

Sometimes, there are questions that aren't simply looking for information, questions that aren't only trying to know something...

But questions that ask us to make a decision and to answer, **not simply from what we think we know**, but from our heart and from our life...

Questions that make us look at ourselves... and ask us to take a stand...

There are also questions that we can answer almost without thinking...

Questions for which we already know the answer because we've heard it many times...

because we learned it... because someone taught it to us...

But the question Jesus asks today doesn't belong to that group...

My dear brothers and sisters... today's Gospel brings us to one of those moments that can mark our journey of faith...

Jesus asks His disciples... **Who do people say that the Son of Man is?** *And the answers come quickly...*

John the Baptist...

Elijah...

Jeremiah...

It's a relatively easy question... because to answer it, they only need to say what other people think about Jesus...

But then Jesus changes the question... **But who do you say that I am?**

And suddenly! repeating what other people say isn't longer enough... **Now the answer has to come from them...**

And I believe that, after so many centuries, this question continues to come through the Gospel and reaches each one of us... **And you... who do you say that I am?**

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BUT WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

We may have heard about Jesus since we were children...

We may know many things about Him...

We may come to Mass every Sunday...

We may pray the Creed and know the teachings of our faith...

And all of that is important...

But there comes a point in our journey of faith when **it's no longer enough simply to know who other people say Jesus is...** We need to discover... **Who is He for me?**

Peter dares to answer... *You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God....*

And then Jesus tells him something that we cannot ignore... **Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven...**

Peter didn't come to that answer simply because he was more intelligent than the others...

Faith was first a gift... *Let us remember that...* **Faith was first a gift...** God opened Peter's heart so that he could recognize **who was standing before him...** *But that gift also needed Peter's response...* And the same thing happens with us...

The faith we've received...

The Word we've heard...

The sacraments we've celebrated...

The grace that has supported us so many times...

All of that is a gift... But the gift waits for a response... And at this point, Jesus' question becomes even more personal... **Because we could respond...**

Jesus is my Lord...

Jesus is my Savior...

Jesus is my Teacher...

But then we would have to ask ourselves... **Does the way I live confirm the answer I give with my lips?**

Because if I say that Jesus is my Lord... **then I also have to allow Him into my decisions...**

If I say that He is my Teacher... **I've to allow His Word to teach me, even when it's difficult for me...**

If I say that He is the center of my life... then that answer has to begin to show **in the way I live... in the way I love... in the way I treat others...**

Listen... Peter's answer wasn't simply the right answer... **It was an answer that began to change his life...**

And there is something even more beautiful in this conversation... Peter says to Jesus... **You are the Messiah...** And Jesus answers him... **You are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my Church...** Peter recognizes who Jesus is and Jesus begins to show Peter who he is called to be...

He gives him a mission...

He gives him the keys...

He counts on Peter for His Church...

And here we can discover something very important for our own lives...

When we truly discover who Christ is... **we also begin to discover who we're...**

Because meeting Jesus doesn't only allow us to know Him better... **It also helps us discover why we're here...**

what we can offer...

whom we're called to serve...

what God wants to do with our lives...

My dear friends... Peter has given a wonderful answer today... **But his journey is only beginning...**

He still has much to learn about Jesus...

He still has to discover that following Him will not always mean going where him had imagined...

He still has to learn how to live the answer he has just given...

And the same is true for us... So, before we finish, I would like us to put aside, just for a moment...

All the answers we've learned...

All the answers other people have given...Even

All the beautiful answers we know how to say...

And listen once again to Jesus asking each one of us personally... **And you... who do you say that I am?**

....

Perhaps our answer is...

You're my Lord...

You're my Savior...

You're my hope...

Let us not be afraid to answer... But let us remember something... Our answer doesn't end when we say His name... **Our answer begins when our life starts to show that we truly believe and live what we've just said.**

Fr. Moices Rafael C.