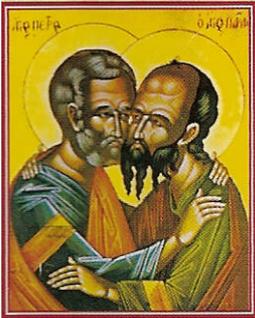


June 29

C. ☩ Holy Glorious, All-praised and First of the Supreme Apostles Peter and Paul



Holy Apostle Peter, brother of Apostle Andrew, born a Judean, was distinguished by the ardor and boldness of his character (Mt. 16:15-17, 22-23; 14:25-31; Mk. 1:20, 30, Jn. 1:44). Called by the Lord from the modest lot of fisherman to catching men, he was one of the zealous disciples of the Savior (Mt. 4:18-19; Lk. 5:10-11). Up to his calling he was called Simon. After his calling, as an omen and reward for his firmness in faith, he received the name Cephas, which in Greek is Peter, which means rock. He remained faithful to this name all his life and proved this by numerous examples of his strong affection for the Lord. He was the participant and witness of the greatest miracles of the Savior and the major events of His mortal life (Jn. 1:42; Mt. 16:18; 17:1; 26:37; Lk. 8:51).

After the resurrection of the Savior, called by Him again for apostolic service, he kept unshakably firm like a rock in the faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world during all his life and tried also to inspire this in other people (Jn. 21; Acts 2:14; 4:8; 12:3; 8:14; 12). He was an apostle mainly of the Judeans (Gal. 2:7, 8).

In the year 44 when Herod Agrippa threatened him with death in Jerusalem, St. Peter was released from prison by an angel (Acts 12:1-11), and then he left Jerusalem.

He preached in Syria, Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Asia and Egypt, confirming great wonders by the power of his words: he raised the dead and healed the infirm, and one of the latter was healed even from his shadow only (Acts 5:5, 10, 15; 9:33-34, 40).

In reign of Nero, having arrived in Rome, he endured a martyr's death on a cross. Recognizing him unworthy to be crucified the way Jesus Christ was crucified; Apostle Peter asked that he be crucified with his head downwards.

Although Apostle Peter was also distinguished with special zeal for Christ, this did not give him superiority of authority over the other apostles, but only superiority of honor according to Apostolic labor. The same as the other apostles he proposed the council to decide the matters of the church and these were decided by the common voice of the apostles and presbyters

with the entire Church (Acts 15:7, 12, 14; 1:23-26; 6:2-6; 15:22-23). The council sends Peter on the matter of serving the same way as the other disciples of Christ (Acts 8:14).

The Apostle Paul, speaking about the apostles and honoring them as pillars, places James in the first place and then Peter and John, counts him as one of them and equal to Peter (Gal. 2:7-9; 2 Cor. 11:5).

The story of the Roman church that Apostle Peter was bishop of Rome from 42 to 67 cannot withstand criticism.

The relics of St. Peter repose in the Vatican cathedral in Rome. The Holy Apostle left 2 Catholic Epistles.

The Holy Apostle Paul, named Saul up to his calling to be among the Apostles, was born as a Judean in the city of Tarsus. He was a disciple of the famous Hebrew teacher Gamaliel, belonged to the sect of the Pharisees and severely persecuted Christians (Acts 13:7-12; 21:39; 22:3; Phil. 3:4-5; Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1, 2; 26:11). Wonderfully called to be an apostle by the Lord Himself, Who was revealed to him on the way to Damascus, he accepted Holy Baptism from Apostle Ananias and since this time became the most zealous preacher of the Gospel (Acts 9:3-30). He wrote that he more than all labored in the good news of Christ (1 Cor. 15:10). He was mainly the apostle of the nations (Rom. 15:16, 18; Eph. 3:6-7; Gal. 2:7) and preached Christ in Arabia, Palestine, Caesarea, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy and many other countries.

Having undergone much suffering, he became worthy of ultimate revelations by the Lord, being admired in paradise, uplifted to the third heaven where he heard such mysteries that is impossible for anyone of human nature to retell and performed many great miracles (2 Cor. 11:23-29; 12:1-4, 7; Acts 13:11; 14:10; 16:18; 19:12; 20:9-12; 28:3-6).

