

NOVEMBER 14
SAINT JOSEPH PIGNATELLI
PRIEST, RELIGIOUS
MEMORIAL

Saint Joseph Pignatelli was born in Saragossa in Spain in 1737 of noble family, and received most of his education there. He joined the Society in 1751, was ordained in 1762, and devoted himself to an apostolate among the very poor in his native city. When the Society had been all but extinguished, he worked indefatigably for its restoration, and was Provincial of Italy from 1803 to his death. He was universally loved for his kindness, humility, and gracious manner, and died in Rome on November 15, 1811. Pope Pius XII canonized him in 1954.

From the Common of Pastors, or the Common of Men Saints, for Religious

THE OFFICE OF READINGS

Second Reading

From two letters of the Saint, the first written on June 3, 1767, to one of his brethren in Rome, the second to his brother Joachim Pignatelli, written on July 8, 1767.

(Ed. [in Spanish] J. M. March, S.J., *Beato José Pignatelli y su Tiempo*, Barcelona, 1935, pp. 205-206 and 215-216.)

No reason will induce me to leave the Society, in which I have determined to live and die.

It is true that, whether in prison or on our long journey, we were never without the sort of troubles which our lower nature would find it almost impossible to bear. So great is God's goodness, however, that he made all these things pleasant and gave us in addition great peace of mind and freedom from worry. All the fathers and brothers have very happy faces. They show themselves true sons of Saint

Ignatius and are guided by his spirit so that they find nothing distasteful when it is a question of obeying God's call. For my part I render infinite thanks to his divine majesty, for calling me to his Society without any merit on my part, especially at this time when, despite the severe world-wide persecution she endures, she still receives great love from God.

Fourteen years ago I embraced the religious life in the Society of Jesus, and expressed the desire to enter the Indian mission; but my superiors refused my request for fear of displeasing our family. But now no reason will induce me to leave the Society, in which I have determined to live and die.

Recently a message arrived giving leave to go ashore and enter a hospital in Calvi. We can indeed expect no happiness in this life, but our troubles will not follow us beyond the grave. If my life is to end in a few days' time and I can then go to heaven, I promise you that I shall beg God to call you to himself when your own lives are ended.

If you send me any more letters, I beg you not to say a word about abandoning my vocation. I also implore you not to make any moves in Rome to have me transferred to another religious order. I should never accept such a proposal even though I had to die a thousand times.

May God support all your wishes.

Your brother, Joseph Pignatelli, S.J.

Responsory (Is. 25:1, 4)

R. O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things.

V. You have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God, in a time of trial you gave Saint Joseph courage and strength to unite his scattered companions. May we always receive support from our brethren, and remain faithful to our vocation in the midst of every change. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.