

Our Lady of Victories Church

(serving Harrington Park, River Vale and the Pascack/Northern Valley)
150 Harriot Avenue, Harrington Park, New Jersey

www.olvhp.org

WELCOME

SUNDAY, June 28, 2020 A.D.

To the Parish Family of
OUR LADY OF VICTORIES
(THE LITTLE CHURCH WITH THE BIG HEART)

Parish Office 201-768-1706

COME WORSHIP WITH US

Rev. Wojciech B. Jaskowiak
Pastor

Mr. Thomas Lagatol Mr. Albert McLaughlin
Deacons

Maria Hellrigel - Parish Secretary
201-768-1706

Religious Education (CCD)
Susan Evanelle Denise Coulter (LSEC)
201-768-1400

Sr. Elizabeth Holler, SC Sr. Mary Corrigan, SC
In Residence-Convent

Selena Piazza Elizabeth Gulfo
Lesa Rossmann Martin Coyne II
Ministers of Music Parish Trustees

Jorden Pedersen Esq. Jon Fischer CFA
President Parish Council Chairman Finance Committee

Novenas prayed after 8:00 a.m. Mass:

Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal: Monday

St. Jude and St. Anthony: Wednesday

Infant of Prague: 25th of the month

St. Peregrine: First Friday of the Month

Rosary: Recited M - Sat after 8:00am & after 12:00Noon Mass

this Friday—**July 3—First Friday** of the month

Adoration immediately after 12:00Noon Mass

6:00-6:50pm Confessions

6:30pm Devotions to the Sacred Heart / Reposition

7:00pm First Friday Mass

NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED

Stop in and visit Jesus in the Tabernacle. You can do it here at
OLV Parish. Church is open 7am-3pm (M-F).



REMINDER! In order to attend
Saturday evening / Sunday Masses
you must sign-up in advance.

You can now even sign-up for the whole month

You may sign-up in the lower church on
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 11am-12Noon.

Or write an email to parish email
olvrectory.hp@gmail.com

See page 2 for new Mass schedule.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION:

Mon.-Sat. 7:30-7:50am. Saturday 11:00-11:50am; 3:00-3:45pm

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM:

To register for Baptismal preparation and Baptism, call the rectory.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION:

Call the Religious Ed Office for requirements/class schedule.

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY:

Please call the rectory for an appointment.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK/LAST RITES:

Sick calls at any time in emergency.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS AND VOCATIONS:

Anyone contemplating a vocation to the Priesthood or Religious Life
should contact the Vocations Office at 973.497.4365.



OLV Rectory
Phone: 201-768-1706
Address: 81 Lynn St.
Email: olvrectory.hp@gmail.com

OLV Fax
201-768-3962

Religious Education
201-768-1400
155 Parkway
olvhpccd@gmail.com

OLV Convent
201-768-1705
145 Parkway

Fr. Wojciech's Corner

It was a joy to welcome back all those of you who came last weekend for restarting our Sunday Masses. I thank Deacon Al for the hard work he did to help people sign up for the Masses. Let us continue praying for all those who are still vulnerable and cannot join us in person, but join us through Live-Stream Mass Sundays at 9:30am. As everybody was celebrating Fathers Day last Sunday, the Cardinal ordained 10 new priests (*new fathers*). How much in need of fathers we are in our times, we just realized during these past few months. Let us pray for the newly ordained to be true fathers and shepherds of the flocks with which they will be entrusted.

As the world slowly "reopens", the Church will open this week with the Solemnity of the great Apostles: Peter and Paul. Great sinners turned into great saints. There is hope! We will close this week with another great Apostle St. Thomas, great consolation to those in doubt. His encounter with the Risen Lord led him into a true freedom. May this constant encounter with the Risen Lord help us also to celebrate and acquire true freedom as we will celebrate Independence Day, the 4th of July, this year falling on Saturday, the day of Mary.

Happy 4th of July!

"The greatest deception, and the deepest source of unhappiness, is the illusion of finding life by excluding God, of finding freedom by excluding moral truths and personal responsibility."

