



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 23, 2026

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, joy, and hope!

“The Question That Shapes Our Faith”

Have we ever truly asked ourselves who Jesus is, not merely in theory, but in the concrete reality of our lives today? It would be interesting to hear the many responses we might give if someone asked this question. We could gather countless ideas, impressions, personal reflections, or even hearsay about who He is.

In the Gospel, when Jesus asked His disciples, they repeated what others were saying, that He was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. None of these captured His true identity. So, Jesus turned to His disciples and asked them directly, “But who do you say that I am?” He wanted them to know Him personally and intimately, especially since they had chosen to follow Him. Among the twelve, Peter responded with conviction, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Where did such a profound answer come from? How could Peter, a fisherman with human limitations, speak such truth? Jesus revealed that Peter’s profession of faith did not come from human reasoning or popular opinion but from the Heavenly Father Himself. The truth was revealed to Peter, and he held fast to it throughout his life, even in moments of weakness, fear, and denial. Though he stumbled, he ultimately persevered, bearing witness to Jesus until his martyrdom, when he was crucified upside down for the sake of the Gospel.

Jesus’ question invited His disciples to make a personal profession of faith. Today, we are privileged because Peter’s confession has already handed down the truth to us. Yet the question remains, have we accepted this truth in a way that shapes our commitment and faithfulness to Jesus’ teachings? Opinions about Jesus what others say, what society suggests, or what culture portrays, do not transform our lives. But when we believe, with the depth of Peter’s faith, that Jesus is truly the Son of the living God, we allow ourselves to be molded by His ways and to live His life.

In these challenging times, when our world is marked by uncertainty, division, and rapid change, Jesus’ question grows even more urgent. If He were to ask you today, “Who do you say that I am?” how would you respond? Would your answer reflect trust in Him amid life’s anxieties? Would it reveal a faith that remains steady even when circumstances are not?

My hope and prayer is that we continue to know Him more deeply, to anchor our lives in His truth, and to live out our call as His disciples with renewed courage and conviction. May our profession of faith not only be spoken with our lips but also be witnessed in our lives, bringing His light, peace, love, joy, and hope to our families, our community, and our world.

Your Friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual