



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

St Peter and St Paul-June 29th 2021

Readings: Acts 12: 1-11, Psalm 33, 2 Timothy 4: 6-8. 17-18, Matthew 16: 13-19

Over the last 48 hrs three people have asked me if today is still a day of obligation. As we know.....there are no obligations in this time of plague. The legalities are suspended. Nevertheless we are here and those gathered with us via this link, because we are drawn- not by legalities but by something deeper. We are drawn on this day of days that merits the tag Day of Obligation by the obligation of the heart.

The word oblige/obligation comes from the Latin – ‘on account of the bond’. We are here in person and in spirit ‘on account of the bond’. To our eternal joy we are bound together with these two great followers of Christ. We are here because, through no merit of our own but through God’s grace alone, we are part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, brothers and sisters of the saints of the Most High. In short.....we are family. How could we not celebrate the heavenly birthdays of the impulsive, simple, sometimes stumbling, first confessing, Galilee fisherman whose proclamation of Christ is the foundation of the Church and the unlikely rock upon which Jesus builds His Church. The Alpha male who ends his life crucified upside down on the Vatican Hill and whose relics lie under the great altar of his successors.

How could we not celebrate the courageous and longed for entry into the eternal Presence of the uncompromising, fierce intellectual, tireless and compassionate missionary, whose passion for souls informed the Church of her priority and reminded her of Christ's universal purpose. The convert whose fidelity terrified and inspired the original brotherhood, whose suffering was extraordinary and whose love and resilience led to martyrdom in the little prison garden of the three fountains.

The obligation is not a burden but a privilege to be invited to walk in such exalted company and know that we are bound together in Christ and that, because of their love of Jesus, we have been given the privilege of being born into the same eternal reality and hope of glory.

It is the shared conviction of the ultimate reality that draws us here – 'obliged' - on account of the bonds of love and faith and belonging.

This is the heart of the Mass. We come because this is where we, in the Church Militant here on earth, meet the Church Triumphant in Heaven – reaching across the boundaries of time and eternity – together in Christ.

St Peter and St Paul....pray for us.