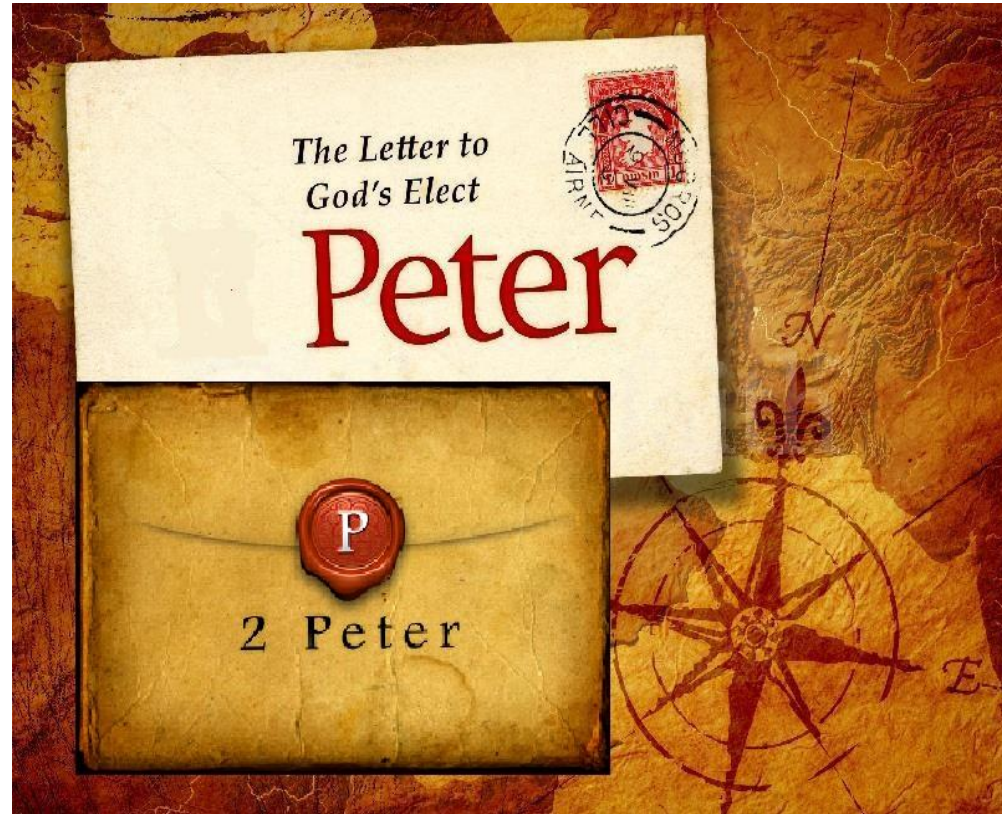


# 1st & 2nd PETER

## CLASS PRESENTATION 20



## 1<sup>st</sup> PETER

### INTRODUCTION:

1st Peter is the 21<sup>st</sup> book of the New Testament. Saint Peter, the leader and spokesman for the early disciples. This is how he is addressed in the greeting denoting his authority to speak.

### AUTHORSHIP:

That Peter, the head of the twelve, was the author of this letter is not only strongly supported by the external and internal evidence. It is clearly stated at the beginning of the letter: “*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ*” (Peter 1:1). Peter writes that he used a secretary, Silvanus, (mentioned in 1 Peter 5:12). Such secretaries often gave literary expression to the author’s thoughts in their own style and language. Again in 1st Peter 5: 1 he refers to himself as: “.....as a fellow presbyter and witness to the sufferings of Christ and one who has a share in the glory to be revealed.”

The early Church regarded the letter as Petrine, and is featured or referred in early Patristic Era texts and Early Church Fathers: Parallels exist in Clement of Rome’s Epistle to the Corinthians (c. 96 AD),

Polycarp (c 70-150/166 AD) has definite citations from the epistle (but he does not cite it as Peter’s or mention Peter’s name); Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 115-202 AD), Tertullian (c. 155-240 AD), and Clement of Alexandria (150-215 AD) all quote this epistle as Petrine. Theophilus of Antioch cites this letter as Petrine. Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 265-339) places it among the books that were accepted by the church without any doubt and stated that Papias (c. 60-130 AD) used 1 Peter. However, there are disagreements amongst scholars and the authorship of 1 Peter remains contested.

