



PRAYER, MOST EFFECTIVE WEAPON TO UNLOCK CHAINS OF SUFFERINGS

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ROME -

The Holy Father Pope Francis has described prayer as the most effective weapon to unlock the chains of sufferings and challenges and facilitate unity, peace and love for the common good of humanity. The Pope made this revelation in his homily at the celebration of this year's feast of Saints Peter and Paul at the Altar of the Chair in St Peter's Basilica. Stressing on the effective power of prayer, the Holy Father affirms: "Only prayer unlocks chains, only prayer paves the way to unity," Using several passages of the New testament with respect to how the faithful of the early Church eschewed complaints and used prayer to achieve invaluable successes, the Pope stated: "It is pointless, even tedious, for Christians to waste their time complaining about the world, about society, about everything that is not right. Complaints change nothing," he said. "Those Christians did not cast blame; they prayed."

He used the example of the imprisonment of Peter to buttress his point saying that the early Church responded to persecution by joining in prayer. According to him, Chapter 12 of the Book of Acts disclosed that “while Peter was kept in prison, the Church prayed fervently to God for him.” He added: “Unity is the fruit of prayer, for prayer allows the Holy Spirit to intervene, opening our hearts to hope, shortening distances and holding us together at times of difficulty.” The Holy Father also spoke on the life and mission of the two principal Apostles of the Church, noting that though they were two very different people, God gave them the grace to be closely united in Christ. He added: “The closeness that joined Peter and Paul did not come from natural inclinations, but from the Lord.” His words: “We celebrate together two very different individuals: Peter, a fisherman and Paul, a learned Pharisee who taught in synagogues. When they went forth on mission, Peter spoke to Jews, and Paul to pagans.

The Pope also identified that challenges are followed by prophecy and called for real prophecy in bearing witness in one’s life to the love of God. “This is how Peter and Paul preached Jesus, as men in love with God”. Also, at the celebration of the Mass, Pope Francis blessed the “pallia” for the newly appointed cardinals and Archbishops in different parts of the world, in the last year. Unlike previous years, the newly appointed metropolitans could not be personally present at the Vatican to receive their pallia as a result of the Corona Virus global movement restrictions. These pallia would be sent to

the new metropolitans through the Apostolic Nuncio of the respective countries.