

St. Peter of Alcantara

PETER WAS BORN of noble parents at Alcantara in Spain, and from his earliest years gave promise of his future sanctity. At the age of sixteen, he entered the order of Friars Minor, in which he became an example of every virtue. He undertook by obedience the office of preaching, and led numberless sinners to sincere repentance. Desirous of bringing back the Franciscan Order to its original strictness, he founded, by God's assistance and with the approbation of the apostolic See, a very poor little convent at Pedroso. The austere manner of life, which he was there the first to lead, was afterwards spread in a wonderful manner throughout Spain and even into the Indies. He assisted St. Teresa, whose spirit he approved, in carrying out the reform of Carmel. And she having learned from God that whoever asked anything in Peter's name would be immediately heard, was wont to recommend herself to his prayers, and to call him a saint, while he was still living.

Peter was consulted as an oracle by princes; but he avoided their honors with great humility, and refused to become confessor to the emperor Charles V. He was a most rigid observer of poverty, having but one tunic, and that the meanest possible. Such was his delicacy with regard to purity, that he would not allow the brother, who waited on him in his last illness, even lightly to touch him. By perpetual watching, fasting, disciplines, cold, and nakedness, and every kind of austerity, he brought his body into subjection;

having made a compact with it, never to give it any rest in this world. The love of God and of his neighbor was shed abroad in his heart, and at times burned so ardently that he was obliged to escape from his narrow cell into the open, that the cold air might temper the heat that consumed him.

Admirable was his gift of contemplation. Sometimes, while his spirit was nourished in this heavenly manner, he would pass several days without food or drink. He was often raised in the air, and seen shining with wonderful brilliancy. He passed dry-shod over the most rapid rivers. When his brethren were absolutely destitute, he obtained for them food from heaven. He fixed his staff in the earth, and it suddenly became a flourishing fig-tree. One night when he was journeying in a heavy snow-storm, he entered a ruined house; but the snow, lest he should be suffocated by its dense flakes, hung in the air and formed a roof above him. He was endowed with the gifts of prophecy and discernment of spirits as St. Teresa testifies. At length, in his sixty-third year, he passed to our Lord at the hour he had foretold, fortified by a wonderful vision and the presence of the saints. St. Teresa, who was at a great distance, saw him at that same moment carried to heaven. He afterwards appeared to her, saying: O happy penance, which has won me such great glory! He was rendered famous after death by many miracles, and was enrolled among the saints by Clement IX.

Commentary from the Divine Office (Extraordinary Form) for 19 October, St. Peter of Alcantara.



Proper Prayers of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form

OCTOBER 19

**St. Peter of Alcantara,
Confessor**

Prayers at the Foot of the Altar
(see red Missal, pp. 10-13)

Introit (Psalm 91: 13, 14)

JUSTUS ut palma florébit:
sicut cedrus Libani multipli-
cábitur: plantátus in domo
Dómini: in átriis domus Dei
nostri. *Ps. ibid.* 2. Bonum est
confitéri Dómino: et psallére
nómini tuo, Altíssime. *Ÿ.*
Glória Patri, et Filio, et
Spirítui Sancto. Sicut erat in
príncipio, et nunc, et semper,
et in sæcula sæculórum.
Amen. — Justus ut palma ...

THE JUST shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus: planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. *Psalm.* It is good to give praise to the Lord: and to sing to Thy name, O Most High. *Ÿ.* Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. — The just shall flourish ...

Collect

DEUS, QUI beátum Petrum
Confessórem tuum admir-
ábilis pœiténtiæ et altíssimæ
contemplatiónis múnere il-
lustráre dignátus es: da
nobis, quæsumus; ut, ejus
suffragántibus méritis, carne
mortificáti, facilius cœlestia
capiámus. Per Dominum
nostrum Jesum Christum ...

O GOD, who didst vouchsafe to ennoble blessed Peter, Thy Confessor, by the gift of marvelous penance and highest contemplation: grant, we beseech Thee, that by his merits pleading for us, we may so mortify our bodies as the more easily to appreciate the things of heaven. Through our Lord Jesus Christ ...

Epistle (Philippians 3:7-12)

FRATRES: Quæ mihi fuérunt
lucra, hæc arbitrátus sum
propter Christum detrimén-

BRETHREN: the things that were gain to me, the same I have counted loss for Christ. Furthermore, I count all things to

be but loss, for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ; and may be found in Him, not having my justice, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ Jesus, which is of God, justice in faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings; being made conformable to His death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection which is from the dead: not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow after, if I may by any means apprehend wherein I am also apprehended by Christ Jesus.

