

Our father (Russian) Remember those lists of Roman names you used to hear, or read, in the 'Canon' of the Mass? The 'Roman' canon, it used to be called, for they were ancient Roman martyrs and saints. These days I don't think you're likely to hear those lists very much, if at all, even when the 1st Eucharistic Prayer (as it's now called) is being used. And the Church's calendar of saints has also been without all those obscure names for the past 10 yrs or so. Well, today 30th June, they're all celebrated together now, as the early martyrs of the Church in Rome — on the day following a festival that has remained one of the principal saints' days in the year, Ss Peter and Paul which was yesterday. It's also one of the very oldest, and a day that's still a general holiday in some places. Ss Peter and Paul, of course, were the first martyrs of the Church in Rome: and they've always been celebrated together, despite their individual stature and importance, and their very different claims to fame in the Christian community. The fact that both of them, for different reasons, counted as the glory of the Church in the place where they gave their lives for Christ is about the year 67 is most likely the reason they came to be celebrated together. In one of his sermons for the feastday of Ss Peter + Paul, Pope Leo the Great in the 5th century drew a parallel between --- MP 203 p1