* St. John Paul II, Homily, World Youth Day, Toronto, July 28, 2002

SAINTS

PETER & PAUL

On June 29, we honor the two great pillars on which Jesus built His Church: Saints Peter and Paul, who totally lived for God and His Church. Peter left a fishing career, his wife and family; Paul, a tent maker, left the comforts of family and homeland, to travel to the ends of the know world to spread the news of Jesus Christ. They both died to "self" so that Jesus could work in and through them! Jesus will work in and through each of us – if we die to "self" and live totally for God.

New Mass Schedule for Opening Church

Saturday evening 4:00PM and 5:00PM

Sunday 7:00AM, 8:00AM *Latin*,

9:30AM - also live-streamed, 10:45AM,

10:45AM Family Mass in OLV GYM

12:00Noon, 1:00PM *Spanish*, 6:00PM,

There will be no 7:00PM Mass on Sunday evening.

Advice to Graduates

Don't sweat the small stuff, and most stuff is small.

The most boring word in any language is "I".

Nobody is indispensable, especially you.

People are more important than things.

Persistence will get you almost anything, eventually.

Nobody can make you happy;

most people are as happy as they make up their minds to be.

Live by what you trust, not by what you fear.

Character counts. Family matters.

If you wait to have kids until you can afford them,

you probably never will.

Baby kittens don't begin to open their eyes until six weeks after birth.

People generally take 26 years.

Television ruins more minds than drugs.

Sometimes there is more to gain in being wrong than in being right.

Life is so much simpler when you tell the truth.

People who do the world's real work usually don't wear ties.

A good joke beats a pill for a lot of ailments.

There are not substitutes for fresh air, sunshine, and exercise.

A smile is the cheapest way to improve your looks.

May you live life so there is only standing room at your funeral.

Mothers know best, but sometimes fathers know too.

Forgive yourself, your friends, and your enemies.

If you don't do anything else in life, love someone

and let someone love you.

Spiritual Excerpt

The version found written on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta:

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends

and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.

Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.

Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them anyway.

IT'S IN THE BIBLE

The phrase "*Mark my words*", used in making a prediction to take notice of what I have to say, comes to us from Isaiah 28:23.

God bless America.

and

America bless God.

Pray for Those in the Military

US Army

Captain Ben Clemente
RRT Specialist James Crumb
Specialist Peter Dippolito
Major Michael Franson
Sergeant First Class Charles Greene
Captain Shawn Linn
Lieutenant Gigi McElroy
Colonel John McLaughlin
Captain John G. Miele

US Air Force

Chief Master Sergeant Shawn Llewellyn

US Marine Corps.

Corporal Shanna Bennett
Corporal Matthew Brady
1st Lieutenant Ryan Colomeo
Lance Corporal Thomas Iafrate
Corporal Joseph Levine

US Navy

Lt. Commander Julia Cheringal
Ensign Jon Clemente
Lieutenant Joseph Jaeger
Lieutenant Andrew Jaeger
OS2 Daniel T. LoVecchio

Prayer for the Safety of Soldiers

Almighty and eternal God, those who take refuge in You will be glad and forever will shout for joy. Protect these soldiers as they discharge their duties. Protect them with the shield of Your strength and keep them safe from all evil and harm. May the power of Your love enable them to return home in safety, that with all who love them, they may ever praise You for Your loving care. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Pray for Our Sick

Please Pray in the name of **JESUS**, the Healer, that the *sick of the Parish* may be restored to health and all those who assist and care for the sick will be given the *strength* to continue *God's Will*: baby Cordelia, baby Emmet Fischer, baby James Amicucci, baby Jonathan, Richard Bolton, Robert Brawley, Dominic Carini, Sal Cenicola, Helen Choma, Kevin Columbo, Marie D'Ascenzo, Maryann Dean, Lorraine Degerdon, Vincent DePaola, Marge Devitt, Carl Falasca, Jay Filip-pone, Marie Filippone, Mary Foley, Amy Hartwell, Peter Kellar, Milan Krupa, Mary Lowe, James McGarry, Robert Milli, Gianna Moscatello, John Pal, John Peterson Jr, Joan and Buddy Phalon, Marie Piazza, Canice Prince, Louise Ricciardi, Vincent Ricciardi, Veronica Roman-chuk, Beth Sacco, Mike Tobia, Brian, Carla, Chris, Christina, Dierdre, Ed-ward, Elba, Jennifer, Joann, Karen, Lisa, Lou, Lucas, Lynn, Michael, Patrick, Paul, Peter, Robert, Roseann, Sean, Sharon.

