

Dear Padre,

What does the Church say about free will and predestination? I am confused and wonder if there is any fundamental difference?

The Church can be viewed as the champion of free will, for it is descriptive of God’s grace at work in his creation. On the other hand, the Church does not champion predestination. The Church understands that this concept is in direct opposition and contradicts the creative act of God. It is understandable how someone might confuse these two different perspectives. In fact, some Christian belief systems have historically confused them; for example, those who follow the thought of John Calvin (1509–1564), including various Congregational, Reformed, and Presbyterian churches. But, regardless of the confusion, the two positions are not complementary, and someone cannot hold both positions because they are incompatible with each other. Catholics believe that we have been created by God with free will. In response to this wonderful gift, we are invited to form our consciences and live our lives lovingly and deliberately as people who choose to respond, in total freedom, to the Way, the Truth, and the Life that is found in Jesus. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

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A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

What can I do for the Church? Not complaining about the Church, but committing myself to the Church. Participating with passion and humility.... That is what a synodal Church means: everyone has a part to play, no individual in the place of others or above others. There are no first- or second-class Christians; everyone has been called.

HOMILY, ROME, JUNE 29, 2022



PA PHOTO / SHUTTERSTOCK

Monday

June 30
Weekday
Gn 18:16–33
Mt 8:18–22

Tuesday

July 1
Weekday
Gn 19:15–29
Mt 8:23–27

Wednesday

July 2
Weekday
Gn 21:5, 8–20a
Mt 8:28–34

Thursday

July 3
St. Thomas, Apostle
Eph 2:19–22
Jn 20:24–29

Friday

July 4
Weekday
Gn 23:1–4, 19;
24:1–8, 62–67
Mt 9:9–13

Saturday

July 5
Weekday
Gn 27:1–5, 15–29
Mt 9:14–17

Sunday

July 6
Fourteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Is 66:10–14c
Gal 6:14–18
Lk 10:1–12, 17–20
or 10:1–9

Our Parish COMMUNITY

June 29, 2025

Sts. Peter and Paul, Apostles

Acts 12:1–11 / 2 Timothy 4:6–8, 17–18 / Matthew 16:13–19



Roots and Wings

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

“There are two things we should give our children: one is roots and the other is wings.” So goes the adage. It is in knowing our roots that we know who we are. It is with wings that we then shape the future—a future sprouting from those roots but also blossoming into something new. If there were only the roots, we would never know life’s richness. Without wings, never would we come to beauty.

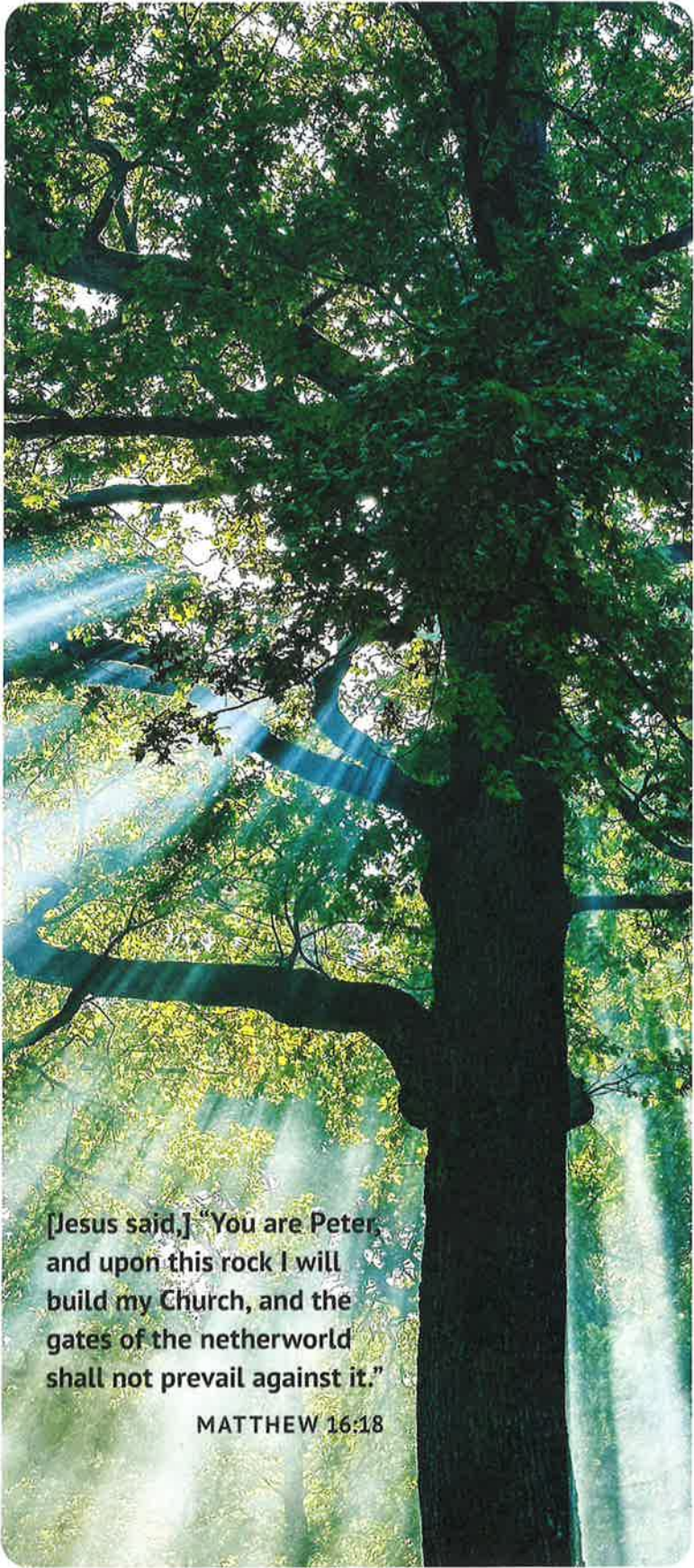
The solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul honors both of these dynamics in the Church. It was Peter who was the Rock, who was able to recognize God’s presence made flesh among us, who would say to Jesus, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

It was Paul who pushed the envelope, who proclaimed that God’s saving love was for Jews and Gentiles—both members of the household of God—without distinction. It was Paul who argued that circumcision was not necessary for a believer. It was Paul who recognized that the Law was indeed a blessing, yet also that obeying the Law does not save us—it is the love of Christ Jesus that saves us.

Many are rooted through faith in Christ Jesus. Some live out that faith as Catholics, others as Lutherans or Methodists, still others as Orthodox or Anglicans. All of us rooted in Christ, all of us living out faith, each blossoming in our own fruitfulness as guided by the Spirit, for the purpose of tradition is to pass on the flame and not to preserve the ashes. ●

Reflect

**Am I more comfortable with roots or wings?
Am I more like St. Peter or St. Paul, and why?**



[Jesus said,] “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.”

MATTHEW 16:18