



From the Pastor

*1st Sunday of
Advent - B*

December 3, 2017

Born on April 7, 1506 to nobility in Spain's Xavier Castle, **Saint Francis Xavier** travelled extensively before he died on an island off China in 1552 on **December 3**, which is now his Feast Day. He was ordained a Priest

on June 24, 1537, with **Saint Ignatius of Loyola**; they, with a few other friends, formed what would become the **Jesuit Order**. Pope Paul III denied his request to be a missionary to the Holy Land due to all the political unrest there; instead, in 1541, the Pope appointed him Papal Nuncio or Ambassador to Goa, India.

Three years later he went to preach on remote Indonesian islands; in 1549 he went to Japan, and made the first recorded Japanese convert, a man named Anjiro. Some say he was the first missionary to reach the Philippines. After a brief return to India, he set off for China, arriving in April, 1552, where he fell ill and died later that year. On each voyage he faced opposition and criticism; he also struggled to learn each culture and language: no easy feat in Oriental lands. He is often depicted preaching to those from many lands. Canonized with **Saint Ignatius** on March 12, 1622, **Saint Francis Xavier** is the patron saint of **Missionaries** and **Catholic Missions**.

Collect - Saint Francis Xavier, Priest

O God, who through the preaching of Saint Francis Xavier won many peoples to yourself, grant that the hearts of the faithful may burn with the same zeal for the faith and that Holy Church may everywhere rejoice in an abundance of offspring. Through our Lord Jesus Christ ... and ever. Amen.

"LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME." This quote from Jesus, recorded in three of the four Gospels, was crucial to **Saint Francis Xavier**. In each town he entered, he walked through the streets ringing a **bell** [a precursor of the 'Good Humor man?'] to attract children, whom he took to a church for catechetical lessons. What do we do to share our Faith with children?

Prayer over the Offerings - Saint Francis Xavier, Priest

Receive, O Lord, these offerings we bring you in commemoration of Saint Francis Xavier, and grant that, as he journeyed to distant lands out of longing for the salvation of souls, so we, too, bearing effective witness to the Gospel, may, with our brothers and sisters, eagerly hasten towards you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DO WE HELP OR HURT THE CAUSE? One of his greatest obstacles in spreading the Faith was the unchristian, often scandalous behavior of Christians! He was often embarrassed by the conduct of Portuguese sailors and businessmen, many of whom had come to India simply seeking adventure. Many had even been prisoners or troublemakers back home, and their bad example severely hindered the good he tried to do. By our words and example, do we hurt or hinder the cause of evangelization?

Prayer after Communion - Saint Francis Xavier, Priest

May your mysteries, O God, kindle in us that fire of charity with which Saint Francis Xavier burned for the salvation of souls, so that, walking ever more worthily in our vocation, we may obtain with him the reward you promise to those who labor well in your harvest. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DO WE HAVE FIRE IN OUR BELLY? Besides images of his vast missionary activity [**sailing vessel, globe, catechism, crucifix**] he is often depicted as a **young, bearded Priest**, holding **fire** or a **flaming torch**. For as his orations stress: he was **afire** with a **burning desire** to spread the Good News. He is credited with making 40,000 converts and baptizing 10,000 in just one month! What a feat!

His body is still enshrined in a shrine in Goa, India, but his **right arm** - with which he blessed and rang that bell - is in Rome's Church of the Gesù, the 'Mother House' for all Jesuits. Do we allow ourselves to be consumed by the love of God? Do we have a burning desire to evangelize? **Saint Francis Xavier**, pray for us!

With God's love and my prayers,

Father Mike

Very Rev. Michael J. Kreder, KHS