Spiritual Communion *composed by Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val*

As I cannot this day enjoy the happiness of assisting at the holy Mysteries, O my God! I transport myself in spirit at the foot of Thine altar; I unite with the Church, which by the hands of the priest, offers Thee Thine adorable Son in the Holy Sacrifice; I offer myself with Him, by Him, and in His Name. I adore, I praise, and thank Thee, imploring Thy mercy, invoking Thine assistance, and presenting Thee the hom-age I owe Thee as my Creator, the love due to Thee as my Savior.

Apply to my soul, I beseech Thee, O merciful Jesus, Thine infinite merits; apply them also to those for whom I particularly wish to pray. I desire to communicate spiritually, that Thy Blood may purify, Thy Flesh strengthen, and Thy Spirit sanctify me. May I never forget that Thou, my divine Redeemer, hast died for me; may I die to all that is not Thee, that hereafter I may live eternally with Thee. Amen.

"The church is a miniature Heaven. Whosoever takes no delight in entering this little heaven on earth will not be admitted into the great Heaven above." **St. Ambrose**

Mass Intentions

Monday, June 29– Solemnity of Ss. Peter and Paul

8:00 James P. Walsh R/b Jeanne Marie Walsh
12:00 Marta E. Ryan R/b Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Ryan

Tuesday, June 30 – First Martyrs of the Church of Rome

8:00 Intentions of George Fabiano R/b George and Gail Fabiano
12:00 Eleanora Zanetti R/b the Zanetti Family

Wednesday, July 1 – St. Junipero Serra - Priest

8:00 August Reinfried R/b Norma Reinfried
12:00 Helen Smith R/b the Oakley Family

Thursday, July 2 – St. Bernardino Realino of Italy-Priest

8:00 Edward O'Connor R/b Margaret Brandes
12:00 Joseph Lawlor R/b Ray Lawlor

First Friday, July 3 – St. Thomas the Apostle

8:00 Lourdes Hinojosa R/b Margaret and Al Algeria
12:00 Intentions of Raph, Mike and Sandra Giron R/b the Giron Family
7:00 Judith Mahoney R/b Lorraine Gobbetti

First Saturday, July 4 – INDEPENDENCE DAY - St. Elizabeth of Portugal

8:00 Charles F. Scott R/b Tony and Laura Scott
12:00 Souls in Purgatory
4:00 Burke, Walsh and Melbourne Family R/b Bill and Peg Walsh
5:00 James Quaglietta R/b Marvin Schwartz

Sunday, July 5 - St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria - Priest

7:00 Rosemary Dolan R/b the Kip Family
8:00 Intentions of Maria Victoria Alcala R/b Marita Morgan
9:30 Scott Emerson Jr. R/b Bob and Renee Tringali
10:45 Giuseppe LaFranca R/b Roy and Maria Lapidus
10:45 Gym Eileen Seneca R/b Michael and Barbara Fizulich
12:00 Gino Zocco R/b Mike Zocco
1:00 People of the Parish
6:00 Catherine Pagano R/b Connie and Richie Luzzi

Sanctuary Memorials

The Sanctuary Lamp will burn this week for the **repose of the soul of Michael B. Ryan**, r/b Mary Ann Ryan.

The Blessed Virgin Mary Votive Lamp will burn this week for the **repose of the soul of Millie Sutter**, r/b Sonny and Anita Garzino.

The St. Joseph Votive Lamp will burn this week for the **souls in Purgatory**.

Sanctuary Offerings

If you would like to donate flowers for the Altar, Bl. Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, please contact the rectory. Flowers, Bread and Wine, the Bl. Virgin Mary Votive Lamp, St. Joseph Votive Lamp, and the Sanctuary Lamp can be dedicated on a weekly basis.

My Parish—COVID-19—My Responsibility

We thank all those who so generously continue to support our parish by mailing in your donations. At the same time, we understand that some have been laid off from their work or experiencing decreased income and are unable to continue their donations at this time. *Donations / offering envelopes may be mailed to:*

OLV Rectory, 81 Lynn Street, Harrington Park, NJ 07640.

