

Peter and Paul
Galatians 2:1-21

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of St. Peter and St. Paul, the chief apostles who brought the faith into the heart of the Roman Empire.

Arise to follow the Lord today.

Has the summer been a time of spiritual progress or malaise?

You are with Peter and Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch. Peter confirms the ministry of Paul in Jerusalem. Paul then has to correct Peter for his approach to the Gentiles in Antioch.

Pray that the Lord draws you out of sloth to embrace the kingly mission he has given you. Pray for the grace of freedom and humility for all Exodus Men, just as they are praying for you.

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

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Letter to the Galatians

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up by revelation; and I laid before them (but privately before those who were of repute) the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. But because of false brethren secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage—to them we did not yield submission even for a moment, that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. And from those who were reputed to be something (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who were of repute added nothing to me; but on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised (for he who worked through Peter for the mission to the circumcised worked through me also for the Gentiles), and when they perceived the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised; only they would have us remember the poor, which very thing I was eager to do.

But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And with him the rest of the Jews acted

insincerely, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their insincerity. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?" We ourselves, who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, yet who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.

Reflection

King David was a man given authority by God, although he gave into sloth and began neglecting his duties. God had to remind him continually of his great calling, leading him back to a proper authority in the care of others.

Paul, whose Hebrew name was Saul, began persecuting the Son of David, Jesus, the true Messiah, when he lived as a Pharisee. After his conversion, he turned from being a persecutor to a great evangelizer. He shows us that even when we set off on the wrong path, the Lord shows us mercy when we repent. Paul became a model of sharing the Gospel through every trial, whether of persecution or enduring the hardships of travel. He gave everything back in service to the King he had been persecuting.

Peter also models conversion for us, having turned away from the Lord during his Passion, even after he promised to follow him to death. After the resurrection, Peter pledges his love to Jesus three times and is entrusted with the care of the flock. The Lord told him that he would be led where he did not want to go, giving everything to the Lord in his own death as a martyr. His death manifests how he learned to imitate the Good Shepherd in laying down his life for the sheep entrusted to his care.

Paul comes to Jerusalem to receive the Church's blessing on his mission to the Gentiles. He lays out his teaching before the pillars of the Church, the three apostles who had been closest to Jesus, showing that he was subject to the Church's authority. Nonetheless, this obedience does not mean that he could not correct Peter when he came to Antioch and acted in a hypocritical way. We recognize in this scene both the necessary role of Church's hierarchical authority, given to us by Christ, and the need for prophetic calls to live out the Gospel faithfully. Peter and Paul are able to support one another in their ministry and are able to correct one another when need be. Ultimately, the Lord stands above all as the true head of the Church. We are all brothers seeking to live out the mission

that Jesus has given us.

As we seek to overcome sloth and pride, David, Paul, and Peter all give us an example of turning back to the Lord, receiving correction when necessary, and staying faithful until the end. Pray about how you can imitate them in humility and charity.

Now place yourself before God, and converse with him.

Week 5 Action Items

Bookend your day with a morning offering and nightly examen.

Check in with your anchor.

Don't give in to distractions.

Invite men to join your fraternity for Kings of Summer, Part 2.