

July 4-5, 2020 St. Peter and St. Paul: Great examples for us!

I wrote these words this past Monday-which was the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul. As I wrote I could not help thinking of how these two great apostles are great examples for you and me. Although they lived long ago both St. Peter and St. Paul have a lot to teach us about following Jesus today.

Jesus gave both St. Peter and St. Paul a great mission in this world. As Catholics we believe that St. Peter was the first pope. Although Peter would not have used that term, the fact that Jesus made him the leader of the Church on earth is obvious from even a casual reading of the New Testament.

Peter is mentioned 191 times in the Bible-more than three times as much as any other apostle. After Jesus ascended to Heaven, Peter took the lead in many different ways. He proposed and led the process of picking a new apostle to replace Judas Iscariot, he preached the homily after the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost explaining why the crowd heard all of the apostles in their own languages. In the first disputes that arose in the early Church, Peter took the lead gathering the others, leading the discussion, and speaking for the Church once a decision was made.

That Peter was less than perfect at times is no secret. We all know that he denied Jesus three times on Holy Thursday night. Many also know that St. Paul had to encourage Peter to speak more forcefully on at least one occasion. Indeed, St. Paul knew how important it was for the leader of the Church to boldly proclaim the message.

St. Paul is an interesting apostle for a number of reasons. He was not one of the original Twelve, and at first opposed and tried to stop Christianity from spreading. He was even involved in the killing of St. Stephen, one of the Church's first deacons.

Paul's conversion happened when Jesus spoke to him from a blinding light one day. After a brief conversation with our Lord, Paul obeyed Jesus' words and was baptized. After making a retreat and meeting with Peter, he began preaching the Gospel in so many places it is hard to count them all. Indeed, Paul would be the greatest missionary in Church history.

If you know the Bible, you know that, like St. Peter-St. Paul was far from perfect. He was not always the easiest person for other disciples to work with. We know that on a couple of occasions, other disciples found him so difficult that they simply left him and went home! I suspect Paul was unintentionally difficult, but possessed a level of zeal that most people do not.

I started this column by saying that I believe these two great apostles have a lot to teach us about being Christian in today's world. Here are three reasons why.

The first reason is precisely because they are so imperfect. Jesus knew better than anyone that neither St. Peter nor St. Paul were perfect people. He was well aware of their shortcomings. But He still called them to be apostles and gave them a great mission in this world.

In the same way, Jesus knows we are far from perfect. But He still calls us to be His disciples and gives us the mission of living a holy life in this world. Rather than get discouraged by the fact that we don't always do this perfectly, we should look to the example of St. Peter and St. Paul and remember that we are in good company. Just as Jesus forgave those great apostles and helped them to persevere in spite of their shortcomings, so He will forgive us whenever we repent of our sins and give us the grace we need to keep trying to be the best Catholics possible.

The next reason is that St. Peter and St. Paul both followed Jesus under difficult circumstances. The world in which they lived did not make it easy to spread the Word. There was no print media, let alone electronic or social media, to help preach the Gospel. Add to that the fact that they were so opposed in their work that both of them died as martyrs; killed for their faith in Jesus.

Like them we face all kinds of difficulties in living and spreading our faith. While we have many forms of communication at our disposal, so do those who work to spread a different message. While we enjoy freedom of religion in our land, we are well aware that not everyone does. We also know that, even with the freedom we enjoy, we face many challenges in preaching the Good News and living our Faith each day. Like St. Peter and St. Paul, we cannot get easily discouraged.

Finally, St. Peter and St. Paul remind us that the Church is multidimensional. As the first pope, St. Peter reminds us that the Church is a structured and ordered community of Faith. St. Paul reminds us that the Church always has a missionary dimension. In this they teach us to respect and work to make the structured Church all she can be while simultaneously doing our best to further her missionary efforts around the world today.

I hope everyone had a great Independence Day. Those who missed them can find my reflections for Independence Day in last week's bulletin column.