Thank you for your generosity.

Faith is the ability to not panic.

REASON, SEASON, LIFETIME

People come into your life for a **reason, a season or a lifetime**. When you know which one it is, you will know what to do for that person. When someone is in your life for a **REASON**, it is usually to meet a need you have expressed. They have come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance and support, to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. They may seem like a godsend and they are. They are there for the reason you need them to be. Then, without any wrongdoing on your part or at an inconvenient time, this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end.

Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up and force you to take a stand. What we must realize is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled, their work is done. The prayer you sent up has been answered and now it is time to move on.

Some people come into your life for a **SEASON**, because your turn has come to share, grow or learn. They bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never done. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it, it is real. But only for a season.

LIFETIME relationships teach you lifetime lessons, things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation. Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life. It is said that love is blind but friendship is clairvoyant. —*Author Unknown*.

DID YOU KNOW?

The term "**bleeding heart**," often used in a derogatory sense when applied to image-conscious (read *hypocritical*) liberals, had a very Catholic and Incarnational origin. The term came into use not long after the revelations of our Lord to St. Margaret Mary concerning the wounds inflicted by sinful Catholics on His Sacred Heart. In the revelations given to the Visitation nun in 1675, our Lord opened His bosom and exposed before her eyes the very flesh of His human Heart wrapped in a ring of thorns and oozing droplets of His precious blood. "Behold," He said to the saint, "the Heart that has so loved men." Within Catholic Christendom of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a "bleeding heart" was a heart consumed with true Christian charity for the poor and sick.

A Little Humor ...

Secret to a Good Marriage

At St. Peter's Church they have weekly husbands marriage seminars. At a session last week, the priest asked Giuseppe, who said he was approaching his 50th wedding anniversary, to take a few minutes and share some insight as to how he managed to stay married to the same woman all these years. Giuseppe replied to the assembled husbands, "Wella, I've tried to treata nice, spenda da money on her, but besta of all is, I tooka to Italy for the 25th anniversary!" The priest responded, "Giuseppe, you are an amazing inspiration to all the husbands here! Please tell us what you are planning for your wife for your 50th anniversary?" Giuseppe proudly replied, "I gonna go pick her up."

Summer Jokes

- What do cats eat for dessert? Mice cream!
- What do you say to a dog on the beach? You are one hot dog!!!!
- What did the pig say on a hot summer day? – I'm bacon!
- Why do bananas use sunscreen? – Because they peel.
- Why are gulls named seagulls? – If they were by the bay, they'd be bagels.
- Why don't oysters share their pearls? – Because they're shellfish.
- Which letter is the coolest? – Iced T.
- What do you call a snowman in July? – A puddle.
- What do sheep do on sunny days? – Have a baa-baa-cue.

"The Magic Bank Account"

Imagine that you had won the following *PRIZE* in a contest: Each morning your bank would deposit \$86,400 in your private account for your use. However, this prize has rules:

The set of rules:

1. Everything that you didn't spend during each day would be taken away from you.
2. You may not simply transfer money into some other account.
3. You may only spend it.
4. Each morning upon awakening, the bank opens your account with another \$86,400 for that day.
5. The bank can end the game without warning; at any time it can say, "Game Over!" It can close the account and you will not receive a new one.

What would you personally do?

You would buy anything and everything you wanted right?

Not only for yourself, but for all the people you love and care for. Even for people you don't know, because you couldn't possibly spend it all on yourself, right?

You would try to spend every penny, and use it all, because you knew it would be replenished in the morning, right?

ACTUALLY, This GAME is REAL ... Shocked ??? YES!

Each of us is already a winner of this *PRIZE*.

We just can't seem to see it. The PRIZE is *TIME**!

1. Each morning we awaken to receive 86,400 seconds as a gift of life.
2. And when we go to sleep at night, any remaining time is Not credited to us.
3. What we haven't used up that day is forever lost.
4. Yesterday is forever gone.
5. Each morning the account is refilled, but the bank can dissolve your account at any time WITHOUT WARNING... SO, what will YOU do with your 86,400 seconds?

