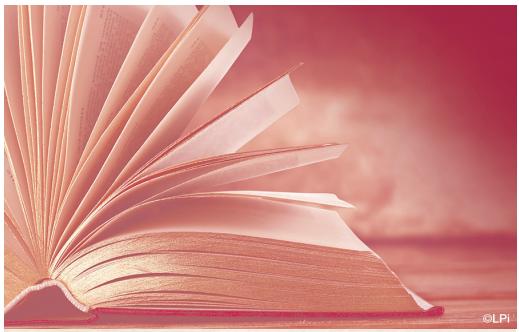


# WORSHIP & MEDITATION



## FIRST READING

"I will place the key of the House of David on Eliakim's shoulder; when he opens, no one shall shut when he shuts, no one shall open." (Is 22:22)



## PSALM

Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands. (Ps 138)



## SECOND READING

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways! (Rom 11:33)



## GOSPEL

"And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it." (Mt 16:18)

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## GOSPEL MEDITATION

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

The only way to know God is to love God. Our minds will never fully grasp the mystery of God, but our hearts and souls can learn to love the mystery. Years ago, when life had a more innocent quality to it, we believed what we were told or witnessed, unless there was direct evidence otherwise. This was especially true if the information came from someone in authority. In a sense, we were a bit more gullible on one hand but also more trusting on the other. The latter is an admirable quality that sadly can be eroded when we realize we have been duped. With education and technological advances, we find ourselves more skeptical and less likely to too quickly accept and believe what we see and hear.

For all of the good that social media can do, it can also easily distort reality and truth. Photoshop and a myriad other technological truths can add to, fabricate, and make even the non-existent seem real. It is amazing. How far do we allow this obviously justifiable skepticism to take us? Questioning and doubting are healthy elements of any good relationship as long as we don't allow them to turn us away from a deeper experience of love and encounter. If we cannot get our minds around something or empirically justify or prove it, we tend to declare it a hoax, untrue, or unauthentic and walk away. The very same trust that can quickly be eroded is exactly what is essential for all of our relationships, especially our relationship with God. With all things and people that make a profound claim on us, we have to trust in the absence of knowledge. Full self-investment involves plunging completely into the unknown!

Simon Peter said to Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Peter came to this knowledge, which is not "head knowledge" because of the relationship he shared with Jesus and what God was able to reveal in and through that relationship. Peter simply "knew" because of love that this is who Jesus really is. The silent exchange of love between friends, and not an intellectual exercise of the mind, brought Peter to this place. When we stop and think about it, there are many things in life that we simply know but do not completely understand. When someone sacrifices their own well-being for another, it may not make intellectual sense when examined. But it makes a world of sense when it is carried out. The vastness of reality and an encounter with incomprehensible mystery all lead us to profound silence where we simply know something to be true. Have you trusted enough to allow your relationship with God to bring you to this place or are you still too skeptical?