

## February Holy Heroes Sts. Peter and Paul - Feast Day June 29

*This month's Holy Heroes are the patron saints of our school and parish. They share the same feast day because they were both very important in shaping the early Church, and were both martyred the same year.*

**ST. PETER** - Like his brother Andrew, Peter was a fisherman from Galilee. When Jesus called them to be His Apostles He said, "Come, and I will make you fishers of men." He meant that He would have them do His work of bringing people to God. Peter's original name was Simon, but Jesus gave him the name of Peter, which means "the rock".

Peter became the leader of the Apostles and was at Jesus' side at the Transfiguration and the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. At times though, Peter's fear was stronger than his faith. While Christ was walking on the water, He called Peter to Him. Peter set out with confidence, but began to sink when he became afraid. Peter also denied knowing Jesus on the night of His arrest, again because he was afraid. When he realized how he had failed, he was filled with sorrow and vowed to change and become the leader Jesus wanted him to be.

One day Jesus asked His Apostles who they thought He was, and it was Peter who answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus then declared Peter the head of His Church and said, "Upon this *rock* I will build My Church. To you I give the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven."

After the Resurrection, Jesus appeared to Peter, giving him the responsibility of carrying on His work on earth. Peter preached in Asia Minor, Antioch, and then in Rome, where he established the Catholic Church in the heart of the pagan Roman Empire. As the first bishop of Rome, (the first Pope) he was ordered to die upon the cross in 64 A.D. He asked to be crucified upside down, because he felt unworthy to die in the same way as Jesus.