Deep faith in the truth of preached doctrines, clear understanding of Christian truths, courageously tranquil amidst every possible danger, unusual knowledge of the human heart and by nature having the fascinating power of eloquence during the gifts of grace by the Holy Spirit, promoted his unusual success.

In the words of St. John Chrysostom, Apostle Paul for his sermons sought more of reviling and dishonor rather than us of honor, more of death rather than us of life, more of poverty rather than us of repose, more of grief rather than others of joy, and prayed more for enemies rather than others who prayed against enemies. Only one thing was terrible and dangerous for him was that of not offending God. But more than anything, equally and driving him, was nothing except pleasing God. He put love for Christ higher than anything. With this love he wanted more to be accounted among the

last and punished, rather than being without it among the highest and receiving honors.

He died in Rome about the year 67, beheaded by the sword on command of Emperor Nero. His relics repose in a Roman church beyond the city on road to Ostia.

Apostle Paul has written 14 Epistles: to the Romans, 2 to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, 2 to the Thessalonians, 2 to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon and to the Hebrews.

In the services for this day the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul are glorified, as "friends of Christ", "of the heavenly recesses", "rivers of knowledge", "feeders of the entire inhabited world", "preachers of true piety", "intercessors for the whole world", "disciples of Christ and founders of the Church, true pillars and walls, and trumpets of the doctrine and suffering of the divine Christ, "fishers of the world" "possessors of the keys of the Kingdom", "prototypes of the preachers of God", "chiefs of the Apostles"¹.

Troparion, tone 4

**First-enthroned of the Apostles,
And teachers of the universe,
Pray to the Master of all,
To grant peace to the universe,
And great mercy to our souls.**

Kontakion, tone 2

**Firm and divinely-inspired preachers,
Highest of Your Apostles, O Lord,
You received in enjoyment of Your blessings and repose:
For you accepted their sickness and death more than any sacrifice,
O Only One Who knows their hearts.**

Magnification

**We magnify you,
Apostles of Christ,
Enlightening the entire world with your teaching,
Having led all the ends of the world to Christ.**

Paramoia: 1) 1 Pet. 1:3-9; 2) 1 Pet. 1:13-19; 3) 1 Pet. 2:11-24.
Matins Gospel: Jn. 21:15-25; sel. 67. **Epistle:** 2 Cor. 11:21-32, 12:1-9; sel. 193. **Gospel:** Mt. 16:13-19; sel. 67.

See: If the feast falls on a Sunday, all of the Sunday service has precedence. On the day of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul only it is permissible to eat meat and eggs as long as this feast does not fall on a Wednesday or on a Friday.

Ven. Peter, Prince of the Horde, Wonderworker of Rostov

Nephew of Khan Berke of the Golden Horde, he secretly left the horde, accepted holy baptism in Rostov and married the daughter of one of the Horde grandees who was a Christian. He distinguished himself with love for silence, meditation on God and prayer. He built the St. Peter [Petrovsky] Monastery at Lake Nero (see the Iaroslavl Diocese). After the death of his wife, the prince accepted monasticism in the monastery he founded and in God-pleasing asceticism he reached a very old age and died in 1290. His relics are in a hidden place in his monastery. At his tomb many wonderful healings were performed.

¹The image of Apostle Peter on icons with keys is based on the known place of the Holy Scriptures (Mt. 16:13-18), where the Savior announced to Apostle Peter that he was the first who confessed Him to be the Son of God, uttered the promise to give him "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven", i.e. the authority to open and close the entrance to this Kingdom. Such authority, however, the Lord then promised to all the Apostles (Mt. 18:18) and after His resurrection solemnly confirmed this for all of them and consequently also to all the pastors of the Church for their service (Jn. 20:23).

The image of Apostle Paul on icons holding a sword signals his tireless, most zealous preaching of the word of God and he called it a spiritual sword (Eph. 6:12-17; Heb. 4:12), using which he victoriously amazed and cut asunder impiety and faithlessness and converted a large number of people to Jesus Christ.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900), pp. 0221-0223. Translated by Archpriest Eugene D. Tarris © September 3, 2007. All rights reserved.*