



*From the Pastor  
17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in  
Ordinary Time - B  
July 29, 2018*

**SAINTLY NICKNAMES.**

While we take for granted that everyone has a **surname** [or, as we call it, a '**last**' name], and while there is evidence that ancient Romans had surnames, the widespread use of surnames, at least in Western civilizations,

did not become the norm until the 11<sup>th</sup> Century. Generally speaking, one's surname was based on, or gave some clue to, a person's: patrimony or father's ancestry; location, such as place of birth, residence and/or workplace; occupation or job; and/or civic status. Some surnames were adjectives that described a person's size; skin, eye or hair color; temperament; or some other notable characteristic: i.e., 'the Red.'

'Surnames' of sorts are also used by the Church to designate some Saints, like Saints **Leo**, **Albert** and some say **John Paul**, who are given the 'surname' '**the Great**.' Others, to differentiate them from Saints with the same **first** name, are known by their place of birth or ministry, like Saints **Augustine of Canterbury**, **Bridget of Sweden**, or **Theresa of Avila**. Some 'surnames' highlight a Saint's 'theme' or 'style,' like Saints **John of the Cross**, **Joseph the Worker**, **Justin Martyr** or **Paul of the Cross**.

This week, on July 30, we honor **Saint Peter Chrysologus** who, like **Saint John Chrysostom**, have 'surnames' that aptly describe their eloquence in preaching. The Latin word 'chrys' is based on the Greek word 'khrys,' which means 'gold' or 'golden' from which we get '**chrysanthemum**' or '**golden flower**.' **Saint John Chrysostom's** surname means '**golden tongued**' and **Saint Peter Chrysologus's** surname means '**golden word**.' ['Logos' is Greek for 'word.']

Now that we got that squared away, here is the Collect for **Saint Peter Chrysologus**: a 5<sup>th</sup> Century Italian bishop known for testifying courageously to Christ's full humanity and divinity during a period of doctrinal confusion in the Church. He was born in Imola, Italy, in 406 and died there on December 2, 450.

*Collect - Saint Peter Chrysologus,  
Bishop & Doctor of the Church*

*O God, who made the Bishop  
Saint Peter Chrysologus an outstanding  
preacher of your incarnate Word,  
grant, through his intercession,  
that we may constantly ponder in our hearts  
the mysteries of your salvation  
and faithfully express them in what we do.  
Through our Lord Jesus ... forever and ever. Amen.*

**Saint Peter Chrysologus** was an adult convert to the faith; he was baptized, trained and ordained Deacon by his hometown Bishop of Imola, Cornelius, whom **Peter** revered as a spiritual father. In 430, when the Archbishop of Ravenna [the then-capitol of the Western Roman Empire, not Rome] died, Cornelius took the then **Deacon Peter** with him to Rome. **Peter** so impressed Pope Sixtus III that he named him Archbishop of Ravenna, not the man chosen by the local clergy and people, as was the custom at the time. In Ravenna, **Peter** was received warmly by the Western Roman Emperor Valentinian III and his mother Galla Placidia, who gave **Peter** the nickname '**Chrysologus**' because of his preaching skills.

We still have 176 of his sermons, in which he beautifully but briefly explained the Incarnation, the Creed, the place of Mary and John the Baptist in God's plan of salvation, the penitential value of Lent, Christ's Eucharistic presence and the primacy of Saint Peter the Apostle and his successors. But his most famous saying is: "**The man who wants to play with the devil will not be able to rejoice with Christ.**"

This adage, akin to our axioms, that combine "dancing with the devil" and having to "pay the piper" was **Saint Peter Chrysologus'** gentle but firm challenge to those who lived immoral or lawless lives in his days. Since his words also apply to our own times, no wonder Pope Benedict XIII, in 1729, declared him a **Doctor of the Church** and the '**Doctor of Homilies**.' As we honor him, pray that all homilists always imitate his beauty - and brevity - in preaching! **Saint Peter Chrysologus, pray for us.**

***With God's love and my prayers,***

*Father Mike*

***Very Rev. Michael J. Kreder, V.F., KHS***