



YEAR OF FAITH 2012-2013

# St. FRANCIS XAVIER



Francis Xavier was born in the castle of Xavier, in the Kingdom of Navarre, on 7 April 1506. He was born to an aristocratic family as the youngest son of Juan de Jaso, privy counselor to King John III of Navarre (Jean d'Albret), and Doña Maria de Azpilcueta y Aznárez, sole heiress of two noble Navarrese families. He was sent to the University of Paris 1525 and he secured his licentiate in 1528. Francis was very career oriented and enjoyed the pleasures of the world. Through his roommate, St. Peter Faber, he was introduced to Ignatius Loyola and in 1534, Francis Xavier was among the first seven men to decide to formally join Ignatius of Loyola's community. They were the first Jesuits and they made vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Ignatius challenged his friends to yield their lives to Christ, abandon their own plans, and follow the Lord's design for their lives. Their spirituality was initially a disturbance to Francis. However, the only thing which kept disturbing him was the words of Jesus, which often Ignatius repeated "*What does it*





*profit a person to gain the whole world and loose his own soul?"* At last, Francis saw clearly that his place in life was among the Jesuits. Once he was convinced that he was called by Christ, Lord took him to places beyond his imagination.

In 1536 he left Paris to join Ignatius in Venice, from whence they all intended to go as missionaries to Palestine (a trip which never materialized), was ordained there in 1537, went to Rome in 1538, and in 1540, when the Pope formally recognized the Society, was ordered, to the Far East as the first Jesuit missionaries. After a year's voyage, six months of which were spent at Mozambique where he preached and gave aid to the sick, Francis eventually arrived in Goa, India in 1542 with *Fr. Paul of Camerino* an Italian, and *Francis Mansihas*, a Portuguese. There he began preaching to the natives and attempted to reform his fellow Europeans, living among the natives and adopting their customs on his travels. During the next decade he converted tens of thousands to Christianity. In 1551, India and the East were set up as a separate province and Ignatius made Francis its first provincial. In 1552 he set out for China, landed on the island within sight of his goal but died at Shangchuan from a fever on 3 December 1552, while he was waiting for a boat that would agree to take him to mainland China. He was first buried on a beach at the same island. His incorrupt body was moved multiple times and presently is in the Basilica of Bom Jesus in Goa, where it was placed in a glass container encased in a silver casket. Working against great difficulties, language problems (contrary to legend, he had no proficiency in foreign tongues), inadequate funds, and lack of cooperation, often actual resistance, from European officials, he left the mark of his missionary zeal and energy on areas which clung to Christianity for centuries. **Francis Xavier was beatified by Paul V on 25 October 1619, and was canonized by Gregory XV on 12 March 1622, at the same time as Ignatius Loyola. Pius XI proclaimed him the "Patron of Catholic Missions".**

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### WEEK I

#### Quote of St. Francis Xavier

*"It is not the actual physical exertion that counts towards a one's progress, nor the nature of the task, but by the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken. "*

#### Prayer by St. Francis Xavier

Eternal God, Creator of all things, remember that You alone has created the souls of unbelievers, which You have made according to Your Image

and Likeness.

Behold, O Lord, how to Your dishonor many of them are falling into Hell. Remember, O Lord, Your Son Jesus Christ, Who so generously shed His Blood and suffered for them. Do not permit that Your Son, Our Lord, remain unknown by unbelievers, but, with the help of Your Saints and the Church, the Bride of Your Son, remember Your mercy, forget their idolatry and infidelity, and make them know Him, Who You have sent, Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, Who is our salvation, our life, and our resurrection, through





Whom we have been saved and redeemed, and to Whom is due glory forever. Amen

**WEEK II**

**Quote of St. Francis Xavier**

*“Give me the children until they are seven and anyone may have them afterwards.”*

**Prayer to St. Francis Xavier**

O Great Saint Francis, well beloved and full of charity, with thee I reverently adore the Divine Majesty, and since I specially rejoice in the singular gifts of grace bestowed on thee in life, and of glory after death, I give thanks to God, with all the affection of my heart and that by thy powerful intercession thou may obtain for me above all things the grace to live a holy life and die a holy death. Amen

**WEEK III**

**Prayer to St. Francis Xavier**

Most amiable and most loving St Francis Xavier, in union with thee I reverently adore the Divine Majesty. I rejoice exceedingly on account of the marvelous gifts which God bestowed upon thee. I thank God for the special graces He gave thee during thy life on earth and for the great glory that came to thee after thy death. I implore thee to obtain for me, through thy powerful intercession, the greatest of all blessings – that of

living and dying in the state of grace. I also beg of thee to secure for me the special favour I ask. In asking this favour I am fully resigned to the Divine Will. I pray and desire only to obtain that which is most conducive to the greater glory of God and the greater good of my soul. Amen.

Pray for us, St. Francis Xavier-So that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

**WEEK IV**

**Prayer to St. Francis Xavier**

Help me become a hero—

One who executes both spiritual and physical feats;

One who gives himself up to be a part of something greater;

One who departs on a journey and returns changed.

Help me to emphasize the magis—

One who does his best in every area;

One who strives to be great in all aspects of his life.

Help me become a person with and for others—

One who respects himself as well as others;

One who performs deeds not for himself, but for others.

Help me become a leader—

One who persuades others to do the right thing;

One who guides others through action, not talk.

We pray to you for help, St. Xavier. Amen

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