

FEAST OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL

First Reading

ACTS 12:1-11

A Reading from the Book of Acts

King Herod began to persecute some members of the church. He ordered James, brother of John, killed by the sword. He saw that this made the Jewish people happy so he had Peter arrested. That happened during the Feast of Thin Bread. Peter was put in jail with four groups of soldiers watching him. Herod planned to bring Peter on trial in public after the feast. People began to pray to God for Peter.

The night before Peter was to be brought on trial, he was sleeping between two guards. He was bound by two chains and two other guards were standing by the entrance to the jail. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone into the cell. The angel woke Peter up and said, "Hurry up! Get up!" The chains fell off his hands and the angel said, "Get dressed and put on your sandals." Peter put on his clothes and his sandals. Then he followed the angel. He thought he was dreaming. They went past two groups of soldiers to the iron gate that opens into the city. The gate opened and they went out. Then the angel disappeared.

Sts Peter and Paul

Peter realized what had happened and thought that the Lord sent his angel to rescue him from the power of Herod and from everything the Jewish leaders planned to do to him.

The Word of the Lord

Sts Peter and Paul

RESPONSE:

The angel of the Lord saves all people
fearing the Lord.

I will always praise the Lord with all my heart.
Let all oppressed people listen and be glad.
Proclaim with me the wonderful work of the Lord.
Let us praise his name.

RESPONSE:

I prayed to the Lord and he answered me.
He freed me from all my fears.
Keep your eyes on the Lord.
You will shine like the sun.

RESPONSE:

I was nobody but I prayed.
The Lord saved me from all my troubles.
If you honor the Lord, his angels will protect you.

RESPONSE:

Find out for yourself that the Lord is kind.
Come to the Lord for protection.
You will be glad.
Praise the Lord.

A Reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to Timothy

Paul said, “Now is the time for me to die. My life is like a drink offering being poured out on the altar. I have fought. I have finished the race and have done my best. I have been faithful. Now the victory prize will be given to me for having faith in God. He judges fairly and on the day of judgment he will give me a crown and to everyone waiting for him to appear with power.

The Lord stayed with me and gave me strength so I was able to proclaim his message for all the Gentiles. I was protected from death. The Lord will rescue me from all evil and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. Praise him forever and ever!

Amen.

The Word of the Lord

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of Matthew

Jesus and his disciples went near the town of Caesarea Philippi. He asked the disciples, “What do people say about the Son of Man?”

The disciples answered, “Some people say you are John the Baptist.” Others say “Elijah or Jeremiah or some other prophet.”

Then Jesus asked them, “What about you? Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus told him, “Simon, son of Jonah, you are blessed! You did not say that on your own. It was shown to you by my Father in heaven. So I will call you Peter, meaning “a rock”. On this rock I will build my church. Death itself will have no power over it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What you don’t allow on earth will not be allowed in heaven and what you allow on earth will be allowed in heaven.”

The Good News of the Lord

Sts Peter and Paul

