



29 June 2017

Issue No: 156

From +John...

Dear Friends,

Today is a public holiday in Rome, the feast of Sts Peter and Paul. For centuries the city has honoured the two great men whom the Church honours today, Saints Peter and Paul:

Peter – our leader in the faith.

Paul – a fearless preacher.

There are massive statues of these two Saints in St Peter's Square. In one hand St Peter holds a set of keys and in the other a scroll with the inscription "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 16:19). St Paul holds a sword in one hand and a book in the other with the words "I can do all things in him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

Both Peter and Paul are gazing in the same direction; towards the crucified and Risen Christ. It is intended to be the gaze of Peter agonizing on the cross and of Paul dying under the sword. They are both gazes of faith, the faith that filled their lives to the last; Peter is looking down more reflectively and Paul is looking further out. Perhaps they are helpful images for us today as we honour these two great men. I know that I have to try to spend time in prayer, contemplating, reflecting, pondering God's Word and God's call to me to serve. As Peter looks inward and reflects deeply he challenges us to do the same, to "*Be still and know that I am God.*" (Psalm 46:10). Paul is looking out focussed beyond himself, which is what we are also called to do.

We know that we have a mission; we know that we cannot always be gazing inwards. St John Paul II reminded us that "*The purpose of being WITH Jesus is to go FORTH from Jesus, in his power and with his grace.*" (Ecclesia in Oceania 3).

These statues of Saints Peter and Paul may be helpful images as we prepare for our Synod. We are still in the contemplative listening stage – essential for all of us right throughout our lives – and particularly for us now as we prayerfully contribute to the Synod material. But the Synod is also about looking outward, reflecting on where we need to be as Christ's Church, where the message of hope and love needs to be heard, and how we together will take Christ to the world around us.

Today is a day for us to pray: "*St Peter and St Paul – pray for us. Peter and Paul, help us to be faith-filled leaders, help us to be fearless witnesses.*"

This is also very much a day to pray "St Peter and St Paul, pray for Pope Francis."

With every blessing

+ John

NEWS...

- **Clergy Jubilees.** Warmest congratulations and prayerful good wishes to those priests who are celebrating jubilees of their ordination to priesthood at about this time of the year. **60 years:** Frs Brian Wysocki SM, Donald Morrison, Joseph O'Sullivan. **50 years:** Frs James Lyons, John Mori SM, Peter Ewart SM, Rodney Smyth SM, Terence Carr and **25 years:** Frs Gregory Lakra OFM (Cap) and Joseph Grayland.
- **Confirmations:** Parishes are reminded of the Scripture Readings for Confirmations this year which were sent out earlier in the year. Galatians 5: 16-18, 22-24 and Gospel of John 20:19-23.
Please remember too, that the actual ceremony is not the time for the presentation of Confirmation certificates. Neither should photos be arranged for before the Recessional. It is better for the Archbishop and clergy to process out and then return for photos if needed.
- **Synod Consultation:** The closing date is tomorrow 30 June. We will accept contributions for a few days after that date..
- **Mass Times over Synod Weekend:** Please remember to return to my office the form sent on 7 June regarding how parishes will celebrate Masses over the Synod Weekend. The Council of Priests meets on 12 July and require this information for the meeting.

The most important hour is always the present; the most significant person is precisely the one who is sitting across from you right now; the most necessary work is always love.

Meister Eckhart

"Go, you are sent"