

A. St Paul's Tomb

St Paul was martyred c64AD, just two miles from this basilica, on what is now the site of the abbey of Tre Fontane. Lucina, a Roman woman, brought St Paul's body here and placed it in her family tomb.



Emperor Constantine built a basilica here in 324AD, with the high altar directly over the place of Paul's burial.

The coffin of St Paul can be seen from the Confessionion - the area in front of the main altar. Chains which bound St Paul when he was a prisoner in Rome are displayed above the coffin.

Over the high altar towers the great Gothic baldachino

of 1285 (which miraculously survived the fire which gutted this Basilica in 1823).

How extraordinary to be here so close to the mortal remains of St Paul, whose life and powerful teaching accounts for such a large part of the New Testament.

O God, who taught the whole world through the preaching of the blessed Apostle Paul, draw us, we pray, nearer to you through the example of him at whose tomb I pray today, and so make us witnesses to your truth in the world. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Acts 7:55-8:3, 9:1-28. *The conversion of Paul*

Romans 8:14-39. *The spirit helps us in our weakness.*

Galatians 5:13-6:18. *Belong to Christ.*

- How do you witness to the truth of God?
- What about God's love and mercy moves your heart?
- When has that love and mercy changed your life?

B. The Popes

Around the basilica walls is a sequence of roundels, each bearing the image of a Pope. Beginning with St Peter, marked A on the map on page 3, the sequence ends with Pope Francis, marked A2 on the same map. Walk the path of the Popes counting them as you go.

You might recognise the names of some of the Popes - St Gregory the Great, a great reformer; Adrian IV who is the

Look around you...

Unless you are very lucky, you are probably sharing this place of pilgrimage with many other people. Are they pilgrims or, by desire or misfortune, are they tourists?

This sheet is designed to help you spend quality time here as a pilgrim, and to engage prayerfully with the reason this place is here.

A Pilgrim's Worksheet for St Paul's outside the walls



only English Pope (to date!); innocent III who approved the rule of St Francis, Alexander VI, the controversial Borgia Pope; St Pius V, the pope who concluded the Council of Trent; St Pius X, who encouraged the early communion of children, St John XXIII, who called the 2nd Vatican Council, Blessed Paul VI, who oversaw the first reforms authorised by the Council, St John Paul II, who brought a new stability and maturity to the Church, and the more recent Popes - Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis.

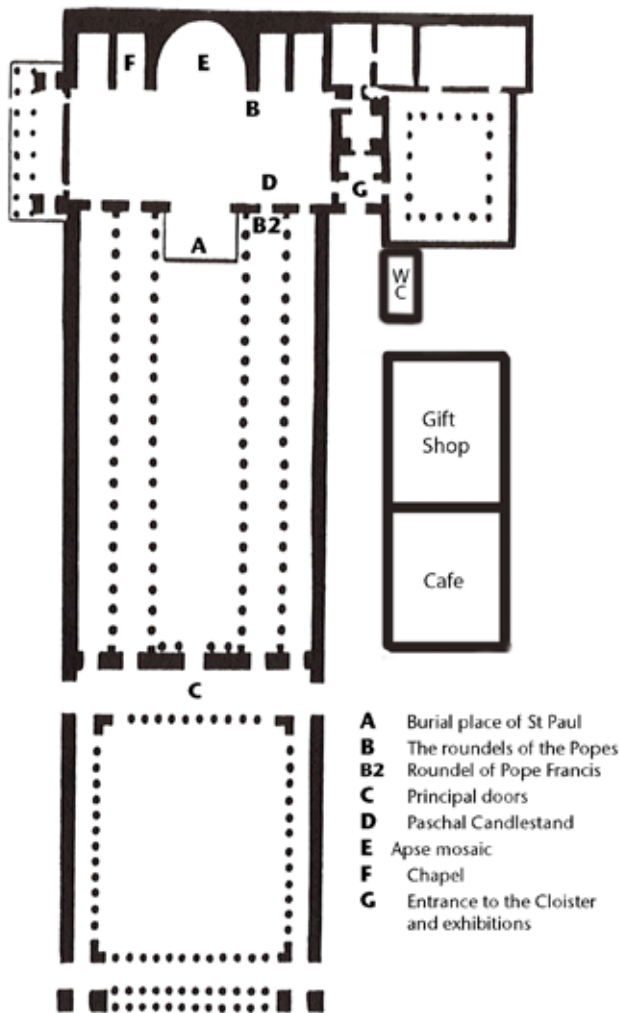
But maybe more significant than the achievements of any particular Pope is the endurance of the Papacy, and its service of the unity of the Church. Let your walk impress on you the enormity of this enduring institution, lasting beyond empires and cultures. God's gift to sustain the preaching of the Gospel.