Gradual (Psalm 36:30–31)

THE MOUTH of the just shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak judgment. The law of his God is in his heart: and his steps shall not be supplanted. *Ÿ. Alleluia, alleluia. (Ps. III: I.)* Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he shall delight exceedingly in His commandments.

Gospel (Luke 12:32–34)

AT THAT TIME, Jesus said to His disciples: Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom. Sell what you possess, and give alms. Make to yourselves bags which grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not: where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

ta. Verúmtamen existimo ómnia detriméntum esse, propter eminentem sciéntiam Jesu Christi Dómini mei: propter quem ómnia detriméntum feci, et árbitror ut stércora, ut Christum lucrifáciam, et invéniam in illo, non habens meam justítiam, quæ ex lege est, sed illam quæ ex fide est Christi Jesu: quæ ex Deo est justítia in fide, ad cognoscéndum illum et virtútem resurrectiónis ejus, et societátem passiónum illius, configurátus morti ejus: si quo modo occúrram ad resurrectiónem, quæ est ex mórtuis: non quod jam accéperim, aut jam perféctus sim: sequor autem, si quo modo comprehéndam, in quo et comprehénsus sum a Christo Jesu.

OS JUSTI meditábitur sapiéntiam, et lingua ejus loquéntur judícium. Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius: et non supplantábuntur gressus ejus. *Alleluia, alleluia. Ÿ. Beátus vir, qui timet Dóminum: in mandátis ejus cupit nimis. Alleluia.*

IN ILLO TÉMPORE: Dixit Jesus discíplis suis: Nolíte timére, pusillus grex, quia complácut Patri vestro dare vobis regnum. Véndite quæ possidétis, et date elemósynam. Fácite vobis sácculos, qui non veteráscunt, thesáurum non deficiéntem in cælis: quo fur non apprópiat, neque tinea corrúmpit. Ubi enim thesáurus vester est, ibi et cor vestrum erit.

Offertory (Psalm 20:2–3)

IN VIRTÚTE TUA, Dómine lætábitur justus, et super salutáre tuum exsultábit vehementer: desidérium animæ ejus tribuísti ei.

IN THY STRENGTH, O Lord, the just man shall joy, and in Thy salvation he shall rejoice exceedingly: Thou has given him his heart's desire.

Secret

PRÆSTA NOBIS quæsumus, omnípotens Deus: ut nostræ humilitatis oblátio, et pro tuórum tibi grata sit honóre Sanctórum, et nos córpore páriter et mente puríficet. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum...

GRANT, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that the offering we humbly bring may be pleasing to Thee in honor of Thy Saints, and cleanse us alike in body and in soul. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee ...

The Common Preface

VERE DIGNUM et justum est, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubique grátias ágere: Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus: per Christum Dóminum nostrum. Per quem majestátem tuam laudant Ángeli, adórant Dominatiónes, tremunt Potestátes. Cæli, cælórumque Virtútes ac beáta Séraphim sócia exsultatióne concelebrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces, ut admítte júbeas, deprecámur, súpplici confessióne dicétes: — *Sanctus.*

IT IS TRULY meet and just, right and for our salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God, through Christ our Lord: through Whom Angels praise Thy Majesty, Dominations worship, Powers stand in awe. The Heavens and the hosts of heaven with blessed Seraphim unite, exult, and celebrate; and we entreat that Thou wouldst bid our voices too be heard with theirs, singing with lowly praise: — *Sanctus.*

Communion (Matthew 19:28,29)

AMEN dico vobis: quod vos, qui reliquistis ómnia, et secúti estis me, centuplum accipiétis, et vitam ætérnam possidébítis.

AMEN I say to you, that you, who have left all things and followed Me, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting.

Postcommunion

QUÆSUMUS, omnípotens Deus: ut, qui cæléstia aliménta percépimus, intercedénte beáto Petro, confessóre tuo, per hæc contra ómnia advérsa muniámur. Per Dóminum nostrum ...

WE BESEECH Thee, almighty God, that we, who have received Heavenly Nourishment, may thereby, at the intercession of blessed Peter, Thy Confessor, be defended against all adversity. Through our Lord ...