Please remember to pray a Hail Mary for me today and every day!

Have a great week!

Fr. John



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SAINTS UPDATE:

Enrolling now! Sts. Philip & James School educates students as young as 2, 3, and 4 years old through grade 8. We pride ourselves on providing a safe learning environment where your student receives individualized attention from certified teachers. We have a special education program for students who need extra assistance in reading and/or math. We stay up to date with the latest technology by using Google Classroom and STREAM programming. Come discover why it is GREAT to be a Saint.

TAKE A VIRTUAL TOUR!

Visit sspjnj.org and click on Virtual Open House to tour Saints Philip & James School. Interested in further discussing your student's education? We are now offering Zoom meetings to learn more about our school. Please contact Mrs. Kucinski at Kucinski.donna@spsj.org to schedule your meeting.

REFERRAL INCENTIVE:

We are thrilled to announce we will once again be offering a referral incentive for our current families. How does it work? Refer a family, and if that family enrolls and completes the 2020-2021 school year, your family will receive \$500 off your tuition in May of 2021. Please note only one family may receive credit for each new family.

POSITION AVAILABLE:

Junior High Language Arts and Religion Teacher (This is for 2020-2021 school year). Please contact Mrs. Kucinski at Kucinski.donna@spsj.org to apply.

SCRIP!

Scrip is still for sale! Looking for a way to effortlessly support the school while doing your everyday shopping? Purchasing SCRIP gift cards, at no additional cost to you, the school receives a percentage of funds back. To learn more, contact Diane Charnak at charnak.diane@spsj.org. She can assist you with getting your SCRIP account set up. Gift cards are available for hundreds of stores, and can even be purchased on your phone.

COMMUNITY SIDEWALK SALE!

We are in the process of organizing a Community Sidewalk Sale for August 8th. We will be selling slots for individuals to bring their items they would like to sell. We are still in the planning phases of this event. If you would like to learn more, contact Sierra Fenton at fenton.sierra@spsj.org.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!

Last weekend we welcomed into the Parish Family through the Sacrament of Baptism Dominic Joseph Delli Santi-Sabbatini son of Mr. & Mrs. Frederico Sabbatini.

WARREN COUNTY RESIDENTS, WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

The Food Pantry is Open & Curbside Pick-up is Available!
387 South Main Street, Phillipsburg
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10am - 3pm
Friday 1pm - 3pm
Please call 908-859-5447 before you plan to arrive.

FORMED...A GREAT WAY TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR FAITH!

FORMED is a collection of Catholic Bible studies, talks, movies, and other programs for people who want to learn more about their Catholic Faith. Anyone in our parish can access it by following three simple steps: (1) Google formed.org. (2) Scroll down to where it asks if your parish already subscribes and indicate yes. It will ask you to enter your parish code, which is GMKZ4Q (all capitals). (3) You will then be asked to set up your own account by establishing your own password.

FOOD FOR THE NEEDY

“A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.” – Proverbs 22:9 Remember – “Food for the Needy” Collection - First Sunday of each month.

FOOD FOR THE NEEDY

Due to the 4th of July holiday, The Food for the Needy Collection will take place on July 11 & 12th. July's needs are peanut butter, spaghetti sauce, canned vegetables, tuna fish, canned soups, canned meat, canned fruit, toothpaste, soap, laundry detergent and deodorant. Life Choices is in need of diapers, formula, and children's items. **Perishable items should not be left at the church**, but they can be dropped off at the Food Pantry, Monday – Friday, 9am-4pm. If you would like to make a monetary offering, please place your donation in an envelope and mark it “Food for the Needy” and place it in the collection baskets as you enter the church or mail it to the church office at 430 So. Main St., Phillipsburg, NJ 08865.

