

*Homily for the Memorial of Saint Dominic, Priest
St. Thomas the Apostle Church – West Springfield, Massachusetts
August 8, 2019*



Scripture Readings: [Nehemiah 10:1-13](#) ✕ [Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9](#) ✕ [Matthew 16:13-23](#)

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus calls Simon Peter by two contradictory names: First, He calls him the "Rock," saying, "You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church." However, later on, He calls Simon Peter "Satan," saying, "Get behind me Satan! You are obstacle to me." This He says in response to Simon Peter's failure to think in God's way.



The fact that Simon Peter could be an obstacle does not mean that he ceased to be the rock that holds the Church's faith in unity. Just like all people, Peter was a complex person, in whom both the "wheat" and "weeds" were mixed. Despite his failings, Jesus appointed Peter as the rock, the primary means of support for the new community He came to build.

The LORD has faith in us even though we have failed him time and time again. He works powerfully in and through all of us flawed human beings. What He asks of us is that we continue to try to find and follow in God's ways. ✕