

**Thought for the Week**  
**30<sup>th</sup> June 2019**  
**The Feast of St Peter and St Paul**

Flawed men....our inspiration!

The statues of St Peter and St Paul in many churches and cathedrals are probably the easiest to recognise. St Peter usually holds the “keys to the kingdom” and sometimes a model of St Peter’s in Rome. St Paul carries a book, representing his letters in the New Testament, and a sword indicating the form of his martyrdom (as a Roman citizen he was entitled to be beheaded).

But these saints are not men we should always see on pedestals: their most appealing features to my mind are their human fallibility. From different and unlikely backgrounds God called them and sent his Spirit to transform their lives for the sake of his kingdom.

St Paul must have been a bit scary. He was so focussed and would have needed to be tough and resilient to endure the hardships of his missionary travels. Yet he must have also been warm and charismatic, so filled with the Spirit that he could communicate the message of the love of the risen Christ. But he started as a persecutor, a doubter and an enemy of the Church, turned around by God’s Grace.

We know about St Peter’s frailty; his denial of Jesus and his weakness when first put to the test. A boat owning, local fisherman is not a background we immediately recognise as breeding ground for organisational leadership. Nor is being a shepherd: King David was a great leader too, but still human and flawed. God saw in all three of these men the charisms, the gifts and the potential to be great servants of his kingdom.

We too are flawed and only human (I definitely am); let us ask God this week to send his Spirit that we too can be effective witnesses, leaders and sharers of the Good News that St Peter and St Paul were so confidently able to proclaim.

A Parishioner