

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (Mk 8,27-35): Jesus set out with his disciples for the villages around Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He asked them, «Who do people say I am?». And they told him, «Some say you are John the Baptist; others say you are Elijah or one of the prophets». Then Jesus asked them, «But you, who do you say I am?». Peter answered, «You are the Messiah». And He ordered them not to tell anyone about him (...).

Then Jesus called the people and his disciples and said, «If you want to follow me, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. For if you choose to save your life, you will lose it; and if you lose your life for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel, you will save it».

Peter's confession on the way to Jerusalem

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today we contemplate a milestone in Jesus Christ's way: Peter's confession. Jesus asks his disciples who the people think He is and who they themselves consider Him to be. The views of people are greater or lesser approximations —from the past— to the mystery of Jesus Christ, and they have something in common: they classify Jesus in the category of prophet (Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist...). But they do not arrive at His divine nature.

Peter answers in the name of the Twelve in a confession that is markedly different from the opinion of the "people": "You are Christ" (or, also, according to parallel passages, the "Anointed one", "Son of the living God"). Immediately afterwards, Jesus foretells His Passion and Resurrection, and continues with a teaching about the way of the disciples: the way to follow Him, the "Crucified", in a "getting lost

themselves".

—In his confession, Peter used "words of promise" from the Old Covenant: it was a confession "in the dark". That confession arrived at its complete form only when Thomas touching the wounds of the Risen Christ, cried out, in amazement: "My Lord and my God!".