

APRIL 27
SAINT PETER CANISIUS
PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH
MEMORIAL

Peter was born in 1521 at Nijmegen, in what is now The Netherlands. After studying at Cologne he joined the Society and was ordained in 1546. He was sent to Germany, where for many years he strove to defend and consolidate the Catholic faith by writing and preaching. Among his many works, the *Catechism* holds pride of place. He died in 1597 at Fribourg in Switzerland, and was canonized and declared a Doctor of the Church by Pius XI in 1925.

From the Common of Doctors of the Church, or of Pastors.

THE OFFICE OF READINGS

Second Reading

(From the Works of Saint Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church. [Ed. O. Braunsberger, *Petri Canisii Epistulae et Acta*, I, Freiburg/-Breisgau, 1896, pp. 53-55].)

“You know, Lord, how urgently and how often that day you entrusted Germany to me.”

[Saint Peter Canisius is rightly known as the second apostle of Germany. On receiving the apostolic blessing before setting out for that country, he was favored with a mystical experience which he described as follows:]

“Eternal High Priest, in your great goodness it pleased you that I should seek from your Apostles confirmation and success for the apostolic blessing I had received. For pilgrims come to pray to them in the Vatican, and there by your power they work miracles. I experienced there a great consolation and the sense of the presence of your

grace which was being offered to me through their intercession. They gave me their blessing too, confirmed my mission to Germany, and seemed to be promising me their goodwill as apostle of Germany. You know, Lord, how urgently and how often that day you entrusted Germany to me, telling me ever after to have her good at heart, and to wish to live and die on her behalf.

“Finally, my Savior, I seemed to be gazing at the Heart of your Sacred Body with my own eyes. It was as if you opened it to me and told me to drink from it as from a spring, inviting me to draw the waters of salvation from these springs of yours. I was filled with longing that the waters of faith, hope, and charity would flow from your Heart into me. I thirsted for poverty, chastity, and obedience; I begged you to wash me all over and dress me in fine clothing. Then I dared to touch your beloved Heart and bury my thirst in it; and you promised me a robe woven in three parts to cover my naked soul and help me greatly in my undertaking. These three parts were peace, love, and perseverance. Secure in the protection of this garment, I was confident that I would lack nothing, and that everything would turn out for your glory.”

Responsory (Mt. 13:52; Prov. 14:33)

R. Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old, alleluia.

V. Wisdom instructs even fools, and makes her home in the heart of a man of understanding;* who is like a householder. . . .

Concluding Prayer as at Morning Prayer.

MORNING PRAYER

Benedictus Antiphon

The learned will shine as brightly as the vault of heaven, and those who have instructed many in virtue will shine like stars for all eternity.

Concluding Prayer

God of patience and compassion, send us in our own day men of vision and wisdom like Saint Peter Canisius, to sow the good seed of your Word among the peoples of the world, so that they may win them to you, the living God, and to the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

(Alternative Concluding Prayer as in the Roman Divine Office [December 21].)