I have seen something like this before but this time I enjoyed it a little more. It really makes you "think," doesn't it? Those seconds are worth so much more than the same amount in dollars. Think about it and remember to enjoy every second of your life, because time races by so much quicker than you think.

Clothing Bins

Christ freed us from sin. Patriots throughout the ages fought for our freedom. There are still those today who cannot enjoy freedom from poverty. Why not celebrate your freedom by an act of kindness? One way to do this is by donating your unwanted used clothing, small appliances, shoes, linens, sheets, towels, stuffed animals, novels, toys and children's books to our Catholic Charities donations bins located on the church grounds. Thank you.

KIDZ KORNER

1. Who led the Jews as they wandered the desert?
2. What food did God give to the Jews in the desert?
3. How many years did the Jews wander in the desert?
4. Where and what is the shortest verse in Scriptures?
5. What was St. Paul's occupation?

Answers on page five.

A blind person asked St. Anthony:
"Can there be anything worse than losing eye sight?"
He replied: "Yes, losing your vision."

Saint who started a devotion to the Precious Blood



One devotion you don't hear too often is a devotion to the Precious Blood. But St. Gaspar del Bufalo sure was devoted! **Born on the feast of the Epiphany, he was given the full name Gaspar Melchior Balthazar** for the traditional names of each of the three Wise Men who went to adore the baby Jesus. **He founded the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in 1815.** Their vision and goal was to establish mis-

sions, churches, and catechize the people in towns and provinces where bandits had taken over. St. Gaspar and his missionaries were very successful and one time, the saint, armed only with a crucifix, went into the mountains to preach to the bandits and was able to negotiate peace with them. "We must let it be known how the Blood of Christ cleanses the souls and sanctifies them, particularly by means of the sacraments," St. Gaspar said on more than one occasion. He also said things like: "I exhort you to speak less and pray more." Or this one: "We are living in times in which the divine Blood must cleanse the entire world." **St. Gaspar was the first to really popularize devotion to the Precious Blood.** St. Gaspar found a unifying theme throughout salvation history, that the Precious Blood always underlined man's relationship with God. He said, "Other devotions which are products of various times have holy and praiseworthy beginnings, but they go back only so far; this devotion is so ancient that it goes back to the moment when Adam sinned, for which reason Jesus was called, 'the Lamb who has been slain from the foundation of the world.'" He also said, "Jesus has given us His Blood even to the last drop. What is there left to do? Jesus is a victim. Behold I am ready, O my God, to be a victim of love!" At his time, many Catholics thought that the name of Jesus as the Precious Blood should be reserved for a sacred few and not "bandied about" on the lips of many, but St. Gaspar thought otherwise. "In every era the Lord has inspired certain devotions to stem the tide of iniquity. We also see that in times past the Church was attacked in this or that doctrine. Today the war is being waged against religion as such and against Christ Crucified. We need, therefore, to reemphasize the glories of the Cross and of our Crucified Redeemer, to reopen the fountains of mercy just when the devil would make us the victim of wrath. Now, more than ever, it is opportune to tell people at what price our souls were redeemed. We must let it be known how the Blood of Christ cleanses the souls and sanctifies them, particularly by means of the sacraments. We must arouse them from their insensibility by reminding them that his Blood is offered up every morning upon the altars and that instead of blasphemy and insult, we should give it adoration and praise," he said." **Though he was of frail health, St. Gaspar served the people during the cholera outbreak in Italy.** He spent the summer of 1837 ministering to and tending the spiritual needs of those in Rome affected by the cholera epidemic. On December 28, he succumbed to his own failing health and died while ministering to others. St. Vincent Pallotti, his friend and founder of the Pallottines, assisted at his deathbed and his doctor described him as a "victim of charity" because of his tireless efforts to serve others up until the very end. St. Gaspar was canonized in 1954 and his feast day is October 21. Because of his own devotion, a Litany of the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ was written and all who pray it receive a partial indulgence.

Blood of Jesus, Help Me!

In every need let me come to Thee with humble trust saying *R. Blood of Jesus, help me!*

In all my doubts, perplexities, and temptations, R.

In hours of loneliness, weariness and trials, R.

In the failure of my plans and hopes; in disappointments, troubles and sorrows, R.

