

Look towards him and be radiant;  
 let your faces not be abashed.  
 This poor man called, the Lord heard him  
 and rescued him from all his distress.  
**From all my terrors the Lord set me free.**  
 The angel of the Lord is encamped  
 around those who revere him, to rescue them.  
 Taste and see that the Lord is good.  
 He is happy who seeks refuge in him.  
**From all my terrors the Lord set me free.**



**Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8,17-18**

My life is already being poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to be gone. I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith; all there is to come now is the crown of righteousness reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his Appearing. The Lord stood by me and gave me power, so that through me the whole message might be proclaimed for all the pagans to hear; and, so I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from all evil attempts on me, and bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia! You are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. Alleluia!

**Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19**

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea, Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.'

**We ask for your Prayers:**

- for the sick in mind and body, in our parish family, our own family, the people of Cirencester and Tetbury.
- For those who have died recently especially of the Corona virus and all whose anniversaries are at this time.
- In our Diocesan prayer link, we remember the priest and parishioners of Matson and Tuffley, Gloucester.



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St Michael's RC  
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**SOLEMNITY OF STS. PETER AND PAUL**

*Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul; we remember our fellow parishioners in the Parish of St peter, Cirencester. We pray that parishioners from both parishes work together and support Fr Philip in building our parishes again as we gently come out of lockdown. Saints Peter and Paul are also the Secondary Patrons of the Diocese.*

**First Reading: Acts 12:1-11**

King Herod started persecuting certain members of the Church. He beheaded James the brother of John, and when he saw that this pleased the Jews he decided to arrest Peter as well. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread, and he put Peter in prison, assigning four squads of four soldiers each to guard him in turns. Herod meant to try Peter in public after the end of Passover week. All the time Peter was under guard the Church prayed to God for him unremittingly. On the night before Herod was to try him, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, fastened with double chains, while guards kept watch at the main entrance to the prison. Then suddenly the angel of the Lord stood there, and the cell was filled with light. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him. 'Get up!' he said 'Hurry!' – and the chains fell from his hands. The angel then said, 'Put on your belt and sandals.' After he had done this, the angel next said, 'Wrap your cloak round you and follow me.' Peter followed him, but had no idea that what the angel did was all happening in reality; he thought he was seeing a vision. They passed through two guard posts one after the other, and reached the iron gate leading to the city. This opened of its own accord; they went through it and had walked the whole length of one street when suddenly the angel left him. It was only then that Peter came to himself. 'Now I know it is all true' he said. 'The Lord really did send his angel and has saved me from Herod and from all that the Jewish people were so certain would happen to me.'

**Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 33(34):2-9**

**From all my terrors the Lord set me free.**

I will bless the Lord at all times,  
 his praise always on my lips;  
 in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.  
 The humble shall hear and be glad.

**From all my terrors the Lord set me free.**

Glorify the Lord with me.  
 Together let us praise his name.  
 I sought the Lord and he answered me;  
 from all my terrors he set me free.

**Fr. Philip writes** Have you ever heard it said that you can't make a silk purse out of sow's ear? I don't need a silk purse, but it is God's habit to make a wonderful piece of tanned leather out of sows' ears. And so we come to Saul of Tarsus and Simon the son of John. One was a bit of an academic, a student of Judaic Law and Scripture and the other was a hot-tempered man who aspired only to keep his fishing business afloat and yet who wields the key of heaven. A pair of pigs' ears, if ever there was! From these two, God made the Teacher of the Gentiles and the Rock on which the Church is built. Both were transformed by meeting and knowing the Saviour and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Both left their previous ways of life for a new adventure with God. They both died as martyrs for the Faith in Rome. God's saints are wonderful pieces of His handiwork, tanned leather, tooled and cut to size. Fancy silk purses tear so easily, wear holes and are pretty useless. A silk purse is a plaster statue, not a real person, painted and unreal. Christ did not come as a silk purse, but as a human being like us in all things but sin. He deliberately chose the rough and ready, the violent and the venial for His Father's plan. Whatever our personalities may be, our talents and our character defects, God's grace can make us fit perfectly into His plan. His love wants us to be the people He knows we can be and gradually He will work to bring this about. Thus, we offer ourselves to God for His service and for Him to work on and with.



The Apostles Peter and Paul

**This week we celebrate the following:**

- Tuesday: Dedication of Clifton Cathedral Church of Ss. Peter and Paul. Feast in the Diocese
- Wednesday: Memorial of Saint Oliver Plunket, buried at Downside
- Friday Feast of Saint Thomas, Apostle
- Saturday: St Isabel of Portugal

**Reopen of Churches for Private Prayer** Thank you to those who cleaned both churches in the preparation of opening them for private prayer. The Diocese has granted permission to open both Churches to be opened for private prayer.

- A) St Peter's will be open Sunday 10.00am until 12.00noon. (when the patronal festival indulgence can be gained)
- B) St Michael's Church; the church will be open on Wednesday from 10.00am until 12.00noon.

*Please, remember it is for private prayer only; reciting of the rosary or other prayers as a group is not permitted. Thank you to those who have said that they are happy to be stewards; if you are available in your parish please inform the office which time you prefer, thank you.*

**Reopen of Churches for the Celebration of Mass**, which is great news. However, we still have to be safe and social distancing should still be carried out.

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July**                    **6.00pm Said Mass in St Peter's**  
**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July**                    **9.00am Said Mass in St Michael's**  
   **11.00am Said Mass in St Peter's**  
*Please note that singing is not yet allowed!*

**Parish Finances:** Thank you to all those who continue to support our parishes through standing order; this is a great way to support your parish. If you do not currently donate this way; it is easy to do, whether you pay tax and 'Gift Aid' your contribution or not, please email the parish office and a form will be sent to you. A cheque made payable for your parish would also be most welcome. Make the cheque payable to the parish and put through the door of St Peter's or the post box for St Michaels. Thank you for your continued support.

**Mass Obligation:** There is no Sunday or weekday Mass – the Sunday obligation has been lifted for the time being. We can still pray together and look after one another. We can take care of those around us who might be in need. We can build up a sense of community in the area in which we live and maybe we relearn the simple things of faith whilst we hunger for the Bread of Life in the Eucharist.

**PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION** LORD JESUS, I BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE PRESENT IN THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR. I LOVE YOU ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND I PASSIONATELY DESIRE TO RECEIVE YOU INTO MY SOUL. SINCE I CANNOT NOW RECEIVE YOU SACRAMENTALLY, COME SPIRITUALLY INTO MY SOUL, SO THAT I MAY UNITE MYSELF WHOLLY TO YOU, NOW AND FOREVER. AMEN

**Online Sunday Morning Coffee:** A group of parishioners is gathering online using Zoom on Sundays at 11am for coffee and chat and you are welcome to join using the link below. Why not join us, catch up on the week's news: If you need further details contact Rachel on 01666 504877.

We can still be instruments of peace, of joy, of faith and love in so many ways. We are a community of hope and faith and love, and we can still be proclaimers of the Gospel even when our normal, everyday routine is upset. May God watch over each and every one of us, and remind us – always – that he is near.