

being convicted on false evidence. Peter also tries to reinforce his denials by swearing oaths and invoking a curse upon himself. Yet St Matthew (5:33) records these words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: “..you have heard it said..’You shall not swear falsely..’ But I say to you, Do not swear at all...Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.” Further, Peter’s denial in front of the bystanders also directly evokes Jesus saying [St. Matthew (10:33)]: “..whoever denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven”.

Peter subsequently changes from a frightened man capable of serious mendacity into the rock of the Church, martyr and saint. After the resurrection, Jesus thrice asks Peter whether he loves Him. He gives Peter the chance to be redeemed by his threefold declaration that he does love Jesus. Perhaps the threefold declaration of love cancels out the earlier threefold denial? We should recognise the maid’s contribution to these pivotal events in Christian history. NEXT WEEK: *Pontius Pilate’s wife.....*

Stephen S

Entrance antiphon: Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.

First Reading: Genesis 15 5-12, 17-18

Psalms 26: Response: The Lord is my light and my help.

Second Reading: Philippians 3 17-4:1

Gospel Acclamation: Glory and praise to you, O Christ! From the bright cloud, the Father’s voice was heard: ‘This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.’ Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

Gospel: Luke 9 28-36

Memorial Acclamation:

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.



Luca Giordano

Second Sunday of Lent Sunday Cycle C, 2022 Weekly Reflection: Minor Players in the Passion (2): The servant girl who questioned St Peter.

The account of the high priest’s servant girl who questioned St Peter appears in all four Gospels with slight variations. She is unnamed. We know practically nothing about her. Yet she is a key character in the Passion. Her involvement demands some attention. After Jesus’ arrest, He is taken to the house of the high priest for questioning. Peter has followed Jesus at a distance and is warming himself in the high priest’s courtyard when the maid challenges him. In St Matthew (26:69-72) the girl comes up to St Peter and asserts: “*You also were with Jesus the Galilean*”. Another girl repeats the assertion in front of bystanders. Finally, the bystanders say to Peter that he is one of Jesus’ followers. On each occasion Peter denies the charge. St Luke (22:54) also has the girl making only the first allegation. St Mark (14:66-70) tells us that it is the same girl who repeats the accusation in front of bystanders, once Peter has gone outside into the gateway. St John (18:15-18;25-27) provides the background that another disciple, as well as Peter, follows Jesus to the house. The other disciple (unnamed) is known to the high priest and enters the court with Jesus while Peter stands outside at the door. The other disciple then goes out and speaks to the maid who was keeping the door and brings Peter in. The maid then asks Peter whether he is one of Jesus’ disciples.

The maid is courageous in challenging Peter, a man who has just been permitted by her to enter the house of the high priest because he is with a disciple known to the high priest. Her challenge is stark and blunt. What motivated her to interrogate Peter we do not know. The consequences of her words are momentous. She insists on truth. Peter lies 3 times. Peter’s responses to her allegations are of greater significance. Peter’s lies in attempted self-acquittal contrast sharply with Jesus, at that very time, Himself