

Secretariat Meeting 3rd August 2019

Meditation by Rev Peter Johnson Diocesan Spiritual Director.

Romans 1:1-7

How should we all find a title for ourselves and each other? And I don't mean a title that would belittle us or, worse still, flatter us - - but one that **should** describe each and every one of us - - known as Christians.

Listen a moment to St. Paul. He wanted to meet the Christians in Rome - - in fact he was determined that he should. And, of course, he did, though not exactly in the way he'd planned. However, meet them he did, having first sent them a letter which started like this.

Read: Then stress vs 7. 'To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints.' And are called to be saints.

There was a similar beginning to his letter to the people of Corinth: To those of the Church in Corinth - - 'To the Church of God, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy.' And are called to be holy.

And, again in the letter to the Ephesians - - 'To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus.' The faithful. Yes, that's it. It defines Paul's use of the word - - Saint. There we are, Paul writes to the Saints - - to those called to be holy - - and to the faithful in Christ.

Saints are normal people who are set apart from the world - - not by their deeds or moral perfection - - not by their great knowledge - - nor by deeds of great might - - but by their faith in the Lord. Of course, I know that Paul never wrote to the people of Cursillo - - but don't let that put you off. Paul was writing to the people of that time, yes - - but also to the people of this time - - or of any other time in the future for that matter.

But, so not to boast on our behalf, I've written the word 'saints' with a small letter 's', but you can still shout it out. Listen to Paul - - our calling is to be disciples of Jesus. We are to be Holy - - true to his name. And we are to be faithful - - faithful at all times, not just when we get around to thinking about it. What a privilege. But wait a minute. Before we get all puffed up - - let's realise something, for a moment. You see, there were also people around in those times who didn't leave it at that - - there were holy people around at that time who did something else and, alas, we do too. There were, and continue to be, people who made

Jesus weep. Yes, you can be sure of that when you look around the world today - - including looking inside the Church.

Remember to story of the raising of Lazarus? Well, of course, it was the lack of understanding of those around him that caused Jesus to shed tears. And now, here we are. Of course, I don't know about all of you here, but I'm only too aware of those many things I get wrong, not just occasionally, but all the time.

So, where are we? We are called to be Holy - - to give ourselves to God - - and I trust we do. We're called to be faithful - - trusting in Jesus, our personal redeemer - - and I trust we are. And we're called to be saints. But, is there something missing?

We can only start out on that journey when we realise our faults - - when we fully know our deficiencies - - and then take them to God, asking for his forgiveness. Most of all, we should work on the understanding of Christ - - his love and his message - - that we all need to make sure that we can be counted as those who are faithful, and holy, and are able to join in being saints of Christ's Church.