

Friday 29 June 2021

Saints Peter and Paul



Peter has often been called the 'Prince of the Apostles' because of the words of Jesus re-naming him, from 'Simon' to 'Cephas', which was the Aramaic form of the Greek word Peter meaning 'rock'. Jesus said that on this rock he would build his Church.

In fact, both Peter and Paul came to be seen as having different roles to play within the leadership of the Church: Peter in witnessing to Christ's Lordship and Paul in helping to understand its meaning for Jesus' followers.

Peter and Paul have been jointly remembered on this day since the earliest days of the Church because it was regarded as the anniversary of their joint martyrdom in Rome in about 64 AD.

Sermon © Sarah Gura.

Liturgy © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

Prayers of intercession © **Biddings Blogspot** (adapted).

Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration are included at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page, <http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

The Introduction

HYMN [Our Father in Heaven](#)

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

with all your soul, with all your mind,

and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven. Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin, let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you
in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This version of the Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

**Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;
Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.**

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for Saints Peter and Paul

Almighty God,
whose blessed apostles Peter and Paul
glorified you in their death as in their life:
grant that your Church,
inspired by their teaching and example,
and made one by your Spirit,
may ever stand firm upon the one foundation,
Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the prophecy of Ezekiel.

The hand of the Lord was upon me there; and he said to me, Rise up, go out into the valley, and there I will speak with you. So I rose up and went out into the valley; and the glory of the Lord stood there, like the glory that I had seen by the river Chebar; and

I fell on my face. The spirit entered into me, and set me on my feet; and he spoke with me and said to me: Go, shut yourself inside your house. As for you, mortal, cords shall be placed on you, and you shall be bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people; and I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be speechless and unable to reprove them; for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God'; let those who will hear, hear; and let those who refuse to hear, refuse; for they are a rebellious house. *Ezekiel 3:22-27*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also (this was during the festival of Unleavened Bread). When he had seized him, he put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover. While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.

The very night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him, saying, 'Get up quickly,' and the chains fell off his wrists. The angel said to him, 'Fasten your belt and put on your sandals.' He did so. Then he said to him, 'Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.' Peter went out and followed him; he did not realise that what was happening with the angel's help was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. After they had passed the first and the second guard, they came before the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went outside and walked along a lane, when suddenly the angel left him. *Acts 12:1-11*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 I will build my Church

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All **Glory to you O Lord.**

When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessèd are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'

Matthew 16:13-19

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon

The gospel passage begins with Jesus and his disciples in a 'Gentile' land. It is here that he asks his disciples about his true identity. Probably this is a quieter place far away from the crowds where he can prepare his disciples for what was to come. This is also away from the conflict with the Pharisees and Sadducees and the rejection from His own people. Or maybe this could be a nod to Jesus being for everyone including Gentiles and not just for the Jews.

Jesus asks his disciples who the people think he is. He already knows the answer to this question but still he voices to prepare for the important question to follow. In context, some people think Jesus is John the Baptist come back and even Herod believes he could come back. Others think he was Elijah, and most Jews did expect the great prophet to come back. Still others thought Jeremiah, one of the greater prophets of his time. Some thought he was one of the prophets. This shows that people thought highly of Jesus as they think he is one of the great prophets reincarnated. They are however missing the point as he is the Son of God. He is so much more than a just a mere prophet. He is the awaited long-awaited Messiah.

The people held him in high esteem but probably misunderstood Him and His message. The disciples had been with Jesus the longest but even they sometimes misunderstood Him. Even now, I do not think we fully understand who Jesus is and do not fully understand the Father who sent Him. God's love and power is beyond our understanding, and we never fully understand these things. We do learn about God all the time as our faith grows and we grow in confidence in our Father. We are not expected to totally understand or be right about Jesus but to come to Him with open hearts and eager to learn and become more Christlike each day as we strive to be better Christians.

