

## SAINTS PETER AND PAUL APOSTLES

### SOLEMNITY

*Today we join in the joy of the all Church in celebrating these two great men, witnesses of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Peter and Paul, pillars upon which our Church is founded.*

*As we affirm in the Creed: I believe in the Church, which is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. This last characteristic refers precisely to the foundation of the apostles upon which the Church of Christ is built.*

*This solemnity recalls once again the love of God, who takes the initiative to love us unconditionally, and in this love, sends his Son Jesus Christ, who through his mission, awakened in generous hearts the desire to follow him and bear witness to this faith.*

*Peter was Jewish by birth, a fisherman by trade, and he bore witness to Jesus, saying, "You are the Messiah of God." But perhaps one of the aspects of his life we remember most, besides his impetuous character, was that during the Lord's Passion, he denied him three times.*

*Paul a native of Tarsus, Turkey, severely persecuted Christians before his conversion, as he belonged to the Pharisees.*

*He persecuted Christians until he had a personal encounter with Christ, who asked him, "Saul, why do you persecute me?"*

*Afterward, he invited him to follow in his footsteps and thus become the apostle to the nations, because his preaching was directed to the pagans, Gentiles, that is, non-Jews.*

*Like Peter, he bore witness to Christ, and we can find this in his various pastoral and apostolic letters. (13)*

*From the above, we can discover in the light of faith that both were simple men, characterized by their ups and downs and their weaknesses; but this did not prevent them from giving their lives for Christ, professing one faith and seeking the unity of the Church. Peter makes a triple confession of his faith: Lord, you know that I love you...*

*While Paul affirms: for me, life is Christ.*

*Thus, they shared in the death of Jesus Christ in martyrdom: Peter, in 64, being crucified upside down, and Paul, being beheaded in Rome in 67.*

*Both responded to Jesus' call to be his disciples, witnesses of his love, to proclaim the good news of the gospel, seeking new disciples who would recognize Christ as our only Lord and Savior.*

*Through their mission, they made Christ's priestly prayer a reality: Father, that they may all be one as You and I are One.*

*Today, the challenge remains. We must strive to build a united Church, a Church in communion.*

*Pope Leo XIV, in the homily of the Mass for the opening of his pontificate, mentioned what he would call his first Great Desire: I long for a united Church, a sign of communion that becomes a leaven for a reconciled world.*

*How much we need to work together for this unity. Sometimes we emphasize the defects of those who are part of our Church, forgetting that we are all in a process of conversion with our strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures. But this should not discourage us; rather, we should understand that the initiative to love one another, in His mercy, makes up for and forgives our weaknesses.*

*Unity must begin in our hearts, in our families, in the great family that is the Church, to be a reflection of God's love in the world, inviting others to believe and, in this faith, to recognize that Jesus Christ is Lord. Today*

*we are invited to show solidarity with the entire Church, in what we call Peter's mite, that is, our contribution that helps make the Gospel of Christ known to all nations.*

*Let us remember that by being part of the same Church, we are also invited to show solidarity with its needs: our mother, the Church, carries out her mission not only in proclaiming the Gospel, but also in caring for the sick, in education, in fostering priestly and religious vocations, in the fight for human rights, in defending life, in evangelizing the marginalized or the voiceless. She also carries this message to immigrants, prisoners, soldiers, those in war, etc.*

*Let us do our part, being generous, remembering that God blesses those who give with joy.*

*Let us pray to our heavenly Mother, Mother of all Christians, that her prayer may reach us, always recognizing the greatness of being children of God and belonging to the true Church of Christ.*