a tattoo, remember that you're God's temple.

—Fr. Patrick Keyes, CSsR
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

The acceptance of our body as a gift from God is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father...Thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy an absolute power over creation.

—ADDRESS TO PONTIFICAL ACADEMY FOR LIFE, JUNE 26, 2018

© 2020 Liguori Publications, Liguori, MO 63057-9999. Printed in USA. *Imprimatur*: "In accordance with CIC 827, permission to publish was granted on December 18, 2019, by the Most Reverend Mark S. Rivituso, Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of St. Louis. Permission to publish is an indication that nothing contrary to Church teaching is contained in this work. It does not imply any endorsement of the opinions expressed in the publication; nor is any liability assumed by this permission." No part of this work may be used in any form without the prior written permission of Liguori Publications. Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible*, revised edition © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. To order Liguori Sunday Bulletins, call 800-525-9521, or visit Liguori.org.

Calendar

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

Liguori
PUBLICATIONS
A Redemptorist Ministry