



A Resource Guide for THE YEAR OF ST. PAUL

JUNE 28, 2008 - JUNE 29, 2009

About the Year of St. Paul

During the coming year, the Church throughout the world will observe a special Jubilee year in honor of the Apostle Paul, whose birth is traditionally placed between 7 and 10 A.D. The celebration will be centered at the great Basilica of St. Paul outside the Walls in Rome, where St. Paul's relics have been venerated for centuries. The Basilica will welcome tens of thousands of pilgrims during the coming year, and will also host a series of liturgies, ecumenical prayer services, concerts, lectures, and artistic and historical displays. In announcing the Year of St. Paul, Pope Benedict urged that all dioceses undertake similar initiatives to help the faithful come to know the great Apostle better, and "to make ever more widely known the immense wealth of teaching they contain, a true patrimony of humanity redeemed by Christ." In addition, the Pope reminded all that this Jubilee Year of the Apostle to the Gentiles is an ideal time for ecumenical efforts.

Beginning the Year of St. Paul – June 28-29, 2008

This year, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29, falls on a Sunday. That means that the readings and prayers for the Solemnity take the place of those for the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Red vestments are worn. This Solemnity has a true Vigil, and the readings and prayers of the Vigil may be used at the evening Mass on Saturday, June 28. Celebrating this great solemnity as a parish community is the perfect way to begin the Pauline Year.

Ideas for Celebrating the Pauline Year in the Parish

There are many ways to celebrate the Pauline year without going all the way to Rome!

Here are a few possibilities:

- Take special care with the proclamation of the Pauline readings at weekday and Sunday Masses during the coming year. Help lectors to understand the special challenges and nuances of St. Paul's writings.
- Homilists might consider more extensive reflections on the Lectionary readings from St. Paul during the coming year.
- Include study or reflection questions in the bulletin to help people to focus in a special way on what the Apostle has to say to us each Sunday.
- Schedule Bible studies or adult education events focused on the writings of Paul.
- Teach people about the practice of *lectio divina*, and encourage them to meditate on the words of St. Paul.
- Prepare a special place of prayer in the church, perhaps with a passage from one of Paul's letters, and a candle (a "Pauline flame" will be a central feature of the observance of the Pauline year in Rome). If there is an image of St. Paul in your church, call special attention to it. You might even encourage people to gather there before or after Mass to pray a litany in honor of St. Paul.
- Make this an ecumenical year by taking time during this Pauline Jubilee to get to know the other Christian communities in your neighborhood and to reach out to them in some way.

Conditions for Obtaining the Plenary Indulgence

Pope Benedict XVI will grant the faithful Plenary Indulgence for the occasion of the two-thousandth anniversary of the birth of the Apostle Paul. The Plenary Indulgence will be valid throughout the Pauline Year, 28 June 2008 to 29 June 2009. The conditions for obtaining the plenary indulgence are as follows.

"All Christian faithful - truly repentant, duly purified by the Sacrament of Penance and restored with Holy Communion - who undertake a pious visit in the form of a pilgrimage to the papal basilica of St. Paul on Rome's Via Ostiense and pray in accordance with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff, are granted and imparted Plenary Indulgence for the temporal punishment of their sins, once they have obtained sacramental remission and forgiveness for their shortcomings. Plenary Indulgence may be gained by the Christian faithful, either for themselves or for the deceased, as many times as the aforementioned acts are undertaken; it remains the case, however, that Plenary Indulgence may be obtained only once a day.

"In order that the prayers pronounced on these holy visits may lead and draw the souls of the faithful to a more intense veneration of the memory of St. Paul, the following conditions are laid down: the faithful, apart from pronouncing their own prayers before the altar of the Blessed Sacrament, ... must go to the altar of the Confession and pray the 'Our Father' and the 'Creed', adding pious invocations in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Paul; and such acts of devotion must remain closely linked to the memory of the Prince of the Apostles St. Peter".

The faithful who are unable to journey to Rome, "under the usual conditions (sacramental Confession, Eucharistic communion, prayer in keeping with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff) and completely unattached to any form of sin, may still obtain the Plenary Indulgence if they participate devotedly in a religious function or in a pious exercise held publicly in honour of the Apostle of the Gentiles: on the days of the solemn opening and closing of the Pauline Year in any place of worship; on other days determined by the local ordinary, in holy places named for St. Paul and, for the good of the faithful, in other places designated by the ordinary".

Those who are unable to leave their homes may also obtain the Plenary Indulgence if they "spiritually unite themselves to a Jubilee celebration in honour of St. Paul, offering their prayers and suffering to God for the unity of Christians". For full details, see

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/tribunals/apost_penit/index.htm

Online Resources

- The Official Site for the Holy Year, <http://www.annopaolino.org>
- The Holy Father's Address in Announcing the Year of St. Paul, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20070628_vespri_en.html
- Explore the wonderful catechetical resources offered by the Bishops of England and Wales, <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Scripture/Paul.html>
- Read Bishop Michael Saltarelli's Pastoral Letter for the Year of St. Paul (Diocese of Wilmington, Maryland), <http://www.cdow.org/stpaul.html>
- A special feature for the Pauline Year will be available at the website of St. James Cathedral, www.stjames-cathedral.org.

Good Reading

- Raymond Brown, SS, *An Introduction to the New Testament*
- Jerome Murphy O'Connor, OP, *Jesus and Paul: Parallel Lives; St. Paul: His Story*
- Ronald D. Witherup SS, *101 Questions and Answers on Paul*
- H. V. Morton, *In the Steps of St. Paul*
- Magnificat, *Praying with Saint Paul: Daily Reflections on the Letters of the Apostle Paul*