

Reflection Thursday 1st Week Lent St Peter's Chair 2024

The feast of **St Peter's Chair** has been celebrated in Rome since the fourth century. It signifies the unity of the Church founded upon the Apostles.

During Lent we seek to follow Christ as his disciple because we are happy to do and because it is something we want to do more than anything else. St Peter puts it this way, *"Carry out your responsibility to the Church because you are eager to do it. Never be a dictator over any group that is put in your charge, but be an example that the whole flock can follow."*

The words of Jesus to Peter *'You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church'* have been understood as the basis for the special role of the bishop of Rome, the successor of Peter, in relation to the whole church. In different ways each of the gospels testifies to the leadership role of Peter. The words of Jesus to Peter in Matthew's gospel are words of assurance, for it is Christ who will build the Church and Christ who endows Peter with authority.

Aware of Peter's failings as well as his triumphs, he teaches us that following Jesus is not about perfection; not about being without sin, nor about being faithful with no doubts. It is not about having all the answers or having absolute certainty all of the time. It is about falling down, failing, and being picked up and brushed off. It is about putting one foot in front of the other knowing that God is beside us and loves us with each step we take. It is knowing that as we walk the journey of faith God does not abandon us and is with us every step of the way — even when we are not sure that there is a way to follow or if the way we are following is the right way.