

## **Solid Rock**

The name "Peter" means "rock" (Petros (Greek)= stone, rock).

Rocks are solid, hard, resilient, sturdy, durable.

Peter didn't always live up to his name.

A couple weeks ago, the gospel told us how Peter's fear paralyzed him. In that moment, his faith didn't feel too resilient.

And we all know what Peter did when Jesus needed him most. He denied Jesus, not once, not twice, but three times. Then he ran away!

Nonetheless, Peter, the fisherman-turned-disciple, returned to follow Jesus and ultimately gave his life for the faith.

It is precisely upon this imperfect man with a sometimes wavering faith that Jesus builds his church. And this church, this community of faith will prevail, Jesus tells us, even against "the gates of hell itself " (Matthew 16:13-20).

In every age, Christ continues to build his church. And in every generation the saga continues: The flawed and the imperfect are chosen to continue the construction. Christ does not always select backgrounds and resumes that Google, Amazon, or Verizon might choose for leadership excellence.

God's ways are not our ways.

And despite the often flawed personnel profiles of its members, that church, founded by Christ, marches on.

At times, the flaws of the leaders and members are so deep that the church's "march" seems impeded. Our gait may appear more like "limping" or "hobbling" through time. But the church advances nonetheless, because God's kind grace sustains it. A heaven-sent energy protects it from crossing the gates of self-destruction.

Through our Baptism, each of us has been called to a purpose, a mission.

United with the successor to Saint Peter, each of us has been entrusted with a work that nobody else is called to do. This is the part that we play as part of the amazing building project of the church in our own time.

Christ, the architect, knows that we are imperfect builders. Sometimes, like Peter, our faith will falter. And sadly, from time to time, we'll even fail the people we love the most.

But God's ways are not our ways.

Christ never fails to build his church. And no "hell" of human making, or otherwise, can prevail against it.

The amazing grace of God is stronger than any darkness. This holy construction remains undeterred.