

Theme of the Week - You are Peter

Sunday is the feast day of both St Peter and St Paul and apart from 1st November where we celebrate All Saints, this is the only other Holy Day of Obligation given over to any other Saint. In this case two Saints! This in itself just shows the significance of the two not just in terms of being Apostles of Jesus but in the role they have played in establishing the Catholic Church and evangelizing all through their participation in it.

Firstly, let us recognize St Peter. A fisherman who is called by Jesus to follow him, and with his brother, he did. Quite a thing to do, give up all you have to follow someone you have just met, but others did the same so why should he stand out? A disciple who was very close to Jesus and was there at some of the most significant points in his ministry, the transfiguration for example. Peter was not on his own however, John (the disciple) was also there, so why so special, why Peter? What we do see as being a little unique of Peter from the other disciples was he was rebuked by Jesus and was told he would deny Jesus on three occasions and he did. When you take all these things together you have a person who arguably is no greater than those around him but Jesus chooses him **'You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church'** (the Vatican is built upon the tomb of St Peter.) Here we may question why Peter? Maybe we need to look at God. Who is our God? A loving God. Who is our God? A forgiving God. Who is our God? A just God. And even though Peter made some mistakes, even though Peter showed signs of temperament, Peter is like us and we are all welcomed into the Catholic Church (Peter was the first Pope of the Church.) The significance of the Catholic Church being a Communal Church, for all, it shows that we are all part of this community even when we make mistakes because we are loved and forgiven by God.

St Paul was a scholar. After the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, his epistles (letters) that we so regularly hear at Mass on Sundays played and still play a huge role in how the Church is today. How we understand our relationship with God the Father, Jesus and our relationship with the divine. Someone who wasn't there when Christ was alive, but converted and went on to spread the word of Jesus. What does this give us? Hope is prevalent. Hope that even though we may not always feel or know that we have experienced Christ, Christ will make himself known to us. Hope that his published works gives us a better understanding of who God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are and why they are our redemption. Hope that in our lives, God will teach us right from wrong.

The 30th June is a day where we celebrate two wonderful Saints. Two Saints where one is the Rock who lay the foundations of the Church and one who then built upon this so others too could follow in Christ. The Church we have today is a listening Church. In October, the second session of the Synod will take place. Pope Francis officially launched the Synod in 2021 saying **"We recall that the purpose of the Synod is not to produce documents, but to plants dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands"**. We have been called by Pope Francis to be in Communion with one another and listen to the Word of God. Participate by coming together and serve one another and finally being called to Mission to better witness the Gospels in our surroundings. Saint Peter and Paul undertook this task and we are called today to do the same.

You are Peter

Weekly Reflections
30th June 2024



A reading from the Gospel of St Matthew 16:13-19

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.'

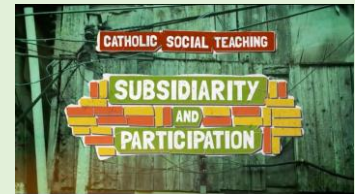
Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord,

Who gave unto Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul the task of laying the foundation and evangelizing of the Church, grant that through our intercession to them we too can bring the message of Christ to others.

Through Christ our Lord

Amen



Catholic Social Teaching of Subsidiarity and Participation

We all have the right and duty to participate fully in society. We live in community with others, growing together. We are called to be active participants in all that we do. We have a responsibility to be inclusive so that we allow all people to participate. Pope Francis said "Each of us has a part to play, a gift to share, a service to offer, for the building up the Body of Christ in Love. Watch the video on Subsidiarity and Participation and state how you can be part of our Church. How can you be:

Active and Curious

Day 1

Why do you think that Saint Peter & Saint Paul's Feast Day is a Holy Day of Obligation?

What importance does this assign to the two Saints?

Day 2

Jesus says to Saint Peter "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church".

What do you think this literally and metaphorically means?

Day 3

How does the writings of Saint Paul give hope to us today?

How can the Synod in October give hope to the Church today?