



AMDG  
STS PETER & PAUL, APOSTLES  
YEAR C  
30TH JUNE 2019



**Glorify the Lord with me.  
Together let us praise his Name!**

OPENING PRAYER

Grant, we pray, O Lord our God,  
that we may be sustained  
by the intercession of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul,  
that, as through them you gave your Church  
the foundations of her heavenly office,  
so through them you may help her to eternal salvation.

This week we celebrate the feast of the two ‘chief apostles’ – St Peter and St Paul. Both were faithful rocks on whom Jesus built his Church, unshakeable in their belief that Jesus was the Christ, and ever-faithful to the universal mission he gave them. They can greatly encourage us as we, too, try to be Church today, following Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

The Church prays continuously for Peter throughout his ordeal as he lies enchained in Herod’s prison. But then an angel comes to release him and Peter realises that the Lord really has saved him. (*First Reading*)

The *Psalmist* has also been released from his distress, and invites us to glorify God with him. We, too, can trust that the Lord will answer when we seek refuge in him, and will free us from our terrors.

Paul, like Peter, is also in prison, and knows that the end of his life is near. But he rejoices that he has kept faith: God has always been with him in his struggles and will bring him safely home. (*Second Reading*)

As Peter acknowledges Jesus as the Son of the Living God, Jesus establishes him as the rock on which he will build his Church, and entrusts him with the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. (*Gospel*)

This week, as we give thanks for the lives of St Peter and St Paul, we pray for that same courage to put our trust in Christ Jesus, whatever trials we may face in life. Let’s ask, too, for God’s help as we work together to try to build up his Church.

## SECOND READING 2 TIMOTHY 4: 6–8, 17–18

**A**s for me, my life is already being poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to be gone. I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith; all there is to come now is the crown of righteousness reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his Appearing.

But the Lord stood by me and gave me power, so that through me the whole message might be proclaimed for all the pagans to hear; and so I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from all evil attempts on me, and bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

As I come to pray, I take as much time as I need to settle down, perhaps taking in some deep breaths, breathing in God's love for me.

How am I today ...?

I ask the Lord to take care of anything that burdens me or requires my attention right now.

When I am ready, I prayerfully read this extract from Paul's letter to Timothy.

Perhaps I imagine Paul in prison, reading the letter aloud to me.

What touches me here?

Paul tells us that he is prepared for death; he has done the best he can in God's service, and his faith in the power of God is unshakeable.

Is there anything that especially moves me here, or may inspire me as I deal with my own particular trials?

I ponder whatever God's Holy Spirit brings to my attention.

Perhaps I recognise how the Lord's power has been at work in the events of my own life, whether now or in the past.

I speak to the Lord of this, and give thanks.

I ask for whatever help I need.

Before I end my prayer, I bring before the Lord all facing trials of any kind at this moment.

I end with a slow sign of the cross, saying with Paul:

*'To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.'*

## GOSPEL MATTHEW 16: 13–19

**W**hen 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.’

As I come to prayer, I ask the Holy Spirit to open my heart and help me to be fully present in this moment, in this place, to meet with the Lord.

Then I read this deep, rich passage slowly, several times, allowing God’s word to touch me ...

Perhaps I imagine myself sitting with the disciples, noticing how they each respond as Jesus asks his first question.

Now I focus on how Jesus re-phrases his question, leading to Peter’s declaration of faith ... I notice Jesus’s response too.

What touches me here? And how do I myself want to respond?

As I move more deeply into my prayer, I may like to imagine that I am alone with Jesus as he speaks to me of building his new Church ... and of handing over the keys ...

I ponder what the Church means for me today ... perhaps in my own parish or community.

Who or what are the rocks that support it?

And how might God be calling me to help in the work of building it?

I stay awhile with Jesus in the stillness and I talk to him, as Peter did, from the heart. If there is a grace that I want to ask for, I do so in trust.

As I end my prayer, I ask God to strengthen his Church across the world, and help all those who minister within it.

*Our Father ...*

## Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

The Lord really did send his angel.

*First Reading*

I will bless the Lord at all times,  
his praise always on my lips.

*Psalm*

The Lord stood by me and gave me power.

*Second Reading*

'But you ... who do you say I am?'  
'You are the Christ; the Son of the Living God!'

*Gospel*

*This week's texts if you want to reflect further*  
*Acts 12: 1–11; Psalm 33 (34); 2 Tim. 4: 6–8, 17–18; Matthew 16: 13–19*



'I will give  
you the  
keys of the  
kingdom of  
heaven'



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH  
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