

Fr Marcus' reflections; Feast of Ss Peter and Paul

Dear friends

The words of St Paul in today's second reading remind me of my mother. For years before she died, she would often say that she had asked the Lord to take her, and every time I told her that the Lord was still trying to pluck up courage! Then we had a laugh together. Perhaps St Timothy had a little chuckle when St Paul told him that his life was already an offering to God and the time had come for him to be gone.

Although my Mum was no St Paul, like him she was ready to go to God in complete trust. And it was that same complete faith and trust in God's saving power, and in his Son Jesus Christ, that characterised the lives of both St Peter and St Paul, whose great festival we celebrate today.

They were so different. Peter an obscure, impetuous fisherman; Paul a highly educated pharisee and a Roman citizen. But they had in common the experience of the Lord's boundless mercy and forgiveness, and they both had absolute trust in him. Jesus chose them to use their skills and abilities in their different ways. Between them they had what was needed for the building up of his Church, a Church that the powers of evil can never destroy.

Today the Lord chooses us, despite our weaknesses and our different backgrounds, to be united in the community of the faithful and to take our part in the continued building up of holy Church. Unreliable as we are, we are chosen to be apostles of the Good News of our salvation, and to show in the way we live our lives something of God's love and forgiveness.

Through everything, in suffering or in happiness, we follow the example of the great Saints Peter and Paul, and commit our lives in faith and trust to God. Like them, we are only too well aware that it is not in our own abilities that we should trust, for we know our own weakness, but we rejoice in God's saving power.

I end as I began, although not with my earthly mother but with Mary Mother of the Church. Her Magnificat says it well. The purpose of our lives is to glorify the Lord and to rejoice in God our Saviour, for 'the Almighty works marvels for me.' And that is what we celebrate today – God's marvels, in particular the great things the Lord did for Saints Peter and Paul, and for the establishment of his Church. Remarkably, in the world's eyes, the marvels continue in the Church.

Next month some of our churches may be able to open for Mass in a limited way. We pray and trust that soon we can all come together again in unity and worship. Meanwhile, give thanks to God for the great things he has done for us – for you.....and for me.

Fr Marcus