

MORNING MEDITATION

Tuesday, Fourth Week of Easter

Serenity is a quiet and tranquil mind.

Acts 11:19-26

The good news of Jesus reached the Greeks and a large number of them believed and were converted to the Lord. Barnabas was sent, from Jerusalem, to minister to them. He was a man full of the Spirit, who encouraged and brought Saul for Support in his ministry. For the first time, here in Antioch, the disciples of Jesus were called Christians.

Be gracious and accept, gratefully, the support of others in your ministry!

Psalm 87

**Zion shall say: "One and All were born in her;
And he, who has established her, is the Highest Lord."
They shall note, when the peoples are enrolled:
"This man was born there."
And all shall sing, in their festive dance:
"My home is within you".**

John 10:22-30

It was the festival of the Dedication, Festival of lights or Hanukkah. King Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.) of Syria decide to eliminate the Jewish religion and introduce everything Greek into Palestine. Many Jews died resisting this move of Antiochus. The Maccabaeus brothers began a revolution, fought a good fight and finally won the struggle in 164 B.C. and in that year the temple and all that was used in the temple were purified. It was to remember this event that this Feast of Dedication was introduced – it was actually a rededication of the temple.

It was here in the temple, at this festival of lights, they asked Jesus, again, whether he really was the Messiah. Jesus affirmed his claim again. Some accepted it and others walked away. To those who accepted it, Jesus promised eternal life, a life that is full and safe. This is possible because of the intimacy that he has with the Father. Jesus said to them, "I and the Father are one". All are safe in the arms of the loving Father, whom Jesus revealed.

Acceptance of Jesus and growing in intimacy with Him guarantees intimacy with God, our father.

Saint of the Day, April 28 - St. Peter Chanel and 17 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Peter Chanel was born on July 12, 1803 in the hamlet of La Potière, France. From about the age of 7 to 12 he worked as a shepherd. The local parish priest persuaded his parents to allow Peter to attend a small school the priest had started. After some local schooling, his piety and intelligence attracted the attention of a visiting priest from Cras, Fr. Trompier, and he was put into Church-sponsored education at Cras in the autumn of 1814. He made his first communion on 23 March 1817. His interest in the missions abroad began when he read letters from missionaries to America sent back by Bishop Louis William Valentine Dubourg. In 1819 he entered the seminary at Meximieux where he won several awards and class prizes in Latin, Christian doctrine and speech.

Peter Chanel was ordained a priest on July 15, 1827 and spent a brief time as an assistant parish priest at Ambérieu-en-Bugey. At Ambérieu he also read letters from a former curate from that parish who was at that time a missionary in India. There he met Claude Bret, who was to become his friend and also one of the first Marist Missionaries. The following year, Chanel applied to the Bishop of Belley for permission to go to the missions. His application was not accepted and instead he was appointed for the next three years as parish priest of Crozet, which he revitalized in that short time.

Peter Chanel's zeal was widely respected, and his care, particularly of the sick in the parish, won the hearts of the locals. During this time, he heard of a group of diocesan priests who were hopeful of starting a religious order to be dedicated to Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

Wanting to be a missionary, he joined the Society of Mary, the Marists, at the age of 28. He taught in the seminary for five years. Then, as superior of seven Marists, he traveled to Western Oceania. The bishop accompanying the missionaries left Peter and a brother on Futuna Island northeast of Fiji, promising to return in six months. He was gone five years.

Meanwhile, Peter struggled with this new language and mastered it, making the difficult adjustment to life with whalers, traders, and warring natives. Despite little apparent success and severe want, he maintained a serene and gentle spirit, endless patience and courage. A few natives had been baptized, a few more were being instructed. When the chieftain's son asked to be baptized, persecution by the chieftain reached a climax. Father Chanel was clubbed to death on April 28, 1841. Within two years after his death, the whole island became Catholic and has remained so. He was canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1954. Peter Chanel is the first martyr of Oceania and its patron.

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