O God, who in your providential design willed that your Church be built upon blessed Peter, whom you set over the other Apostles, look with favour, we pray, on Francis, our Pope and grant that he, whom you have made Peter's successor, may be for your people a visible source and foundation of unity in faith and of communion. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

C. The Principal Doors

The central doors leading off the front quadrangle, are bronze and were cast in Florence in 1931. The door displays a large cross, highlighted in silver. The horizontal bar carries the names of the apostles and the vertical shows portraits of the evangelists.

The panels on the left of the cross show scenes from the life of St Peter, and the panels on the right shows scenes from the life of St Paul. The middle panel in each sequence is a cen-



tral episode in the lives of the apostles and features a figure of Christ in silver. The example of the saints stirs us and their work has changed the world - but always the motivating figure is Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary.

The doors on the left were installed to mark the Year of St Paul established by Pope Benedict XVI, from June 2008-June 2009.

The door on the right is the Holy Door, opened in every Holy Year or Jubilee Year as a symbol of God's ever-generous call to humankind to come close, to come 'home'. We are invited to turn from all that is unworthy of our nature, and return to the Father who loves us and calls us to himself, always.

We do not have to wait for a Holy Year, of course, or the opening of any one particular door, to respond to God's love.

As you spend time near *these* doors, consider which 'doors' in life which you pass through easily, and at which you hesitate. Know afresh how the Lord calls you ever closer to him. And remember how St Paul prays for you, that you may respond generously to God's love.

This is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name:

Out of his infinite glory, may he give you the power through his Spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and



built on love, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth; until, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God.

From St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 3:14-19

D. The Paschal Candle Stand

This 12th Century stand for the Easter Candle is a remarkable survival. The carvings include animals and episodes from the Paschal Mystery of Jesus' Passion and Resurrection.



The Paschal Mystery lies at the heart of our worship, our joining in the Sacrifice that is the love and life of Jesus for his heavenly Father, and for all of humankind.

Through our baptism we become members of Christ's Body, we share in his life, and so share in his prayer. He is High Priest of our faith, and our prayer a participation in his.

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

We believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him. Christ having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him anymore. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God: and in that ways, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

From St Paul's letter to the Romans 6:3-4. 8-11E.

E. Apse Mosaic

This mosaic dates from 1220 and survived the fire of 1823, although it has been much restored over the years.

It was commissioned by Pope Honorius III to replace an earlier and greatly damaged 5th Century mosaic.

In the upper section Christ, wearing the colours of imperial authority, sits on a cushioned throne. His face is at peace, he makes a sign of blessing with his right hand, and his words to us, written on the book he holds, are gentle: 'Come, blessed of my Father, and receive the kingdom prepared for you.'

To his right stand St Paul and St Luke (who accompanied Paul in some of his travels) and to his left St Peter and his brother Andrew. They too carry texts of faith and encouragement: Paul, 'In the name of Jesus very knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, St Luke, a text attesting Paul's mission in proving Jesus was the Christ; Peter, 'You are the Christ the Son of the Living God' and Andrew a text testifying to his martyrdom: 'The Blessed Andrew, while hanging on the cross, called upon the Lord Jesus Christ'.

The heavenly company is gathered between two palm trees, symbols of paradise. Note also the tiny figure of St Honorius, kneeling at Christ's right foot. We are welcomed into this august company, but we do well to remember with humility, that Christ is Saviour, and we are creatures.

In the lower section are two angels on either side of the empty throne and the other nine apostles, plus, to make up the

number to the symbolic twelve, Sts Matthias, Barnabas and Mark. These hold scrolls which beginning with the angel to the left of the throne say '*Gloria in excelsis Deo*', (see below). The next phrase is picked up by another angel singing antiphonally, and so the song is sung backwards and forwards across these figures singing the praises of God in the text of the first two sections of the Gloria. Angels, saints, depicted in glass and stone, are united in the praise of the Glory of God.



How privileged are we not only to witness this, but ourselves, when we take part in the Mass, to share in the heavenly Liturgy, led in our prayer by the Lord Jesus.

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom: give glory to him therefore through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

St Paul's Letter to the Romans, 16:25-27

F. Chapel

The Chapel immediately to the left of the apse is the only one to avoid destruction in the fire of 1823. It is home to three precious items.

1. A 14th Century wooden statue of St Paul which is now rather the worse for wear because pious pilgrims have taken splinters of wood home as souvenirs. Don't follow their example!
2. The 13th Century mosaic of the Virgin and Child be-

fore which St Ignatius and his companions took their religious vows.

