

**Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul,
Apostles**



The Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul reminds us that even those with messy, complicated pasts can be transformed into saints. Peter, who was impulsive and afraid, denied Christ three times. Paul, once a fierce persecutor, became the Church's boldest missionary. Their lives reflect the mercy of God that meets us not after we clean ourselves up, but precisely in our place of need.

In recovery from lust addiction, we know the power of shame, secrecy, and fear. We know what it's like to feel unworthy of grace or afraid to be truly known. But Saints Peter and Paul remind us that no past is too broken to be healed. In fact, it is through our surrender and honesty that God begins His most powerful work.

Saint Paul shares this encouragement in this Sunday's second reading (2 Timothy 4:6–8, 17–18):

I, Paul, am already being poured out like a libation, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.

From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance.

...But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the proclamation might be completed

and all the Gentiles might hear it.

And I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

The Lord will rescue me from every evil threat and will bring me safe to his heavenly kingdom.

Like Paul, we too are being rescued—from distorted thinking, self-centered patterns, and the slavery of lust. This is not a one-time event, but a daily process of surrender, inventory, and communion with God. Each day we admit our need for Him and seek freedom through humility and grace.

Peter's story is also ours. We've made promises we didn't keep. We've chosen self-protection over truth. But Christ continues to ask us, "Do you love me?" He doesn't condemn—He invites us to follow Him in deeper honesty and purity.

Recovery is not about spiritual perfection—it's about relationship. It's about turning away from isolation and toward connection with others, with the Church, and with God. In that connection, we find freedom—not from temptation entirely, but from the need to hide.

Saints Peter and Paul were changed not by their own strength, but by their willingness to be led. We, too, are called to walk with others, share our experience, and live in the light. As we continue in recovery, let us remember that God is not finished with us. Like Peter and Paul, we are still becoming the people we were created to be.

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- How do Peter or Paul's stories speak to your own past and your journey of healing from lust?
- When have you experienced God's mercy or rescue in moments of temptation or despair?
- What does "keeping the faith" look like for you today, especially in living with honesty and chastity?

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First Reading: Acts 12:1-11

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19