

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, May 8th 2015

The Gospel reading from John is a beautiful but a difficult one. Jesus asks us to be prepared to lay down our lives for our friends. Wow. I have to confess that I don't have any friends for whom in my heart of hearts I'd throw myself into the path of certain death for them. My children or my wife? Yes. Friends? That's a lot harder.

Of course, Jesus did exactly that for his friends. But me, I'm afraid that I'd be more like Peter on that fateful Thursday night denying that I knew Jesus, because I'd be too chicken to admit it and risk my life. I suppose this is one of the reasons I've always identified with Peter. He seems so human. He chickens out, he says the wrong thing (such as his suggestion that they build three tents after witnessing the Transfiguration) and his faith wavers (as it did when he tried to walk on water).

But Jesus chose him as the rock on which the Church was built. So why choose Peter? My theory has always been that Jesus knows we can't be Him, but we can be Peter. We can be Peter putting our foot in our mouth, lacking courage and losing faith — but never giving up. We can all be rocks of faith and justice, even with our many human imperfections.

Pat Borchers- Creighton University Law School