

29 June – Ss Peter and Paul

First Reading † Acts 12:1-11

Now I know it is indeed true: the Lord has saved me from the power of Herod.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

About that time King Herod laid hands on some members of the church to harm them. He had James the brother of John beheaded, and when he saw that this pleased the Jews he went on to arrest Peter as well. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. When he had arrested him, he put him in prison, assigning four squads of four soldiers each to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover. All the time Peter was under guard the church prayed fervently to God for him.

On the very night before Herod was intending to bring him out, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, fastened with two cords, and guards were keeping watch at the entrance to the prison. Suddenly an angel of the Lord was standing there, and light shone in the cell. The angel tapped Peter on the side and woke him, saying,

‘Get up quickly!’

and the cords fell from his hands. Then the angel said to him,

‘Put on your belt and your sandals.’

He did this, and the angel said,

‘Wrap your cloak round you and follow me.’

Peter followed the angel out, but he did not realise that what was happening through the angel was fact; he thought he was seeing a vision. Going through the first and second guard-posts they came to the iron gate leading to the city, which opened to them; they went out and had walked along a lane when suddenly the angel left him. Then Peter came to himself and said,

‘Now know truly that the Lord sent his angel
and delivered me from Herod
and from all the expectations of the Jewish people.’

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial † Psalm 33:2-9

The Lord set me free from all my fears.

I will bless the Lord at all times,
praise of him is always in my mouth.
In the Lord my soul shall make its boast;
the humble shall hear and be glad.

The Lord set me free from all my fears.

Glorify the Lord with me;
together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

The Lord set me free from all my fears.

Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This lowly one called; the Lord heard,
and rescued him from all his distress.

The Lord set me free from all my fears.

The angel of the Lord is encamped
around those who fear him, to rescue them.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
Blessed the warrior who seeks refuge in him.

The Lord set me free from all my fears.

Second Reading † 2 Timothy 4:6-8.17-18

All that remains now is the crown of righteousness.

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time has come for me to depart. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith; all there is to come for me now is the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but also to all those who have longed for his appearing.

But the Lord stood by me and gave me power, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the gentiles might hear it; and so I was *saved from the lion's mouth*. The Lord will rescue me from all evil attacks on me, and bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation † Matthew 16:18

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
You are Peter, the rock on which I will build my Church;
the gates of hell will not hold out against it.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel † Matthew 16:13-19

You are Peter, and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples,

‘Who do people say the Son of man is?’

And they said,

‘Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah,
and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’

He said to them,

‘But you, who do you say I am?’

In answer Simon Peter said,

‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’

In reply Jesus said to him,

‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah,
for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.

So I now say to you:

“You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church.

And the gates of the underworld will never overpower it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven:

whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven;

whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.