



From the Liturgy Office...

Feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul—29 June

Apostles, Saints and Martyrs of the Christian Church

About the feast Day...

On June 29, we celebrate the solemnity which honours the martyrdom in Rome of the apostles Peter and Paul. This feast is observed by Catholics as well as Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran and Oriental Churches.

For the Latin Church, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul was traditionally observed as a holy day of obligation. In Malta, it was even a public holiday known as *L'Imnarja*.

It is unclear if the date of June 29 was chosen to commemorate their deaths or to recognise the date of the translation of their relics (the removal of their relics from one place to another).

Readings of the Day....

The readings for this feast tell us that Saints Peter and Paul spent a period of time in prison and eventually both suffered a martyr's death. Whilst each faced struggle in their life, their growth in discipleship and faithfulness to the Lord is clear. Neither expressed fear in the face of imprisonment and likely execution.

Though most of us will not face a martyr's death, we will all face death as Peter and Paul did. May their feast day cause us to pause and reflect upon our own faith journeys. May we consider what changes or corrections might be necessary in our lives, so that when we approach death we can say, as St. Paul did, "*I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith*".

Reflections on the feast and its implications on discipleship....

The feast of Saints Peter and Paul reminds us that discipleship is something we do together. Our relationship with Jesus is not just "me and Jesus". Rather, we are called to be in community. However, we need to remember that Jesus chooses the community, not us. If we look at the example of Saints Peter and Paul, this becomes apparent. Paul, who was an uneducated ordinary fisherman, had spent years with Jesus and eventually became the "Rock" upon which the church was built. Paul, on the other hand, who was a highly educated Pharisee, did not know Jesus and was only called to discipleship after the resurrection. Yet both complemented one another in the community of the Church.

Therefore, as we contemplate their feast day, let us be reminded that to be true disciples, we, like Peter and Paul, must die to our own conceptions and desires and be open to what Jesus wants from us.

COLLECT PRAYER

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer

O God, who on the Solemnity of the Apostles Peter and Paul give us the noble and holy joy of this day, grant, we pray, that your Church may in all things follow the teaching of those through whom she received the beginnings of right religion. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

