

## **Saints Peter and Paul are teachers of faith, repentance and Church mission in the world, Patriarch Daniel says**



His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel Monday presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest for the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.

During his homily, the Patriarch of Romania highlighted the main characteristics of the two Apostles, noting that they were different as regards their intellectual and spiritual formation, as well as their culture and temperament.

Saint Peter the Apostle was born in Bethsaida in Galilee and was the brother of Andrew, the first to be called to the Apostolate. He was a simple man, accustomed to the patience of an ordinary fisherman. He was a spontaneous man with a dynamic nature and often full of zeal, he loved the Saviour Jesus Christ, he respected Him, and he wanted to do His will, the Patriarch explained.

The Holy Apostle Paul was a Jew from the Jewish diaspora. He was born in the

Tarsus of Cilicia, which is now in eastern Turkey. According to His Beatitude, the Holy Apostle Paul had a wealthy family, which allowed him to study at the school in Tarsus and then at the school of the great scholar in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures Gamaliel in Jerusalem.

At the same time, the two Apostles have common virtues and works:

- Confession of the divinity of Jesus Christ;
- Their sacrificial love for Christ. They both loved Christ to death and even martyrdom, which is a violent death;
- Missionary zeal the zeal to spread the Christian faith, to preach the Gospel throughout the world;
- Both were living teachers first and then teachers of repentance;
- They were both martyrs.

Iconographic representation

As depicted in the Orthodox icons, St. Peter has two keys in his hand, Patriarch Daniel pointed out.

“The two keys are the keys to entering the Kingdom of Heaven, namely, the first is the key to repentance, and the second is that of receiving the forgiveness of sins. No one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven without repentance, without Confession and without receiving the forgiveness of sins.”

The Holy Apostle Paul, continued His Beatitude, appears in the Orthodox iconography with the sword of the Word in his hand and carrying the Gospel in his arms. “The sword of the Word that distinguishes between heresy and righteous faith, between truth and falsehood, good and evil.”

What we learn from the most famous Holy Apostles

The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, as our teachers, instruct us:

- To profess the true faith;
- To be lovers of Christ with much devotion;
- TO love the Church of Christ, to defend it and love it by word and deed and especially by coming to the divine services and fulfilling the will of God in our lives;
- To be preachers of the Orthodox faith;
- To rejoice with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

At the end of his sermon, the Patriarch of Romania congratulated all those celebrating their name day on the feast of Sts Peter and Paul, wishing them ‘many

years with good health and help from God,' and to become confessors of faith and fulfillers of the acts of faith.

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