NATIVE SON CALLED TO THE ORDER OF DIACONATE

We are happy to announce that Mr. Timothy Eck II, a native son of our parish, has been called by the Most Reverend James F. Checchio, Bishop of the Diocese of Metuchen, to the Order of Deacon. He will be ordained on Saturday, July 25, 2020 at 10:30am at the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi in Metuchen, NJ

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” (Matthew 11:30)
When we think of being good stewards, we may think that God is asking too much of us when He calls us to generously share our time, talent, and treasure. However, we must remember that we are not “owners” of anything, we are merely “stewards” of the gifts God has given us. All He is asking is that we give back a small portion, in gratitude, of what He has already given to us.

LEGION OF MARY LIBRARY

June is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Legion of Mary Library has a wonderful selection of books & videos for the entire family to choose from. Although the library is currently not opened, please see information on formed.org where similar resources can be found.

A KIDNEY FOR CHRISTINE

Christine Lella Mathews is in need of two life-saving surgeries. A kidney transplant and a pancreas transplant. Due to the long waitlist, Christine is pursuing a living kidney donor to meet her medical needs. Anyone interested in becoming the donor that can save Christine’s life can follow this link: <https://www.rwjbh.org/rwj-university-hospital-new-brunswick/treatment-care/transplant-services/types-of-transplants/kidney-pancreas-transplants/become-a-living-donor/> and be sure to mention Christine Mathews on the donor form. Her continuous love for her family, friends, and God is what makes her fight, and keeps her strong. She has battled so many obstacles in her almost 32 years of life and this right here is just that. The hope is that this is another obstacle that she will overcome and come through stronger than ever.

Christine is a strong and loving human being with the drive and will to overcome any obstacle, but the medical, living, and other expenses during her testing, surgeries, and recovery will place her and her family in a huge financial hole. Although Christine has insurance, she will need support paying for out of pocket expenses while searching for a donor (preferably a living donor). If she is lucky enough to find a living donor, their medical and recovery expenses have to be covered as well. Donations would help Christine and her husband pay for medicine, rehabilitation, testing, screening, child care for her son Logan, transportation for out-of-state medical care and hotel stays.

A friend has set up a “GOFUNDME” page to provide assistance for her transplant journey. There is also a link with information on how to become a living donor. If you are interested, be sure to mention Christine Mathews on the living donor form. Please, if you could consider giving support in any way to help Christine and her family with the cost of these surgeries they would appreciate it so much. The link for the GOFUNDME page is [gf.me/u/x22p3p](https://www.gofundme.com/u/x22p3p).

THE PRAYER CORNER

POPE JOHN PAUL II'S PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who are called the Prince of Peace, who are yourself our peace and reconciliation, who so often said, “Peace to you,” grant us peace.

Make all men and women witnesses of truth, justice, and brotherly love. Banish from their hearts whatever might endanger peace.

Enlighten our rulers that they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace. May all peoples on the earth become as brothers and sisters. May longed for peace blossom forth and reign always over us all.

A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION IN TIME OF PANDEMIC

O Mary, you always brighten our path as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who, at the Cross, took part in Jesus’ pain while remaining steadfast in faith. O loving Mother, you know what we need, and we are confident you will provide for us as at Cana in Galilee. Intercede for us with your Son Jesus, the Divine Physician, for those who have fallen ill, for those who are vulnerable, and for those who have died. Intercede also for those charged with protecting the safety and health of others and for those who are tending to the sick and seeking a cure. Help us, O Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who took upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows, so as to lead us through the Cross, to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen.

MEMORIAL GARDEN

We are still accepting perennial flowers for Cathy’s Memorial Garden. Anyone wishing to donate please bring the flowers to the church office during normal business hours.

VIRTUAL MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Restore, Rekindle and Renew your marriage! Join us from the comfort of your home via Zoom for eight evening sessions presented on Mondays and Thursday from June 29 to July 23. The only requirement is a computer, iPad or tablet with access to the internet. No prior knowledge of Zoom is necessary. Workbooks and hand-outs will be sent to you before the start of the series. Married couples, priests and religious can register for this program at wwmephilly.org or by calling Al & Mary Liz Heumann at 610-449-1859. A \$100 dollar application fee covers most of the cost, however, you will be invited to make a good faith offering at the end of the program. The fee will be waived for anyone with financial strains.

