



21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 16:13-20
-ASIA-

The *question of identity* and the *profession of faith* are the centrality of today's Gospel. Jesus was rapt to know "who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (cf. Mt. 16:13) And the disciples replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." (cf. Mt. 16:14) But this does not satisfy him, with certitude he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" (cf. Mt. 16:15) Jesus was interested to know "*How he is identified by his disciples?*" With God's grace and generosity, in faith Simon Peter said in reply, "*You are the Christ, Son of the Living God.*" (cf. Mt. 16:16) With this proclamation, Jesus said to him in reply, "*Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church...*" (cf. Mt. 16:17-18)

"Who do you say that I am?" is the very same question that Jesus is asking us. In our encounter and relation with him how are we going to give an answer to this question? Let us call on the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to the Mystery of God, to let our being be disposed to experience Him deeply in the simplicity and in the ordinariness of our lives. Able to proclaim boldly our faith not merely on our lips but especially of our giving witness to it; of a transformed life through unpretentious commitment, whose gaze are for the wretched, small and vulnerable, sensible and listens to reality and the signs of time, and passionate for the restoration of the wounded Body of Christ.

As daughters of Blessed Francisco Palau, let his *Creed* written in "My Relation with the Church" reminds and inspires us to live zealous our faith and what we believe in, as he confess:

1. *I believe that you exist, that you are the only object of love assigned by the law of grace*
"Thou shalt love..."
2. *That you are God and the neighbors.*
3. *That all the neighbors, that is, those predestined to glory, form a perfect moral Body under Christ, God-man, their Head.*
4. *That where Christ is, there is the Church, and they are not separate things...*
5. *That this Body is called the Church...*
6. *That the Church is immensely beautiful because it possesses all the perfection and attributes which form the image of God himself; and so, it is the one object of love which can satisfy all the appetites of the human heart and the intellectual and material vision of man.*
7. *That this perfect moral Body which is you, is a reality, a distinct entity, with its own life and movement; you have spirit and you live, you understand and love, you speak, hear and see.*

8. *That being loved as the one object worthy of love by men and angels, you can correspond with love by loving your lovers.*
9. *That in you love is the Holy Spirit, who poured out upon all the members of your body, corresponds with love to the one who loves. You do not have a soul as we have, but you have a spirit, and this is the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity who gives you life, movement, virtue, grace and glory; you are an intelligence, and this is in your head which is Christ, the Son of the living God, and man, Son of Mary the Virgin; and the Father is with the Son and the Holy Spirit as the principle whence proceed the other two; in you with you, and through you, works the one, triune God, and apart from you there is no salvation, life or happiness, but rather, agitation and eternal torment.*

CARMELITA MISIONERA TERESIANA-ASIA