When my heart is cast down by failure, at seeing no good come from my efforts, R.

When others fail me, and Thy grace alone can assist me, R.

When I throw myself on Thy tender love as my Father and Savior, R.

When I feel impatient, and my cross irritates me, R.

When I am ill, and my head and hands cannot work and I am lonely, R.

Always, always in spite of weakness, falls and shortcomings, of every kind,

Blood of Jesus, help me and never forsake me.

KIDZ KORNER ANSWERS

1. Moses
2. Manna and Quail
3. 40 Years
4. John 11:35 – Jesus wept.
5. A tent maker.

Solemnity Saints Peter and Paul - June 29

The Apostles Peter and Paul stand before us as witnesses. They never tired of preaching and journeying as missionaries from the land of Jesus to Rome itself. Here they gave their ultimate witness, offering their lives as martyrs. If we go to the heart of that testimony, we can see them as witnesses to life, witnesses to forgiveness and witnesses to Jesus.

Witnesses to life. Their lives, though, were not neat and linear. Both were deeply religious: Peter was one of the very first disciples (cf. Jn 1:41), and Paul was "zealous for the traditions of [his] ancestors" (Gal 1:14). Yet they also made great mistakes: Peter denied the Lord, while Paul persecuted the Church of God. Both were cut to the core by questions asked by Jesus: "Simon son of John, do you love me?" (Jn 21:15); "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4). Jesus called them by name and changed their lives. After all that happened, he put his trust in them, in one who denied him and one who persecuted his followers, in two repentant sinners.

There is a great teaching here: the starting point of the Christian life is not our worthiness. The Lord loves us just as we are; he is looking for people who are not self-sufficient, but ready to open their hearts to him. People who, like Peter and Paul, are transparent before God. Peter immediately told Jesus: "I am a sinful man" (Lk 5:8). Paul wrote that he was "least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle" (1 Cor 15:9). Throughout life, they preserved this humility, to the very end. Peter died crucified upside down, since he did not consider himself worthy to imitate his Lord. Paul was always fond of his name, which means "little", and left behind his birth name, Saul, the name of the first king of his people. What was the secret that made them persevere amid weakness? It was the Lord's forgiveness.

Let us think about them too as **witnesses to forgiveness.** In their failings, they encountered the powerful mercy of the Lord, who gave them rebirth. In his forgiveness, they encountered irrepressible peace and joy. Thinking back to their failures, they might have experienced feelings of guilt. How many times might Peter have thought back to his denial! How many scruples might Paul have felt at having hurt so many innocent people! Humanly, they had failed. Yet they encountered a love greater than their failures, a forgiveness strong enough to heal even their feelings of guilt. Only when we experience God's forgiveness do we truly experience rebirth. From there we start over, from forgiveness; there we rediscover who we really are: in the confession of our sins.

Witnesses to life and witnesses to forgiveness, Peter and Paul are ultimately **witnesses to Jesus.** In the Gospel for the Solemnity of Ss. Peter and Paul, the Lord asks: "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" Peter, after saying: "You are the Christ", then goes on to say: "the Son of the living God" (v. 16). Witness arises from an encounter with the living Jesus. At the centre of Paul's life too, we find that same word that rises up from Peter's heart: Christ. Paul repeats this name constantly, almost four hundred times in his letters! For him, Christ is not only a model, an example, a point of reference: he is life itself. Paul writes: "For me to live is Christ" (Phil 1:21).

Having met Jesus and experienced his forgiveness, the Apostles bore witness to him by living a new life: they no longer held back, but gave themselves over completely. They were "poured out as a libation" (cf. 2 Tim 4:6). Let us ask for the grace not to be lukewarm Christians living by half measures, allowing our love to grow cold. Let us rediscover who we truly are through a daily relationship with Jesus and through the power of his forgiveness. Just as he asked Peter, Jesus is now asking us: "Who do you say that I am?", "Do you love me?" Let us allow these words to penetrate our hearts and inspire us not to remain content with a minimum, but to aim for the heights, so that we too can become living witnesses to Jesus.

-excerpt from a Homily of Pope Francis, Solemnity of Ss. Peter and Paul, June 29, 2019; L'Osservatore Romano Weekly Edition in English 5 July 2019,