

**Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles**  
**Mass during the Day**

**Great escape artist.**

**I, Paul have finished the race.**

**I will build my church.**

**-rvb.**

**June 29, 2025**

**Reading I**

**Acts 12:1-11**

In those days, King Herod laid hands upon some members of the Church to harm them.

He had James, the brother of John, killed by the sword,  
and when he saw that this was pleasing to the Jews  
he proceeded to arrest Peter also.

–It was the feast of Unleavened Bread.–

**He had him taken into custody and put in prison  
under the guard of four squads of four soldiers each.**

He intended to bring him before the people after Passover.  
Peter thus was being kept in prison,  
but prayer by the Church was fervently being made  
to God on his behalf.

On the very night before Herod was to bring him to trial,  
Peter, secured by double chains,  
was sleeping between two soldiers,  
while outside the door guards kept watch on the prison.  
Suddenly the angel of the Lord stood by him  
and a light shone in the cell.  
He tapped Peter on the side and awakened him, saying,  
“Get up quickly.”  
The chains fell from his wrists.  
The angel said to him, “Put on your belt and your sandals.”

He did so.

Then he said to him, “Put on your cloak and follow me.”

So he followed him out,

not realizing that what was happening through the angel was real;

he thought he was seeing a vision.

They passed the first guard, then the second,

and came to the iron gate leading out to the city,

which opened for them by itself.

They emerged and made their way down an alley,

and suddenly the angel left him.

Then Peter recovered his senses and said,

“Now I know for certain

that the Lord sent his angel

and rescued me from the hand of Herod

and from all that the Jewish people had been expecting.”

### **A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures**

In this reading from Acts, the commitment and zealous posture of James and Peter bring about dire consequences. At the hands of the wicked King Herod Agrippa 1 and the Pharisees, James loses his head. Peter is more fortunate, he is jailed. Luke, author of Acts, chooses to demonstrate the miraculous and dynamic presence of God in the life of Peter who is the great escape artist. The situation is hopeful, security is doubled, and Peter is sleeping when suddenly he is freed from the bondage of alien forces. After this experience, Peter expresses a deeper awareness of God’s presence and intervention that his call assumes a message that is larger than life. “Now I know for certain that

the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people had been expecting.”

### **Interesting Facts About St Peter**

1. He is the patron saint of priests.

Since he is the first pope, Saint Peter is also considered the patron saint of all priests and popes.

2. He is the guardian of heaven's gates.

According to Catholic tradition, Saint Peter is the one who holds the keys to the Gates of Heaven.

3. He was the first pope.

Also, according to Catholic tradition, Jesus gave Saint Peter the first role of leadership in the Church, therefore he is the first-ever Pope.

4. He was crucified upside down.

Saint Peter did not think it would be honorable of him to die the same way his Master — Jesus, did, so, he requested to be crucified upside down.

5. He was a fisherman.

Before he was called upon to be an Apostle, Saint Peter worked as a fisherman. -Internet.

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### **Why St Peter's Day is Important**

1. It unites the church.

The entire Church all around the world comes together to observe this holiday. How special is that?

2. It honors an important figure.

**It is crucial in traditional environments to pay tribute to the people who helped build the foundation of what is available today. Saint Peter was the one who paved the Church we see now!**

**3. It is a day of reflection and introspection.**

**As much as we love going out or getting friends and family together to celebrate, it is also great to spend some time reflecting on and meditating on our lives. This feast is a wonderful day to practice introspection! -Internet.**

**Responsorial Psalm**

**[Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9](#)**

**R. (5) The angel of the Lord will rescue those who fear him.**

**I will bless the LORD at all times;**

**his praise shall be ever in my mouth.**

**Let my soul glory in the LORD;**

**the lowly will hear me and be glad.**

**R. The angel of the Lord will rescue those who fear him.**

**Glorify the LORD with me,**

**let us together extol his name.**

**I sought the LORD, and he answered me**

**and delivered me from all my fears.**

**R. The angel of the Lord will rescue those who fear him.**

**Look to him that you may be radiant with joy,**

**and your faces may not blush with shame.**

**When the poor one called out, the LORD heard,**

**and from all his distress he saved him.**

**R. The angel of the Lord will rescue those who fear him.**

**The angel of the LORD encamps**

**around those who fear him and delivers them.**

**Taste and see how good the LORD is;**

**blessed the man who takes refuge in him.**

**RR. The angel of the Lord will rescue those who fear him.**

## Reading II

### 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

I, Paul, am already being poured out like a libation,  
and the time of my departure is at hand.

**I have competed well; I have finished the race;  
I have kept the faith.**

From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me,  
which the Lord, the just judge,  
will award to me on that day, and not only to me,  
but to all who have longed for his appearance.