### WHEN AND WAS IT WRITTEN WHERE (AND CONTEXT):

Since Peter was martyred at Rome during the persecution of Nero between A.D. 64 and 67, it was supposed that the letter was written from Rome shortly before his death. This is supported by its reference to “Babylon” (1 Peter 5:13), a code name for Rome in the early church.



Central to 1st Peter is the theme of staying firm in the midst of persecutions. Scholars differ on the nature of persecution inflicted on the addressees of 1 Peter. Some read the epistle to be describing persecution in the form of social discrimination, while some read them to be official persecution. (which occurred intermittently starting with first persecution of Christians organized by the Roman government which took place under the emperor Nero in 64 AD). Other Official Persecutions occurred under Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81–96), and again persecution under Trajan, A.D. 111–12.

### OVERVIEW:

This letter begins with an address by Peter to Christian communities located in five provinces of Asia Minor (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia), (1 Peter 1:1), including areas evangelized by Paul (Acts 16:6–7; 18:23). These are referred to by Peter as: “chosen sojourners” (1 Peter 1:1). Christians there are encouraged to remain faithful to their standards of belief and conduct in spite of threats of persecution. Numerous allusions in the letter suggest that the churches addressed were largely (but not limited to) of Gentile composition (1 Peter 1:14, 18; 2:9–10; 4:3–4), though considerable use is made of the Old



Testament (1 Peter 1:24; 2:6–7, 9–10, 22; 3:10–12). The letter constantly mingles moral exhortation (paraklēsis) with its catechetical summaries of mercies in Christ. Encouragement to fidelity in spite of suffering is based upon a vision of the meaning of Christian existence. The emphasis on baptism and allusions to various features of the baptismal liturgy suggest that the author has incorporated sacramental elements of the baptismal rite that had become traditional at an early date. 1st Peter exhort his readers who are under the pressure of persecution to look to Christ with an eschatological hope of deliverance and blessing for faithfulness (1 Peter 1:3-12).

## CONTENT OF 1st PETER:

The contents following the address both inspire and admonish these “chosen sojourners” (1 Peter 1:1) who, in seeking to live as God’s people, feel an alienation from their previous religious roots and the society around them. Appeal is made to Christ’s resurrection and the future hope it provides (1 Peter 1:3–5): “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time.” and to the experience of baptism as new birth (1 Peter 1:3, 23–25; 3:21). The suffering and death of Christ serve as both source of salvation and example (1 Peter 1:19; 2:21–25; 3:18).

What Christians are in Christ, as a people who have received mercy and are to proclaim and live according to God’s call (1 Peter 2: 9–10): *“But you are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises” of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were “no people” but now you are God’s people; you “had not received mercy” but now you have received mercy.”*, is repeatedly spelled out for all sorts of situations in society (1 Peter 2:11–17): *“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and sojourners to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against the soul. Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles, so that if they speak of you as evildoers, they may observe your good works and glorify God on the day of visitation. Be subject to every human institution for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king as supreme or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the approval of those who do good. For it is the will of God that by doing good you may silence the ignorance of foolish people. Be free, yet without using freedom as a pretext for evil, but as slaves of God. Give honor to all, love the community, fear God, honor the king”*.

Deals also about work (even as slaves, 1 Peter 2:18–20), the home (1 Peter 3:1–7), and general conduct (1 Peter 3:8–12; 4:1–11).

But overall hangs the possibility of suffering as a Christian (1 Peter 3:13–17): *“Now who is going to harm you if you are enthusiastic for what is good? But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, blessed are you. Do not be afraid or terrified with fear of them, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame.*

*For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be the will of God, than for doing evil.” Following this, it equates Christian suffering as imitation of Christ’s suffering: “For Christ also suffered\* for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit.” (1 Peter 3: 18).*

Chapter 5 concludes with counsels to Presbyters: *“So I exhort the presbyters among you, as a fellow presbyter and witness to the sufferings of Christ and one who has a share in the glory to be revealed. Tend the flock of God in your midst, [overseeing] not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” (1 Peter 5: 1-4)”,* and for the community of believers: *“Likewise, you younger members,\* be subject to the presbyters. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for: “God opposes the proud but bestows favor on the humble.” So humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you. Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for [someone] to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings” (1st Peter 5: 5-9).*

1st Peter contains 5 (five) chapters.

### **Outline of 1st Peter**

- I. Address (1:1–2)
- II. The Gift and Call of God in Baptism (1:3–2:10)
- III. The Christian in a Hostile World (2:11–4:11)
- IV. Advice to the Persecuted (4:12–5:11)
- V. Conclusion (5:12–14)

## **2nd PETER:**

### **INTRODUCTION:INTRODUCTION:**

2nd Peter is the 22nd book of the New Testament of the Bible, traditionally held to have been written by Saint Peter.

