

SUNDAY *Plus*

Ss Peter and Paul **Divine Office Week I** Year A

See and understand

[Peter] could see that the promise of the work already done by Paul, Barnabas, himself and many others, was far greater than had been that early growth in Jerusalem.

"Go and teach all nations," Jesus had commanded, and because Peter himself had taken the first real step to carry out the command, he knew that he must not let a small group of stubborn men in Jerusalem hamstring the glorious future offered for the further spread of the Gospel

by shackling it with restrictions that Jesus himself had long ago removed... Peter rose to his feet.

"Brethren, you know that a good while ago God made a choice among us that the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel through my mouth and believe it," he said, speaking with the simple, earthy logic that was such a vital part of him. "God, who knows the heart of everyone, bore witness concerning them by giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did

to us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they" ...

When Peter sat down, Paul rose to tell of the journey he and Barnabas had made to Cyprus and the mainland of Asia Minor. With his usual eloquence, he described the longing of people everywhere to hear the teachings of Jesus and the good news that, through his death upon the cross, the Master had ransomed them all and given them the gift of eternal life.

Frank G. Slaughter, *Upon This Rock: a novel of Simon Peter*

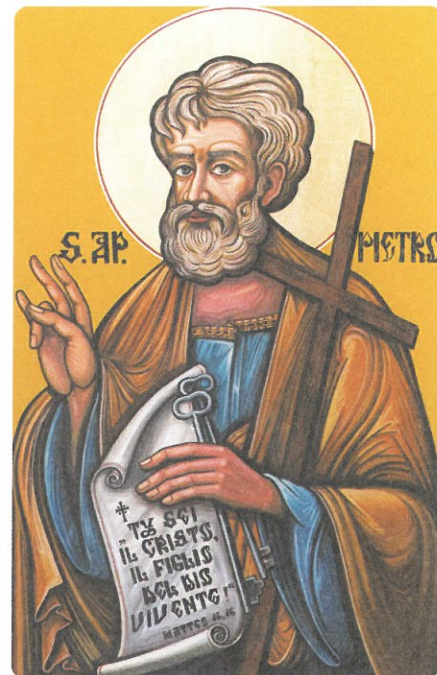



Image: The icon of Saint Peter (Simon) in the Church of Saints Gervasius and Protasius in Pavia, Italy. Adam Jan Figal © Shutterstock

Jesus, Son of the living God, build your Church upon my faith. Strengthen me whenever I feel weak and scared. May I see your mercy and truth in the love of the people around me.  Amen.

Learn from each other

Six blind men heard that an elephant had been brought to the town, but none of them knew of its shape and form. Curious, they decided to investigate using their sense of touch. So, when they found the animal, they felt around it. The first person, who handled the trunk, said, "This being is like a thick snake." For another, whose hand

reached its ear, it seemed like a kind of fan. The third man placed his hand upon the elephant's leg and described it as a pillar like a tree-trunk. The man who felt the animal's side decided that the elephant resembled a wall. Another, who felt its tail, described it as a rope. The last man felt its tusk and believed the elephant to be hard, smooth and like a spear.

And so, all of them were right and all of them were wrong.

Ancient Hindu parable

Our patron saints followed different paths, had different ideas and at times argued with one another with evangelical frankness. Yet this did not prevent them from living... a fruitful harmony in diversity.

Pope Leo XIV

Feast of the week Monday 30 June

Blessed Philip Powell (1594-1646)

Blessed Philip Powell was a Benedictine monk and Catholic priest who became a martyr during the English Civil War. Born in Wales in 1594, he was raised as a Protestant but later converted to Catholicism and became a Benedictine. Ordained in 1628, he secretly ministered to Catholics in England at a time when Catholicism was illegal. Known for his deep spirituality and cheerful demeanour, he bravely served the faithful in South Wales and Devon, often at great personal risk. In 1646, during the height of anti-Catholic sentiment, he was arrested aboard a ship while fleeing to safety. He was imprisoned in London and tried for being a Catholic priest, which was considered treason. Despite the threat of execution, he remained calm and unwavering in his faith. On 30 June 1646, he was hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn. Blessed Philip Powell was beatified in 1929 and is remembered for his courage and joyful witness.

READINGS

Today:
Acts 12:1-11
2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18
Matthew 16:13-19

Monday:
Amos 2:6-10, 13-16
Matthew 8:18-22

Tuesday:
Amos 3:1-8; 4:11-12
Matthew 8:23-27

Wednesday:
Amos 5:14-15, 21-24
Matthew 8:28-34

Thursday:
Amos 7:10-17
Matthew 9:1-8

Friday:
Ephesians 2:19-22
John 20:24-29

Saturday:
Amos 9:11-15
Matthew 9:14-17

Next Sunday:
Zechariah 9:9-10
Romans 8:9, 11-13
Matthew 11:25-30