The Lord stood by me and gave me strength,  
so that through me the proclamation might be completed  
and all the Gentiles might hear it.

And I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

**The Lord will rescue me from every evil threat  
and will bring me safe to his heavenly Kingdom.  
To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## **A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.**

This reading from Timothy is a reflection on a spiritually mature Paul who is near the end of his life. Despite his many experiences of suffering, persecution, rejection, and encounters with death, his commitment to preach the Good News is even more steadfast. He is at peace. He has achieved a degree of wholeness and holiness. He is not afraid of what will happen. He is confident that God is with him. Paul's words give evidence of a spirituality which is born out of suffering and

persecution expressed as a spirituality of imprisonment. He remains faithful to the spirit whispering to him of new and wonderful paths.

What might be qualities or characteristics of a spiritually mature Paul as a member of the community of saints. The following are quotations that are like stained glass reflecting the various hues of St. Paul's sanctity manifesting the face of God.

**Many saints** – “There are many leaves, piles of them. More saints than you could ever dream of. Each one singular. They are many assorted colors as they sail down in the autumn air like fearless sky divers. They are so trusting, letting go completely. They tell me that one does not need to be cultivated to be beautiful. They tell me that the soul remembers its essence if it is given room to grow.” Gunilla Norris, *Journeying in Place*.

**The Geese** – The geese best represent the communion of saints. The geese fly in the wake of one another's wings. They get a lift from one another. Geese tell me that it is, indeed, possible to fly with equals.” - Gunilla Norris, *Journeying in Place*.

**Divine action** – “Divine action has always been the source from which flows a torrent of grace which spreads over everything. I shall no longer

seek it within the narrow confines of a book or the life of a saint, or a sublime idea.” -Jean Pierre de Caussade.

**Lives of the saints** – In the Buddhist tradition, the faithful are advised to examine the lives of the compassionate ones to see how they might respond to suffering. Christians do the same when they study the lives of the saints.

**Energize one another** – “I truly believe that these saints of God receive energy from each other simply by being gathered in my heart. They may be strangers to one another but the Christ-connection that they share makes them kinfolks.” -Macrina Wiederkehr, *Seasons of Your Heart*.

**Community of Saints** - “In the religion of my youth, we believed that through the ritual of what we called “the Lord’s Supper,” we communed with the saints, with all those who had gone before.” -James A. Autry, *Love and Profit*.

Alleluia

[Matthew 16:18](#)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church,  
and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

### Matthew 16:13-19

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi  
he asked his disciples,

**“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”**

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah,  
still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

He said to them, **“But who do you say that I am?”**

Simon Peter said in reply,

**“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

Jesus said to him in reply, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah.

For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father.

**And so I say to you, you are Peter,**

**and upon this rock I will build my Church,**

and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.

I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven.

Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;

and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

### **A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.**

Jesus, in the Gospel, poses a very provocative and profound question, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter’s spiritual depth and faith-filled perception allows him to be given a most responsible position as rock=Petra=Peter or primus inter pares = “first among equals.”

### **Why St Peter's Day is Important?**

The entire Church all around the world comes together to observe this holiday. How special is that? It is crucial in traditional environments to pay tribute to the people who helped build the



foundation of what is available today. Saints Peter and Paul were the cornerstones who paved the way for the universal Church today. It is a day of reflection and introspection. As much as we love going out or getting friends and family together to celebrate, it is also great to spend some time reflecting on and meditating on our lives. This feast is a great day to practice introspection! – Internet.

The church will be comprised of individuals who seek to do the will of God, with a few exceptions like the politics of the Conclave. It will be a dynamic mixture of freedom and discipline, and at times, be drawn to power, prestige, and position. However, the Holy Spirit will guide and protect the church from schemes and potential scandals as are documented over the course of the history of the Church. We, like Peter and Paul, are to speak out in the name of Jesus. We cannot remain silent on social justice issues that concern us all. Like Peter and Paul, we must open our lives to the movement of the Holy Spirit whose transforming power enables us to live freely and responsibly for others thus forming the community of saints.

Here is another cheer, we 8<sup>th</sup> grades boys composed, keeping in mind it came from the sidelines of the football field, but was not about Saints Peter and Paul but who we are, here it is: “A bottle of pop, a big

banana, we are from Cuba, Indiana. That's a lie, that's a bluff, we are from SS. Peter and Paul, and that's the stuff.

**Final prayer:** Father, your servant Paul writes, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not by your own doing, it is a gift of God." Peter would agree this gift is to step into a world that is larger, deeper, richer, and fuller.