May 29th: Memorial of Saint Paul VI, Pope

Gospel text (*Mt* 16:13-19): When Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi, He asked his disciples, «Who do people say the Son of man is?». They said, «For some of them you are John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets». Jesus asked them, «But you, who do you say I am?». Peter answered, «You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God».

Jesus replied, «It is well for you, Simon Barjona, for it is not flesh or blood that has revealed this to you but my Father in Heaven. And now I say to you: You are Peter (or Rock) and on this rock I will build my Church; and never will the powers of death overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and what you unbind on earth shall be unbound in Heaven».

«You are Peter (or Rock) and on this rock I will build my Church»

Fr. Antoni CAROL i Hostench
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Today at the celebration of Pope Saint Paul VI, we lift our souls in a double thanksgiving. Thanks to Jesus Christ for keeping his word to stay with us until the end of the world (cf. Mt 28:20). God fulfills that promise through his Church, through his Eucharistic presence ... But he does it in a very special way through the Pope, the "sweet Christ on earth" (Saint Catherine of Siena). The contemporaries of Pope Montini were able to feel the clairvoyance and the firmness with which that holy shepherd defended the Church during "busy" times.

Thanks also to that humble pastor who, being sometimes alone - like Jesus in Gethsemane - suffered and wept for the Church. He embodied the "stone" on which Christ always builds his Church, without the gates of Hades being able to prevail against it (cf. Mt 16:18). Saint Paul VI assumed the enormous task of leading, concluding, and applying Vatican Council II. Times change and the Church - remaining faithful to its foundations - is not falling behind before new challenges. For this reason, the Pope of the Council watched over an exquisite and daring “updating” of the Church.

It seemed to some that it fell short; to others, that he went too far ... In between, the humble Saint Paul VI suffered because he saw - too many times, impotent and isolated - confusion and nonsense within the Church. Pope Montini was a martyr in life... In his simplicity he even said: « Perhaps the Lord has called me and preserved me for this service not because I am particularly fit for it, or so that I can govern and rescue the Church from her present difficulties, but so that I can suffer something for the Church, and in

that way it will be clear that he, and no other, is her guide and savior». Yes, it is Christ, but He is counting on us: perhaps the faithful should commit ourselves to suffer something more for the Roman Pontiff, our "holy father"...