+ MASSES FOR THE WEEK +

SUNDAY, JULY 5

7:00 – Dr. Robert Zengulis by Doug & Betty
9:00 – Agnes Peterson-Wilson by Family
11:00 - Angelo & Helen Nicolosi by Ann Nicolosi-Foose
1:00 (SP) – For the People
5:30pm – John Russo, Vera Reynolds & Rosalie Russo by Family

MONDAY, JULY 6

6:45 – Kathryn Finlan by Merrie Mulrine
8:00 – Margaret Kohl by Audra Frank
12:10 – Emile DeCoste by Judy Leone & Martha Richline
7:00pm – Mass Association

TUESDAY, JULY 7

6:45 – Joseph J. Janci by The Janci Family
8:00 – Jack Finegan by Family
12:10pm – Anne Harrison by Tony & Dolly Loiacono

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

6:45 – Maryann Defuria by Defuria Family
8:00 – Francis B. & Genevever Moule by Jeanie Bolcar
12:10pm – Joanne Kyrpczak by Paul & Donna Kucinski

THURSDAY, JULY 9

6:45 – Monica Ozgar by Donna & Paul Kucinski
8:00 – Augusto & Stella Pasquini children, nephew & grandsons by Jean Pasquini
12:10 – Olive Mulrine by Paul & Donna Kucinski

FRIDAY, JULY 10

6:45 – Susan Reynolds by The Socci Family
8:00 – Valerie Bates by Ann Nicolosi-Foose
12:10 – Leona Baingit by Jim Sciascia & Family

SATURDAY, JULY 11

8:00 – Ana C. Cortes by Sara Mislan Lotter
4:30 – Pat Shar by Dick & Ann Patti

SUNDAY, JULY 12

7:00 – Perine Family by Martha Perine Richline
9:00 – Ludevina Angelozzi by Gino Angelozzi
11:00 – Walter Zilys by Daughter & Husband
1:00 (SP) – For the People
5:30 – Deceased members of the Colangelo Family by Jeannine Riotto

+ MASS ASSOCIATION INTENTIONS +

MONDAY, JULY 6 7:00pm

Rosemary & Edward Shakal by Family
Richard Manton by Tom & Mary Jiorle
Rose Solt by Margaret Pavkovic & Family
Josie Bacskai by Joann Bacskai
Bessie Mosellie by The Volk Family
Carmella Fisher by The Volk Family
Catherine Savin by Martha Richline
Sharmm & John Stefano by Debbie & Joe Stefano
Nora Giordano by The Payran Family
Margaret McGrath by Fr. John Barbella

LECTORS

July 11 & July 12

Saturday, July 11th

4:30pm Lisa DeGerolamo

Sunday, July 12th

7:00am Ronald Rossini
9:00am Denise Kassick
11:00am Henrietta Schupper
5:30pm Kathy Fulse

Stewardship of Treasure

June 28, 2020: \$7,989.50
Father's Day (to date): \$1,717.00
May Online Contributions: \$18,503.50

Parish Capital Campaign

Total Pledged as of 6/5/2020 \$1,523,061.22
Total Collected as of 6/5/2020: \$1,128,332.16

Have you considered online giving?

If interested in signing up for online giving, please go to: <https://spsj.churchgiving.com>

NURSING HOME TEAMS

All Care Centers are currently under quarantine. No services will be held.

Mass Celebrants for July 11 & 12

4:30pm – Fr. Pat

7:00am – Fr. Pat

9:00am – Fr. Wojciech

11:00am – Fr. John

1:00pm – Fr. Wojciech

5:30pm – Fr. John