This question, however, was paving way for a more important one, 'But who do *you* say that I am?' To which Peter replied, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' Peter is the first person to acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah that Israel had been waiting for a very long time. He is also saying that Jesus is the Saviour sent by God to deliver them. This, according to Jesus is a revelation from God, His Father. The Bible does say that no one can know the Son of Man until it is revealed to them. This is a very important point in time as Jesus would soon be preparing to go and die on the Cross. He needed the disciples to understand who He was and what His mission was. He also wanted to know that they were prepared for His impending death and be ready to carry on with the work he had started without Him.

Peter was rewarded with a blessing and Jesus called him 'Simon, Son of Jonah' — the name by which his father would know him. He is mirroring Peter's acknowledgement of Jesus as the Son of Man. He then calls Him 'Peter', the Rock on which He would build His Church. This is a huge honour on Peter, who in no time would deny Jesus three times when he was needed the most soon after Jesus' arrest. Even though Jesus probably knew that Peter would deny Him, he still believed that Peter was the right candidate after He was gone. He is the same Peter who cut off the soldier's ear when they came to arrest Jesus. Even up to the end, he still did not understand that Jesus had to die on the cross and rise again on the third day.

This shows that God does not judge us the same way people judge and condemn each other. God does not look at our mistakes but our hearts and that we are willing to change. By acknowledging that Jesus was the Messiah Peter proved to have a new deeper appreciation of who Jesus was. Peter is later asked by Jesus if He loved Him, and Peter simply replied that Jesus already knew. This is still what Jesus wants from us, to love him and rest in his love. He wants us to be assured of God's love and to understand that He cares for us and will never abandon us.

The Church was built by Jesus himself and we are the body of Christ. We all have different roles within the Church to support each other as fellow Christians. He goes on to say that the gates of Hades will not prevail over it. No matter how evil forces arise against the Church, it will continue to stand right to the end. That is why it is so important that we love one another and elevate each other as He has loved us. It is through love that evil is conquered. Let us strive to be like Peter who loved Jesus whole heartedly and later fed the sheep as Jesus had commanded Him. Christianity is about a personal relationship with God that continues to deepen through fellowship and prayer. Everyday is a new beginning where we are forgiven and loved unconditionally by our Father. Let us strive to grow closer and closer to our Father loving one another with the love of Christ.

Who do you say HE is? Amen.

Prayers of intercession

Brothers and sisters, as we thank God for Saint Peter and Saint Paul, let us pray that they may continue to inspire the Church in its mission and care, as we pray for the needs of the world.

We pray for all who lead the Church: that it may be built on those who are guided by the Holy Spirit. We pray that love will overcome the divisions in our Churches.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

For the nations and peoples of the world: that, as Peter and Paul overcame their differences, all peoples may put aside disagreements for the good of all mankind.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

For the sick and those who care for them: may they meet their sufferings with courage and with hope.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

For those departed this life, may they come to share in the glory of heaven with Saints Peter and Paul.

Lord, hear us.

All Lord, graciously hear us.

Merciful Father,

All **accept these prayers**
 for the sake of your Son,
 our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The peace

May the God of peace sanctify you: may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before him at the coming of our Lord Jesus with his saints.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

All **And also with you.**

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

HYMN 3 Lord, in this thy mercy's day (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Dismissal

May Christ who makes saints of sinners,
who has transformed those we remember today,
raise and strengthen you that you may transform the world;
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All **Amen**

HYMN4 What wondrous love is this (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ.**
Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy
that we should always sing of your glory,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
For you are the hope of the nations,
the builder of the city that is to come.
Your love made visible in Jesus Christ
brings home the lost,
restores the sinner and gives dignity to the despised.
In his face your light shines out,
flooding lives with goodness and truth,
gathering into one in your kingdom
a divided and broken humanity.
Therefore with all who can give voice in your creation
we glorify your name,
for ever praising you and saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Peter, Paul and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.
Eat and drink
in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All **We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.**

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Almighty God,
who on the day of Pentecost
sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles
with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame,
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel:
by the power of the same Spirit
strengthen us to witness to your truth
and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

**All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.**