

August 27, 2017 – 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A  
Fr. Larry Richards

Good morning! How are you? Blessed! Now I'm sure everyone is going to know what I'm going to preach on today right. If you know me at all. I was on retreat this past week, five days of silence, and I put on Facebook, Twitter, and all the various things, that I would be on a five day retreat if you want me to pray for you, send it to me and I will pray for you. So, of course, there were two thousand requests that came in. So that took most of the week to pray for each person and their intention. It's crazy. But then as I thought of that, I pray every day for an hour, so I want to make sure that you know that you can always email me, at the parish. Just go to our website: <http://www.stjosephbol.org/meet-the-pastor-fr-larry> and it says email Fr. Larry, it goes right to me, nobody else, and then give me your prayer requests and I'll pray for you and your prayer requests every morning. That's what I'm here for, is to pray for you. And I pray for you in general, every day, twice a day, but if you need specific things, please email me and I'll take care of that when I'm praying.

But I want to go now to the Gospel, but before I get to that, one of the prayer requests that came in, it didn't last long. I didn't pray for what she asked. She prayed for the death of Pope Francis, and that the Church would get out of the heresy of the English Mass, and everything else. She went on and on and on. You could tell this person didn't know me, so I did pray for her but for her conversion and her humility, which wasn't present in that moment. In the middle of that I was preparing for this homily, because when Jesus says "upon this rock, I will build My Church." That I hope that we can all agree that it's the Will of God, to found the Church. Right? This is God's will, Jesus said "I've come to found My Church." And so He didn't come to find a literary club, He didn't come to find a Bible, He came to found a church.

So this is what God established, the Church, but then He didn't just do that. Because the problem is what was happening before He founded the Church, He asked that question, "Who do people say that I am?" And they all gave different interpretations right? Only Peter, who had revelation, not what people said, but revelation from God. You've got this from my Heavenly Father, said you are the Christ, and then after he had this revelation, to clarify all the other errors that were out there He said "You are Peter, and upon you I will build My Church. But not only that I will give you, Peter, the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you, Peter, which you bind on Earth, will be bound in Heaven, whatever you loose on earth, I will loose in heaven." That's the Will of God that was explicit, explicit in the Scripture.

And so it's still true today the same church, the same Peter is still chosen by God, and the promise is still there, and the Gates of Hell, will not prevail against it. Because of Peter. See the problem is if each of us were Pope, we would all do it a different way, now wouldn't we? You'd do it one way, I'd do it totally different than a lot of other people and that's why I'm not the Pope right? And so would you and you'd sit there and say this is the way it should be. And the problem is there's so many other places. Let's say we interpret Scripture one way and those of you like what I say come follow me and there would be a group that would do that. And there'd

be a group that says “I don’t like what Fr. Larry does.” So they’d go over here and say let’s do it this way. This is what I believe about the church, and everybody who likes this will follow me. And we’d have another follower, and then someone else would be back here saying “No, no, no, they’re both wrong. I have the true interpretation of the Gospels. This is the way it should be.” And you go yeah, yeah, yeah. And a group will follow them. Then there’s all these different people following different ways of the church. God only promised one person, that the Gates of Hell would not prevail against it: the Pope, period.

And so you can follow those other things, you’re a free person, but you need to know that the Will of God, has not changed. That God established Pope Francis to be the one by the Holy Spirit, to be the one who leads the Church. And we can agree with him or disagree with him. But if we disagree with him and say we won’t follow what he’s teaching, you gotta know you separate yourself from the True Church. Right? Because if you and I say that we know better, I know more than he does; I am no longer in the boat with Peter. And to no longer be in the boat with Peter, means I am no longer a Catholic, De Facto. We gotta know that our decisions make consequences. And then we gotta know how we deal with this. When that person emailed me that I knew she didn’t have two things. I knew she didn’t have humility and she didn’t have obedience. Do you think if you have humility and obedience that God will let you go astray? No. If you and I approach His church and we approach Him with humility and obedience God promises to take care of us and the Gates of Hell will not prevail against us either.

But what happens is, we don’t have humility but we have pride, this is what I think. Nobody here of course, but other people. But what God is calling all of us to be is to know that it’s His Will, that He established a Church, and He established a Pope and how do we deal with that best? By being people of humility and people of obedience. He will never let us stray. If he does let us stray, then Jesus Christ is a liar. Period. Jesus is either a liar or He’s not a liar. He said this is the Church, you are Peter, and the Gates of Hell will not prevail. And if you and I stay faithful and we’re humble and obedient then God promises us the same thing that He promised to Peter. So today, let us conform our will to the Will of God. Let us be people of humility and obedience, that we may grow stronger as a Church, and that we may grow stronger in our faith.

You got it? Get it? Gonna live it? May each of you know His love today and forever,  
Amen.