

*Novena Prayer
to St Peter Chanel
for
Vocations
to the
Society of Mary
April 20th – April 28th*



Structure of the Novena Prayer

Each day the prayer consists of the readings and intercession on the appropriate page. The prayer time should conclude with one of the following prayers

- 1. St Peter Chanel you left your homeland to proclaim Jesus, Saviour of the world, to the peoples of Oceania. Guided by the Spirit of God, who is the strength of the gentle, you bore witness to love, even laying down your life. Grant that like you we may live our daily life in peace, joy, and in love. May your prayer and example call forth from our midst many workers for the Gospel so that God's kingdom may reach to the ends of the earth.**

- 2. Lord Jesus**

You gave the Church St Peter Chanel as an example to Marists and the people of Oceania of gentleness, compassion and love in action. Welcome many young men and women into the Marist Family, to work as Priests, Brothers and Sisters. Help us too to share our charism with lay people throughout the world and to work in partnership with them in Mission for the good of your Church and our world. This prayer we make to the father in your name and through the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Mary Mother of the Church and our mother, choose more young people to follow Jesus your Son in religious life and priesthood and to bear your name as members of your Society.

The biographical quotes are taken from Jan Snijders: *A Mission Too Far... Pacific Commitment*, 2002, ATF Publications

Day One

April 20th

Radio is like the Old Testament;
You hear God's Word;
TV is like the New Testament;
You not only hear God's Word
But also see it come alive in Jesus



He first served as curate in Amberieu, where he found Claude Bret, whom he had known in Meximieux and who ran a school in the town. A year later Chanel was appointed parish priest of Crozet. The two friends thought of volunteering for the missions in Louisiana, but Bishop Devie held them back. Together they became interested in the Marist project and in 1831 they joined. *A Mission Too Far p.33*

Intercessions:

For all Christians, that they might commit themselves more deeply each day to the Lord's call to follow him, giving witness to the Kingdom. Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel followed the call of the Lord that led to his death and the eventual conversion of the island of Futuna. May his witness inspire many to commit their lives to the Gospel and so "bear much fruit." Lord, hear us.

That we gathered here might hear clearly the call of the Lord and work for the extension of his kingdom among us. Lord, hear us.

May many young people hear the Lord's invitation to be his friends and listening attentively to his Word, live with him in religious life and priesthood. Lord, hear us.

Day Two April 21st



Witness is like perfume.
If it's really good,
you won't need to draw attention to it.

Peter had a difficult time saying farewell, Several of his friends raised objections and, typical for the gentle and impressionable man that he was, he wavered. Jeanne-Marie Chavoin got him over the moment of anxiety with “a few energetic words about priests who grow mouldy in the midst of comfort and do nothing for God’s glory.” *A Mission Too Far p.41*

Intercessions:

We pray for Christian families. May they be blessed in their life together and grow as models of community and faith for their children. Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel, growing up in a large loving family, learnt faith and service from his parents. May his example and intercession inspire the youth to dedicate their lives to the Gospel. Lord, hear us.

We remember single parent families and families whose life together is a struggle. May they be “animated by the spirit of faith and love” and grow “as a true source of light and a wholesome leaven for other families” (FS #72). Lord, hear us.

For parents, that they might help their children “welcome generously the call to priesthood and to religious life.” Lord, hear us.

Day Three

April 22nd

A time like this requires strong minds,
great hearts, true faith, and ready hands.



Claude Bret died on the voyage out at 0 40 North, 24 30 West. Peter Chanel, Claude's best friend, who had shared his cabin, cared for him and who had not left from his side in his illness, could not bring himself to mention his name even four months later. *A Mission too Far pp 77/78*

Intercessions:

Mary's gracious choice calls us to be Marist. May we, both professed and lay Marists, always follow the example of Mary in the early Church.
Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel with trust and perseverance strived to establish the Church on Futuna. May we too endeavour to establish the Church and renew it according to our charism. Lord, hear us.

Mary said, "yes" to God's saving plan. May those the Lord is calling to his harvest in the priesthood and religious life follow her example of faith and trust. Lord, hear us.

Lord, you constantly call new labourers into your harvest. Call many young men and women to the work of your Mother in her Society. Lord, hear us.

Day Four

April 23rd

The worst danger that confronts the younger generation is the example of the older generation.



Even when they still lived in a corner of Niuliki's house, the two (Chanel and Marie-Nizier) used to get up very early to say their prayers and celebrate Mass before youngsters would come in to chew the kava roots. Everyone apparently felt free to move in and out of the missionaries' house at any time. *A Mission Too Far p.143*

Intercessions:

We pray for those preparing for Marist life. May the Lord bless and guide them as they continue to learn his call to them. Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel left his country and went to the ends of the earth to satisfy people's need of God. May young people, as they embark on life's journey, find true meaning with and through God. Lord, hear us.

We pray, Lord, that you call many young men and women to serve your Church in the priesthood and religious life. May they experience support and encouragement and feel the warmth of the whole community. Lord, hear us.

May we all seek to grow a "culture of vocations" in our Church. Help us to encourage and call young men and women to follow you, Lord, in every vocation, and to the priesthood and religious life. Lord, hear us.

Day Five April 24th

Wisdom is knowing what to do.
Skill is knowing how to do it.
Virtue is doing it.



Chanel joined in people's feasts and expressed grief when people were sad. He lived so close to them that he was liked and respected by many. One grandmother showed him her granddaughter and said she would not want her to marry anyone but a French nobleman, but the French nobleman present kindly told her to teach her granddaughter to be a good girl. *A Mission Too Far p.148*

Intercessions:

For those preparing to share in Lord's mission as priests and religious: That encountering him in his Word and the sacraments they grow ever closer to him and become holy and effective ministers of the Gospel.

Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel took up the challenge of following the Lord to the other side of the world. Through his intercession and witness, may many young men and women take up the challenge of service in the Church. Lord, hear us.

May seminarians and novices grow close to the Lord as they prepare to share the Lord's mission and serve his Church after the example of Mary.

Lord, hear us.

For all Marists, that they will always keep their gaze fixed on the Lord and grow ever closer to him. Lord, hear us.

Day Six April 25th



Everybody was asked to do it.
Everybody was sure somebody would do it.
Anybody could have done it,
but nobody did it.

Unlike some Europeans on the island the two missionaries had stayed away from the actual fighting, but for many days they were busy, caring for the wounded, removing spears and arrows from bleeding bodies, and consoling the bereaved. Peter Chanel cried when he saw the mutilations of the wounded and the humiliation of the vanquished...*A Mission too Far p.199*

Intercessions:

For all Marists: That we might live out our calling to “make disciples of all nations” by way of our various ministries and apostolates. Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel sailed to Oceania, following the Lord’s invitation to be a fisher of men and women. With his intercession and following his example, may young people dedicate themselves to the spread of the Gospel.
Lord, hear us.

We that pray many young men and women obey the Lord’s command to go and make disciples of all the nations. May they hear his call to mission as lay people and as priests and religious. Lord, hear us.

As ones who through the Society of Mary, have heard the Lord’s call to cast out our nets, may we also have the wisdom and courage to call others to be fishers of the men and women of our time. Lord, hear us.

Day Seven

April 26th

The world's greatest need is not more Christians,
but more Christians who practice their Christianity.



On 18 September Chanel baptised a sick child of Musumusu, it did a week later. On 9 November a small son of Niuliki was seriously ill. With the consent of Niuliki and his wife, Chanel baptised the child in a full baptism ceremony. The child died and on 9 December he gave it a Christian burial, People were moved to tears by the beautiful ritual and said they too wanted to be buried that way. *A Mission Too Far p.200*

Intercessions:

Peter Chanel with Br Marie Nizier was able to live Marist life in the face of severe difficulties. May their example of friendship with the Lord, prayer, openness to the Word, and fraternal love be an example for all Marists and a inspiration to those considering religious life. Lord, hear us.

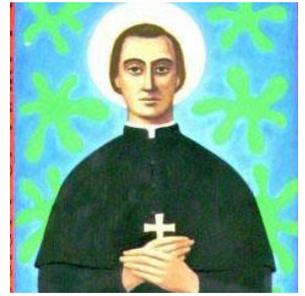
For Marist religious; fathers, brothers and sisters. That truly opening themselves to the love of God, they might discover true joy and fulfilment in their vocation. Lord, hear us.

May the Lord call many young people to answer the challenge of following Christ in the priesthood and religious life. May they discover the richness of this way of life that can engage the whole of their lives. Lord, hear us.

For all who minister in the Church: that attentive and concerned for vocations, we might have the courage to point out the challenge of following Christ to young people. Lord, hear us.

Day Eight April 27th

Faith without works is like a bird without wings;
Though it may hop about on earth,
it will never fly to heaven.



His letters show Chanel the warm-hearted man he was. With every letter he sent greetings to former colleagues and to friends, often with special mention of their mothers or sisters. He did not forget the Sisters and the ladies who did the house keeping for Seon. ... He did not forget the parents of his friend Claude Bret, of whom he had heard that they had taken their loss with edifying resignation. *A Mission Too Far p.201*

Intercessions:

Peter Chanel and the first Marists didn't hesitate to leave family, home and nation to preach the Gospel to the peoples of Oceania. Inspired by their example, may Marists, lay and religious, continue to offer themselves for work in foreign missions. Lord, hear us.

Lord, we pray for Marists around the world who preach your Word in missions far from their homes and families. Keep them safe and guide and bless their ministry among those to whom they have been sent. Lord, hear us.

We pray that units of the Society blessed with financial or human resources might generously consider helping those areas that are in need, in order to foster the work of Mary. Lord, hear us.

For an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life: that many young men and women might respond to your call, offering themselves for mission in the developing Churches of Africa, Asia and America and for the renewal of established Churches. Lord, hear us.

Day Nine

April 28th



Nobody needs love more than those
who don't deserve it.
If we wait for them to become
lovable before we love them,
we will wait around the rest of our lives,

On 18 April 1841 Peter Chanel hears that Meitala, Niuliki's eldest son, has let it become known his decision is made: he will go over to the lotu (religion).³³⁸

When they enter the house, Chanel sees that Musumusu is bleeding and he starts looking for a bandage. The mob get into the house and starts looting. Chanel protests. One of the gang knocks Chanel down, somebody stabs a bayonet into his shoulder. Chanel sags down and pulls out the bayonet. Musumusu calls the looters to order: "We did not come to loot but to kill the white man! When they take no notice, he picks up an adze and hits Chanel on the head, cleaving the skull. *A Mission too Far p.339*

Intercessions:

While on the island of Futuna Peter Chanel had a continued interest in the young people of the college at Belley. May he intercede for the Society, and for Marist students, that many young people hear and answer the call to Marist life. Lord, hear us.

Lord, call many young men and women to commit themselves to doing the Work of your Mother in her Society. Lord, hear us.

For all Marists: that we remember that all ministry calls people to belong to the Church. As our work awakens in children and young people that sense of belonging, help us to encourage those you call to answer your invitation to priesthood and religious life. Lord, hear us.

For the Society of Mary, that through the intercession of Mary, many young men and women will commit themselves to life and service in her "little congregation". Lord, hear us.