3. The 13th Century crucifix over the altar attributed to Pietro Cavallini, who is buried in the chapel. St Brigid of Sweden prayed before this crucifix in 1370, and tradition says that as

she prayed Jesus turned his head to her and spoke to her. You will find one of her prayers on the next page, and others in a booklet available from the gift shop.

The chapel offers a place for a seat for quiet prayer.

*Lord Jesus Christ, the beginning and end of our love,
You held back no part of yourself
when you immersed yourself into the sea of suffering;
I beg you, by the breadth and depth of your wounds,
to help me live a life of perfection, with true charity,
in accordance with your law and
commandments. Amen.*

*My sweet Lord Jesus Christ,
have mercy on me,
a sinner.*

*Jesus, Son of God,
born of the Virgin Mary,
crucified to save mankind,
reigning now in heaven,
have mercy on us.*

Our Father...

Hail Mary...



Glória in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax homínibus bonæ voluntátis.
Laudámus te,
benedícimus te,
adorámus te,
glorificámus te,
grátias ágimus tibi propter magnam glóriam tuam,
Dómine Deus, Rex cæléstis,
Deus Pater omnípotens.
Dómine Fili Unigénite, Iesu Christe,
Dómine Deus, Agnus Dei, Fílius Patris,
qui tollis peccáta mundi,
miserére nobis;
qui tollis peccáta mundi,
súscipe deprecatióem nostram.
Qui sedes ad déxteram Patris,
miserére nobis.
Quóniam tu solus Sanctus,
tu solus Dóminus,
tu solus Altíssimus,
Iesu Christe,
cum Sancto Spírítu:
in glória Dei Patris.
Amen.

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

G. Cloister

The cloister is probably the most beautiful and best preserved in Rome. It was completed early in the 13th Century.

In season the rose garden enhances its beauty, but all year round the mosaic work on many of the columns of the arcade and on the architrave and inner frame of the cloister attracts and delights the eye.

The architectural fragments on display around the cloister remind of the passing nature of things in this world but also, of-



ten, speak in one way or another of our hope, firmly based on the love of Christ, for our being sharers in eternal life.

Of particular note is the replica of the 'Dogmatic' sarcophagus now on the display in the exhibition that leads off the Cloister. (The original is now in the Vatican museum).

Take your time looking over the carvings (*top left* God creates human kind (note what is probably the earliest known attempt in art to depict the Trinity!); *top centre* - the couple whose sarcophagus this is; *top right* miracles of Jesus; *bottom left* the Magi offering worship to the newborn Son of God, and healing of the man born blind; *bottom centre* Daniel in the lion's den; *bottom right* Peter's denial of Jesus and his arrest.

- What images of faith would you like to see placed on your tomb, and why?

Mercy and Mission

'Mercy is the very foundation of the Church's life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church's very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love. The Church 'has an endless desire to show mercy.'

Perhaps we have long since forgotten how to show and live the way of mercy. The temptation, on the one hand, to focus exclusively on justice made us forget that this is only the first, albeit necessary and indispensable step. But the Church needs to go beyond and strive for a higher and more important goal. On the other hand, sad to say, we must admit that the practice of mercy is waning in the wider culture. In some cases the word seems to have dropped out of use. However, without a witness to mercy, life becomes fruitless and sterile, as if sequestered in a barren desert.

The time has come for the Church to take up the joyful call to mercy once more. It is time to return to the basics and to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters.

Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instils in us the courage to look to the future with hope.' Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, 10

What acts of mercy have been yours in this past week?

What has helped you live mercifully? What has hindered?

What acts of mercy have been performed for you this week?

How did you respond to them?

Let these memories draw you to prayer, to giving thanks, to ask for healing, help and mercy? And to ask for help to share with others these gifts of healing, help and mercy

The purpose of the Church

'The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and mind of every person.

The Spouse of Christ must pattern her behaviour after the Son of God who went out to everyone without exception. In the present day, as the Church is charged with the task of the new evangelisation, the theme of mercy needs to be proposed again and again with new enthusiasm and renewed pastoral action.

It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy. Her language and her gestures must transmit mercy, so as to touch the hearts of all people and inspire them once more to find the road that leads to the Father.' Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, 12

Where does the Church best show God's mercy?

Where less well?

'The Church's first truth is the love of Christ. The Church makes herself a servant of this love and mediates it to all people: a love that forgives and expresses itself in the gift of one's self. Consequently, wherever the Church is present, the mercy of the Father must be evident. In our parishes, communities, associations and movements, in a word, wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy.'

Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, 12

Where does the world, your village, town or city, your parish, your family, you yourself, most need love?

What might be different if they/you better knew and lived the love of Christ?

This worksheet is one of a series prepared to accompany times of pilgrimage in the UK and overseas.

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