

**Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles**

On June 29, we celebrate the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul Apostles. This feast reminds us that our faith rests upon the testimony of ordinary people, a fisherman and a tent maker who had a real encounter with Jesus, saw Him crucified and risen. They testify that He is Lord of heaven and earth and invite us to acknowledge Him as Lord of our own lives. A few years ago, Pope Francis gave a great homily last on this feast which reminds us of important things we need to ponder:

The Apostles Peter and Paul stand before us as witnesses. They never tired of preaching and journeying as missionaries from the land of Jesus to Rome itself. Here they gave their ultimate witness, offering their lives as martyrs.... Jesus called them by name and changed their lives. After all that happened, he put his trust in them, in one who denied him and one who persecuted his followers, in two repentant sinners. We may wonder why the Lord chose not to give us two witnesses of utter integrity, with clean records and impeccable lives? Why Peter, when there was John? Why Paul, and not Barnabas?

There is a great teaching here: the starting point of the Christian life is not our worthiness; in fact, the Lord was able to accomplish little with those who thought they were good and decent. Whenever we consider ourselves smarter or better than others, that is the beginning of the end. The Lord does not work miracles with those who consider themselves righteous, but with those who know themselves needy. He is not attracted by our goodness; that is not why he loves us. He loves us just as we are; he is looking for people who are not self-sufficient, but ready to open their hearts to him. People who, like Peter and Paul, are transparent before

God. Peter immediately told Jesus: "I am a *sinful man*" (Lk 5:8). Paul wrote that he was "least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle" (1 Cor 15:9). Throughout life, they preserved this humility, to the very end. Peter died crucified upside down, since he did not consider himself worthy to imitate his Lord. Paul was always fond of his name, which means "little", and left behind his birth name, Saul, the name of the first king of his people. Both understood that holiness does not consist in exalting but rather in humbling oneself. Holiness is not a contest, but a question of entrusting our own poverty each day to the Lord, who does great things for those who are lowly.

What was the secret that made them persevere amid weakness? It was the Lord's forgiveness... The witness, then, is not (just) someone who knows the story of Jesus, but someone who has experienced a love story with Jesus. The witness, in the end, proclaims only this: that Jesus is alive and that he is the secret of life.

POPE FRANCIS

**Transitions: Thank you Fr. David!**

This weekend is Fr. David's last with us in our parish family. His preaching and pastoral presence has been a great gift to us all. It has been a wonderful blessing have a priest with his richness of experience serve in our parishes. I am so grateful his support and ministry this year. As he returns to India, we wish him every blessing. I am sure he will be a great blessing to his new parish there Please join me in thanking Fr. David. There will be a reception after all the Masses at St. Jude this weekend to express our thanks. Please see his beautiful farewell letter in bulletin.

Next Sunday, Fr. Raphael will join our family as our parochial vicar. We look forward to welcoming him. I am sure he will bring great gifts to our parishes. Please pray for him this week as he makes the transition. We are blessed to have him.

Let us pray for one another and ask the Lord to help us build us up together in faith, hope and love. Let us be true witness to Jesus as were St Peter and St. Paul

Blessings on your week!  
Fr. Johnson