

The Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, celebrated on June 29th, holds deep significance, especially in today's world where vocations to the priesthood and religious life are decreasing and missionary work faces growing challenges. This solemnity invites reflection, encouragement, and a renewed sense of purpose. Here's why it remains especially relevant: **1. Witness to Faith and Perseverance in Mission:** Saints Peter and Paul were radically different in personality and background, yet both became pillars of the Church. Peter, a fisherman, and Paul, a former persecutor of Christians, remind us that God calls people from all walks of life. Their lives model: Radical conversion (Paul) and persistent discipleship (Peter), -The power of forgiveness and transformation, and - Unwavering commitment despite suffering, persecution, and even martyrdom. Their witness challenges today's Church to remain courageous, hopeful, and faithful in the face of adversity. **2. A Call to Renewed Evangelization:** As vocations decline and mission territories become more secular or hostile, the feast calls all the baptized—not just priests and religious—to take ownership of the Church's mission: Peter and Paul were not passive recipients of faith; they were active missionaries and builders of Christian communities.- Their lives remind us that evangelization is the task of the whole Church. -The feast is a summons to lay involvement, new forms of witness, and creative approaches to mission in today's context. **3. Unity in Diversity:** Peter represents the Jewish Christian tradition; Paul, the mission to the Gentiles. Despite disagreements, they served one Lord and preached one Gospel: Their shared feast day is a powerful symbol of unity amid diversity. -In a divided world and often a polarized Church, their example urges Christians to prioritize the mission of Christ over personal or ideological differences. -It's a call to build communion in the Church as a credible witness to the world. **4. Encouragement Amid Vocational Crisis:** In light of the declining numbers in vocations: The feast encourages the faithful to pray fervently for vocations, as Jesus instructed ("Ask the Lord of the harvest..." – Mt 9:38). - It reminds us that God is still calling, and the challenge is to create a culture where young people can hear and respond. -It also affirms the value and dignity of every vocation, including the laity's indispensable role in the mission of the Church. **5. A Timely Example of Bold Leadership:** In an era of uncertainty and leadership crises—within the Church and the world—Peter and Paul model: Bold, Spirit-filled leadership that speaks truth with love, -A commitment to truth and justice, even at great personal cost, - And a vision of Church that is missionary, inclusive, and faithful to Christ. **Final Thought:** Celebrating Saints Peter and Paul is not about nostalgia. It's about rekindling the missionary fire in each Christian heart. Their lives assure us that God builds the Church not on perfection, but on faith, courage, and surrender. In today's context, their example is a beacon of hope—a call to go deeper, to trust more, and to live the Gospel with the same boldness and joy that shaped the first apostles.

Devotions of the Month of July: In the Catholic tradition, the month of July is dedicated to the Precious Blood of Jesus. This devotion honors the blood that Jesus shed for humanity, particularly during His Passion and Crucifixion. It reflects on the redemptive power of His sacrifice and emphasizes themes of salvation, mercy, and the Eucharist. **Key Aspects of the Devotion:** Feast of the Most Precious Blood: Traditionally celebrated on July 1 (though it was removed from the General Roman Calendar in the 1969 liturgical reform, it is still observed in some places and by traditionalist communities). Spiritual Practices: Praying the Litany of the Precious Blood. Attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist in a spirit of reparation. Meditating on Christ's Passion and His suffering.

Collective Intentions and Stipends: A decree relating to mass intentions was approved by Pope Francis and goes into effect on April 20, 2025. The prior 1991 decree *Mos iugiter* is emphasized with the Holy See reaffirming that Mass stipends are "a form of spiritual participation and support for the Church's mission," and not a form of purchase or payment. How many intentions may there be for any particular Mass? Canon 948 states that ordinarily there may be no more than one offering (intention) for one Mass. Regulations that need to be followed: 1. The people making the offerings must be informed and agree to combine their offerings with others in a single Mass; 2. All those whose offerings are to be combined must freely consent to have a Mass with multiple intentions; 3. The place and time for the Mass must be announced; 4. Masses for collective intentions may not be celebrated by a priest more than twice a week; 5. * The celebrant may keep for himself (contributed to the parish, according to our diocesan policy) no more than the usual stipend (\$20) for a single Mass. Any additional amount must be sent to the Bishop for the purposes he has specified. In this diocese, the additional amount is to be sent to the Leo Benevolent Association for addition to the LBA's benevolent fund.

Announcements: Happy 4th of July!!

St. Leonard's is having a cash raffle. All proceeds go directly to the church. 1st prize is \$5,000, 2nd prize is \$1,250 and 3rd -7th prizes are \$250. Tickets are \$50 each and only 400 will be sold. The drawing will be on Sept. 14th. If interested in purchasing tickets, please contact Tahni Carothers (715-889-3720). Tickets will also be sold after mass on occasion.

There will be a Holy Hour with confession on First Friday July 4th after the morning mass.

Thank you to all those that were able to help at the spring cleanup this past weekend. Also, a huge thanks to Catholic United Financial for the \$500.00 grant that was used to purchase many needed supplies. It was great to see everyone gather in unity to help maintain and beautify our church and its surroundings!