

## WHO WERE SAINTS PETER AND PAUL?

On June 29 the Church celebrates the feast day of Sts. Peter & Paul. As early as the year 258, there is evidence of an already lengthy tradition of celebrating the solemnities of both Saint Peter and Saint Paul on the same day. Together, the two saints are the founders of the See of Rome, through their preaching, ministry and martyrdom there.

St. Peter, who was named Simon, was a fisherman of Galilee and was introduced to the Lord Jesus by his brother Andrew, also a fisherman. Jesus gave him the name Cephas (Petrus in Latin), which means 'Rock,' because he was to become the rock upon which Christ would build His Church.

Peter was a bold follower of the Lord. He was the first to recognize that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and eagerly pledged his fidelity until death. In his boldness, he also made many mistakes, however, such as losing faith when walking on water with Christ and betraying the Lord on the night of His passion.

Yet despite his human weaknesses, Peter was chosen to shepherd God's flock. The Acts of the Apostles illustrates his role as head of the Church after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. Peter led the Apostles as the first Pope and ensured that the disciples kept the true faith.

St. Peter spent his last years in Rome, leading the Church through persecution and eventually being martyred in the year 64. He was crucified upside-down at his own request, because he claimed he was not worthy to die as his Lord.

He was buried on Vatican hill, and St. Peter's Basilica is built over his tomb.

St. Paul was the Apostle of the Gentiles. His letters are included in the writings of the New Testament, and through them we learn much about his life and the faith of the early Church.

Before receiving the name Paul, he was Saul, a Jewish pharisee who zealously persecuted Christians in Jerusalem. Scripture records that Saul was present at the martyrdom of St. Stephen.

Saul's conversion took place as he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christian community there. As he was traveling along the road, he was suddenly surrounded by a great light from heaven. He was blinded and fell off his horse. He then heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He answered: "Who are you, Lord?" Christ said: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." vSaul continued to Damascus, where he was baptized and his sight was restored. He took the name Paul and spent the remainder of his life preaching the Gospel tirelessly to the Gentiles of the Mediterranean world.

*Peter and Paul, Continued on page 2*



### Welcome to **NAPLES** **MARONITE COMMUNITY**

PRIEST  
**Rev. Thomas Boyer**  
tboyer1968@gmail.com

DEACON  
**Steven Marcus**  
stevenmarcusneg@gmail.com

SACRISTAN/ALTAR SERVER  
**Kamil Madkour**  
**Jay Hamilton**

MUSIC MINISTRY  
**Alijah Madkour**  
**Youssef Sakr**

FINANCE  
**Stephen Maroon**

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### MARONITE DIVINE LITURGY

**SUNDAY, 9:15 A.M.**

St. Agnes Chapel  
7775 Vanderbilt Beach Road  
Naples, Florida

**WEDNESDAY, 12:00 NOON**

Saint Peter the Apostle Catholic Church  
5130 Rattlesnake Hammock Road  
Naples, Florida

### **JUNE 29, 2025** **SAINTS PETER AND PAUL**

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THE LITURGY THIS WEEK IS OFFERED  
for Peace in the Middle East,  
especially in Lebanon

—◆—  
**LAST SUNDAY'S NUMBERS**  
**Attendance: 37**  
**Collection: \$329.00**

*When you are out of town, you can still  
donate to the collection by using this link.*  
<https://naplesmaronite.org/donate>

We are grateful for all your generous financial  
support. The bank has requested that all  
checks must be made out to  
**Heart of Jesus Naples Maronite Mission**

## EPISTLE

2 CORINTHIANS 11:21-30

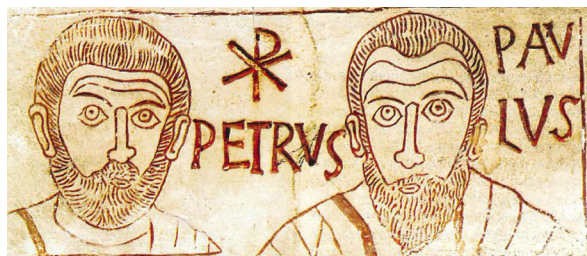
Brothers and Sisters: To my shame I say that we were too weak! But what anyone dares to boast of (I am speaking in foolishness) I also dare. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ?(I am talking like an insane person.) I am still more, with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, far worse beatings, and numerous brushes with death. Five times at the hands of the Jews I received forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I passed a night and a day on the deep on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own race, dangers from Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers at sea, dangers among false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many sleepless nights, through hunger and thirst, through frequent fastings, through cold and exposure. And apart from these things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is led to sin, and I am not indignant? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. Praise be to God always!

*Peter and Paul, Continued from page 4*

Paul was imprisoned and taken to Rome, where he was beheaded in the year 67.

He is buried in Rome in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

In a sermon in the year 395, St. Augustine of Hippo said of Sts. Peter and Paul: "Both apostles share the same feast day, for these two were one; and even though they suffered on different days, they were as one. Peter went first, and Paul followed. And so we celebrate this day made holy for us by the apostles' blood. Let us embrace what they believed, their life, their labors, their sufferings, their preaching, and their confession of faith." (From CNA: The Catholic News Agency, June 23, 2025)



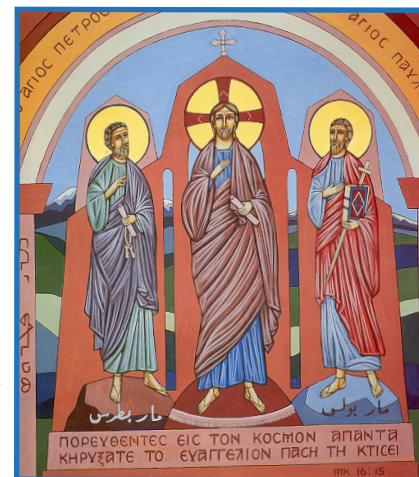
4th century etching of Peter and Paul from the Catacombs.  
via Wikimedia Commons

## GOSPEL

MATTHEW 16:13-20



When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Messiah. This is the truth. Peace be with you.



SAINTS PETER AND PAUL *The Maronite Icons: Modern Sacred Art.* Dar Sader Publishers: Beirut 1999. Via Maronite Heritage.com/icons



The Chair of St. Peter in St. Peter's Basilica.  
Photo by Deacon Steve

Description of the Chair of St. Peter by Pope Benedict XVI during his General Audience, Feb. 22, 2006.

*Dear brothers and sisters, in the apse of St. Peter's Basilica, as you know, is the monument to the Chair of the Apostle, a mature work of Bernini. It is in the form of a great bronze throne supported by the statues of four Doctors of the Church: two from the West, St. Augustine and St. Ambrose, and two from the East: St. John Chrysostom and St. Athanasius*