

VESPERS FOR 350th ANNIVERSARY OF FATHER MÉDAILLE'S DEATH



DECEMBER 30, 2019 ¹

PRESIDER: This evening we gather in prayer and reflection on the 350th anniversary of Jean-Pierre Médaille's death. His name, his memory and his witness still live on in the hearts of some 8,000 Sisters of St. Joseph. In this graced moment as we come together to sit in the presence of our beloved founder and spiritual father, Jean-Pierre Médaille, may we experience that we are truly in the presence of an authentic mystic and prophet. Let us be united in prayer and communion around the world in the fifty-three different countries where we, his spiritual daughters, live and minister today. Let us continue to Love Love and let Love love through us to the glory of God.

GATHERING SONG: I Am with You on the Journey (Kathy Sherman CSJ, *Always With You* CD) or song of your choice.

ANTIPHON 1: Love one another as I have loved you

O God, I want so very much to please You,
to walk in Your ways and to carry out Your purposes.
There is nothing as important to me
as being in the centre of Your will
and living within Your design for my life.

¹ *Silhouette of Father Médaille, S.J.. Slide created by Monica Hartnett, SSJ, Anney.*

While others may find their fulfillment in the acquisition of wealth
or the accumulation of things,
in doing something better than everyone else,
or in the plaudits of their peers,
my foremost desire is to be the object of Your love
and to be Your child and servant forever.

Not only have You fashioned me with Your hands, O Lord,
and created me for Your purposes,
You have stamped Your image upon my heart.
Therefore my deepest longings are met only in You
and in the dedication of my life
to the accomplishment of Your objectives.

ANTIPHON 2: Put aside your old self so that you may emerge anew.

How can I live a life that is pleasing to You, O Lord?
My instincts are earthbound.
The ephemeral delights of this life tantalize and tempt me.
My insatiable longings and desperate attempts to please You
are thwarted by the innumerable enemies of my soul.

I fail so often to do what I really want to do,
to attain what I strive for, to grasp what I reach for,
and I fall back in shame and am flattened in despair.
You do forgive me when I fail, O Lord,
and You put me upon my feet again.

You have promised to strengthen me
and to sustain me in my daily conflicts.
Now I pray for the wisdom to discern Your will
and the grace to carry it out in the difficult days before me.

ANTIPHON 3: That all may be one, as you are in me and I am in you.

You have shown me how much You love me, Lord;
now show me how to love You.
Your standards for me are clear.
I am to translate Your love into terms
that others can comprehend,
to demonstrate it before my neighbour beside me.

I can truly love You only inasmuch as I proceed
to love Your children in this world.
I can serve You only as I commit my life to service
on behalf of my brothers and sisters.
I can offer sacrifices to You
only by way of the altar of my neighbour's need.

This is Your law, Your standard,
Your design and will for my life.
This is the way in which I will be pleasing to You.
I love You, O God,
and I gladly accept Your will and purpose for my life.

Now bless me and guide me
and grant me the grace to walk
within that will and purpose and
have the joy of knowing I am pleasing You. ²

READING: Philippians 2:5-11

In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus: His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are; and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him a name above all other names, so that all beings in the heavens and on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God

RESPONSORY

Love your neighbours as yourself; love them as Christ Jesus loves you.

R. Love your neighbours as yourself; love them as Christ Jesus loves you.

In living your life,

R. Love them as Christ Jesus loves you.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant. *In life have only one desire: to be and to become the person God wants you to be, in nature, in grace and in glory.*

R. My soul proclaims your greatness, O my God and my spirit has rejoiced in you, my Saviour.

L. For your regard has blessed me, poor and a serving woman.

R. From this day all generations will call me blessed.

L. For you who are mighty, have made me great, Most Holy be your Name.

R. Your mercy is on those who fear you throughout all generations.

L. You have shown strength with your arm. You have scattered the proud in their heart's fantasy.

R. You have put down the mighty from their seat, and have lifted up the powerless.

² Leslie F. Brandt, *Psalms Now*, (Reprint, St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003).

L. You have filled the hungry with good things and have sent the rich away empty.
R. You, remembering your mercy, have helped your people Israel.
L. As you promised Abraham and Sarah. Mercy to their children forever.
All: Glory be to the Father...

Ant. In life, have only one desire: to be and to become the person God wants you to be, in nature, in grace and in glory.

INTERCESSIONS: Most gracious God, we place our trust in you. Now we pray:

Jesus, you inspired Jean-Pierre Médaille to work with the first six sisters to found the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Le Puy, France in 1650. It is a congregation animated by Great Love.

R. *May all women and men dedicated to serving others experience the gift of Your love in their ministry.*

You call us by name to be one with you and with one another.

R. *Help us to live in this community of equals celebrating Your gifts and our diversity.*

You continue to inspire us with your words of grace and power. Challenge us to keep communicating throughout the global community this message of hope.

R. *May all mystic-missionaries be graced to walk humbly, to listen sensitively and to serve justly.*

You share life with us in Your banquet of love in every Eucharist.

R. *May we be faithful to our commitments, respectful of our differences and one in our desire to love God.*

CLOSING PRAYER: O God, who through your servant, Jean-Pierre Médaille, You deigned to call a great number of people to the imitation of the Incarnate Word. In his hidden life and his great love for God and humanity, we ask You to glorify Your name and glorify your servant, granting us through his intercession, the grace we ask for... (*name your intention*) ... In the manner of your fatherly prayer, may all the family of the “Little Design” continually renew itself in the Spirit, and hasten with joy along the way that he has indicated in the direction of great Love. Amen.⁴

DEPARTURE SONG: I Am with You on the Journey (Kathy Sherman, CSJ, *Always With You* CD) or song of your choice.

³Antiphons, canticle and prayer based on Father Médaille’s writings. This Office was adapted from *The New Companion to the Breviary with Seasonal Supplement*, Carmelite Monastery, 1998.

⁴ Marius Nepper, *Origins, The Sisters of St. Joseph*, 108. This translation from the Portuguese *Prayer for Beatification* is by Frances Baker, CSJ (Peterborough). See *Words for Life: Book Four*, Appendix, 156-159.