### **AUTHORSHIP:**

According to the Epistle itself, it was composed by the Apostle Peter, an eyewitness to Jesus' ministry. Although it is accepted as Canonical by the Catholic Church (and most Christian denominations), there is some controversy as to whether or not Saint Peter truly wrote it. On 2nd Peter 1: 1 he identifies himself as the writer: "*Symeon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ,*". He further states: "*We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty.*" (2nd Peter 1:16). As in 1st Peter, it is believed he used a secretary to write the letter. British New Testament scholar in his Introduction to the New Testament 4th ed, p. 806, writes: "nowhere did doubts about the letter's authorship take the form of definitive rejection..... It is fair to assume, therefore, that he saw no reason to treat these doubts as serious, and this would mean to imply that in his time the epistle was widely regarded as canonical."

### **WHEN AND WAS IT WRITTEN WHERE (AND CONTEXT):**

As in 1st Peter, and since Peter was martyred at Rome during the persecution of Nero between A.D. 64 and 67, it was supposed that the letter was written from Rome shortly before his death. This is evident as he anticipates his death soon: "I think it right, as long as I am in this "tent," to stir you up by a remind since I know that I will soon have to put it aside, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has shown me. I shall also make every effort to enable you always to remember these things after my departure." (2nd Peter 1: 13-15).

### **OVERVIEW:**

While 1st Peter primarily deals with the subject of suffering and persecution, 2nd Peter focuses on the subject of "false teachers", and "false prophets".

2nd Peter shares a number of passages with the Epistle of Jude, 1:5 with Jude 3; 1:12 with Jude 5; 2:1 with Jude 4; 2:4 with Jude 6; 2:5 with Jude 5; 2:6 with Jude 7; 2:10–11 with Jude 8–9; 2:12 with Jude 10; 2:13–17 with Jude 11–13; 2:18 with Jude 16; 3:2f with Jude 17f; 3:3 with Jude 18; 3:14 with Jude 24; and 3:18 with Jude 25. It is safe to say it "borrowed" or used material from the Epistle of Jude.

## **CONTENT OF 2nd PETER:**

Beginning on Chapter one with the Power of God's promise, as manifested in Jesus, the author goes into a warning about "False teachers/ false prophets": "There were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will introduce destructive heresies and even deny the Master who ransomed them, bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their licentious ways, and because of them the way of truth will be reviled. In their greed they will exploit you with fabrications, but from of old their condemnation has not been idle and their destruction does not sleep." (2nd Peter 2"1-3). He associates them with lessons and references from the past in the Old Testament.

On Chapter three, he speaks to them about the reality of the 2nd Coming of the Lord (2nd Peter 3: 1-10), and ends with an exhortation to be prepared for the Lord's Coming (2nd Peter 3: 11-17), closing with a doxology ().

2nd Peter contains 3 (three) chapters.

## **Outline of 2nd Peter:**

- I.) Address (2 Peter 1:1–2)
- II.) Exhortation to Christian Virtue (2 Peter 1:3–21)
- III.) Condemnation of the False Teachers (2 Peter 2:1–22)
- IV.) The Delay of the Second Coming (2 Peter 3:1–16)
- V.) Final Exhortation and Doxology (2 Peter 3:17–18)

## **RESOURCES USED AND RECOMENDED:**

- NAB Bible, at: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/index.cfm>
- Agape Bible Study at: [http://www.agapebiblestudy.com/Agape\\_Bible\\_Studies\\_Menu.php](http://www.agapebiblestudy.com/Agape_Bible_Studies_Menu.php)
- Pauline Chronology: The Life and Missionary Work of St. Paul of Tarsus. Material provided by Rev. Felix Just, S.J. at: [http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Pauline\\_Chronology.htm](http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Pauline_Chronology.htm)
- New Testament Letter Structure, from Catholic Resources by Felix Just, S.J.  
At: [http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/NT\\_Letters.htm#Edited](http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/NT_Letters.htm#Edited)
- Brown, Raymond E. An Introduction to the New Testament. New York: Doubleday, 1997.
- Early Christian Writers at: <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com.html>
- Guthrie, Donald. Introduction to the New Testament 4th ed. (Leicester: Apollos, 1990).

**Scripture and/or texts in this work are taken from the New American Bible (NAB), revised edition © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C.**