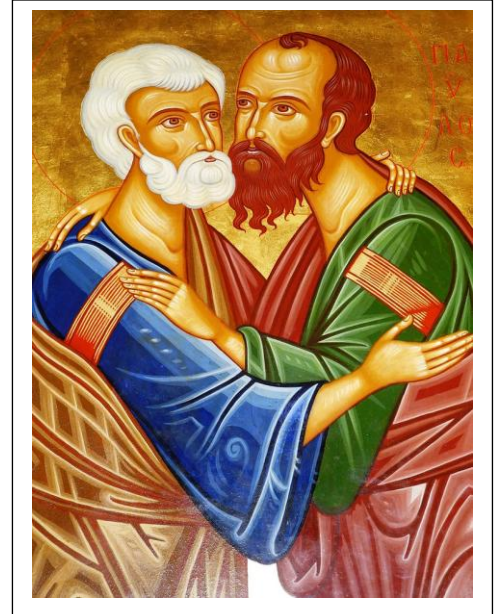


# Peter and Paul

*(Excerpts from a sermon by Revd Chris Minchin  
at St James, Benwell, – printed with permission)*

Across the world, in June, as the church remembers St Peter and St Paul, people are ordained as deacons and priests, commissioned to serve and share the love of God in some way. Peter and Paul were not obvious choices to be the foundation of the Church. Peter was impulsive and emotional—brave one minute, denying Jesus the next. Paul was intense and intellectual, once so committed to the wrong path that he helped persecute Christians. And yet, *these* are the ones Jesus chooses. The Church is built on a betrayer and a former persecutor.



Peter is the rock—dependable, deeply human. Paul is the visionary—pushing boundaries, unafraid to confront and challenge. Together, and in many ways, they reflect the diversity we see in the Church today.

Ordination isn't about status. It's just one kind of calling. The Church isn't just its leaders. The Church is *all* of us, each called to say what we see in Christ, and to make our church the image of Christ for others to see.

Maybe you don't think you have anything to offer. Maybe you feel like you're not "good enough" to be part of the Church in an active way. But if God can build his Church on a man who denied him and another who persecuted his followers, then you are off to a better start than them already. God doesn't call the qualified—he qualifies the called.

Peter and Paul saw Jesus—and responded. Peter saw a friend, a teacher, and recognized the Messiah. Paul saw the Jewish Messiah—and realized he was also the God of all nations. *So how do we see Jesus, and how respond?*

Let's trust that our flaws and past failures don't disqualify us from being called. Let's be the Church—bold and grounded, questioning and faithful, gathered and sent out. Let's be the church, full of diversity, but looking to the same God.

June 2026