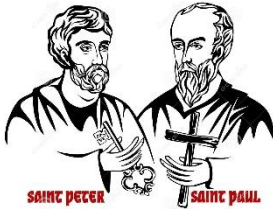


HOMILY – SS. PETER & PAUL - SOLEMNITY

Based on St. John 21: 15-19 | By Rt Rev'd Geoffrey S Robinson CJ



May I speak in the Name of God, who
is +Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.

I sometimes wonder if you and I are
to be trusted! From time-to-time I wonder if our friends
and colleagues are to be trusted!! And, just occasionally, I
wonder if some members of our family are to be trusted!!! –
Well, a little more about that in a moment or two.

Whenever we see a job advertised in which we are
interested, we normally submit our CV. We usually try to
submit it in an impressive form, knowing that those who
submit striking CVs will normally be called for an
interview.

Today we are thinking about two men who were martyred
for the Faith; one of whom, if we believe the Roman
Catholic Church, became the first Vicar of Rome.
Thinking about this then led me to wondering what kind
of CV would he have needed to become the first Pope?

What type of questions would have been asked of him
during the interview? Well, did you know that Saint Peter
was interviewed by Jesus in the Gospel which we heard

today (John 21:1-19), He was in fact asked three questions by our Blessed Lord, - “Do you love me?”

Saint Peter’s CV wasn’t good; he had denied Jesus three times by a charcoal fire on Holy Thursday night. Peter did not find it easy to accept himself after that. Moreover, when the cock crowed later that evening, Peter wept (Matt 26:75; Mark 14:72; Luke 22:61). He realized his failures. He could not cope with it, he could not accept it and so, he wept. Saint Peter had hit rock bottom.

Now with such a CV., we would not expect Jesus to even consider him for the position of looking after his flock. But Jesus could see into his heart and knew he was the man for the job. Why? Because Peter was different to Judas. Peter grew through his mistakes whereas Judas allowed his mistakes to conquer him.

Peter did reform himself after his mistakes, but Judas was not man enough to do so. Peter knew what it was to be human, so too did Judas, but whereas Peter moved on from his sinfulness, Judas did not. Three times Peter had denied Jesus by a charcoal fire on Holy Thursday evening, but now three times by a different charcoal fire on Easter Day Jesus asked Peter to ‘Feed His Sheep’. Jesus forgave Saint Peter and had the confidence in him to lead His Church.

The business of trust and confidence then came to my mind the other day when I heard the story of a businessman, who reached the boarding gate late for his flight. He was sweating and out of breath, as he scanned his boarding pass at the counter and quickly made his way to the plane.

When he arrived at his seat, he greeted a middle-aged woman sitting at the window, and a little girl sitting on the aisle seat. After stowing his bag above, he took his place between them.

After the flight took off, he began a conversation with the little girl who appeared to be about the same age as his daughter. The girl was engrossed with her colouring book. He asked her a few friendly questions but found it strange that such a young girl was traveling alone. Nonetheless, he kept his thoughts to himself and decided to keep an eye on her to make sure she was okay.

Several times over the next half hour the plane made drastic dips and turns, shaking all the while. Some people began crying, and many like the woman in the window seat were praying intently. The man was sweating and clenching his seat as tightly as he could; he was beginning to fear a crash with each increasingly violent shake of the plane.

Then, just as suddenly as it had begun, the turbulence ended. Later the pilot came into the passenger cabin a few minutes later to apologize for the bumpy ride. As the plane began its descent, the man said to the little girl, You are just a little girl, but I have never met a braver person in all my life! Tell me, dear, how is it that you remained so calm while all of us adults were so afraid?

The little girl, looked the businessman in the eyes, and said confidently, “My father is the pilot, and he's taking me home.”

Perhaps that same trust and confidence of that little girl, was in Jesus’ Sacred Heart that day, when he looked at Saint Peter and said, “Feed My Sheep”

Well, I don’t know what you believe about trust, in ourselves, in our family, friends and colleagues, but I believe it is as important to everyone as life itself. Trust then, is a fundamental element in various aspects of life, including personal relationships, business, and leadership. It is often described as the foundation upon which strong and meaningful relationships are built and about character and integrity.

But let us be aware, that there are people in every walk of life whose trustworthiness is in doubt. Their characteristics and integrities are usually built around

their own repeated selfish attitudes. But for us, this is not an option, because we know the need for reconciliation. You know, even despite our sinfulness, Jesus does not lock us in by mistakes of the past or the present.

So today, on this solemnity of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, we are given room to outgrow the mistakes of the past, and to rebuild our lives for the future of Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Can you remember the account of the Woman found in Adultery? - Jesus' response allowed her accusers to leave one by one, until only Jesus was left with the woman. He then wrote on the ground with his finger and told her, "Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more." (John 8:1-11)

We too then should "Go our way and sin no more"
Amen.