
GANZ TEXTS TO SHARE - TNS 14, 4 - ST. PETER FABER, SJ (23 APRIL 2024)

SOURCES



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Author: Pierre Favre

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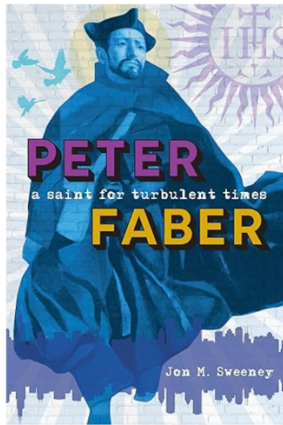
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Peter Faber: A Saint for Turbulent Times Paperback –

February 1, 2021

by Jon Sweeney (Author)

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In a time when the Church suffered violent division and strife, one man peacefully modeled compassion and dialogue.

Peter Faber was one of the original companions who, with Ignatius of Loyola, founded the Society of Jesus in 1534. From his simple upbringing in a mountain village to his years at university, Faber exhibited a mind for learning and a heart for prayer. After doing Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises—an intense retreat for deepening one's commitment to Christ and friendship with God—Faber led others to do the same and soon earned a reputation as the best teacher of the Exercises.

But it was a time of great dissension, as the Church struggled to respond to the challenges of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. Battle lines were drawn—in churches and conversations, at meetings and councils. Along with other Jesuits, Faber sought to help people keep the faith. In exploring Peter Faber's life of conversation, we can learn a powerful and faithful response to dissent, disagreement, and division—for his time and ours.

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Michael Amaladoss, SJ, editor, *Ignis Quarterly: Ignatian Spirituality in South Asia*, No. 2014.1, Volume XLIV, No. 1 (2014), *On St. Peter Faber*.

QUOTES

M. Amaladoss, S.J. - In a world of increasing conflicts and tensions, let us become disciples of Peter and be people of *tri-logue*. In the life of Peter Faber, prayer to the Spirit and to the guardian saints and angels was very much part of his ministry of conversation and reconciliation. We should also realize that when we dialogue with the others at a spiritual level God is always a hidden partner between the two of us. The dialogue then becomes a *trilogue*.

Iris Murdoch, *The Bell*: “Remember that all our failures are ultimately failures in love.”

Wikipedia – Dame Jean Iris Murdoch DBE (/ˈmɜːrdoʊk/ MUR-dok; 15 July 1919 – 8 February 1999) was an Irish and British novelist and philosopher. Murdoch is best known for her novels about good and evil, sexual relationships, morality, and the power of the unconscious. Her first published novel, *Under the Net* (1954), was selected in 1998 as one of Modern Library's 100 best English-language novels of the 20th century. Her 1978 novel *The Sea, The Sea* won the Booker Prize. In 1987, she was made a Dame by Queen Elizabeth II for services to literature. In 2008, *The Times* ranked Murdoch twelfth on a list of “The 50 greatest British writers since 1945”.

Natalie Lacroix, "I Walked to Meet You: A Letter to Peter Faber" in *Ignis*. "One day, a year before your death, you have even written in your Journal: 'On another occasion I became very sad and dejected to think that I was achieving nothing of note. Then I kept thinking I could not help being by far the least successful of all my contemporaries.'

Paul Vandebroek on Hieronymus Bosch (Grove Art Online) - "The concept of threat plays a central part in Bosch's world view: the individual is attacked in his moral and spiritual integrity by his own impulses, rooted in sensuality, by the external world, and by supernatural forces of evil. Fear, both of material ruin and of spiritual damage, was a basic element of bourgeois culture c. 1500. The self was regarded as an extremely weak entity, constantly obliged to resist and remain firm. Hence the admiration for stern anchorites, who are strong, courageous, and self-contained. Along with the sense of the individual's weakness goes an obsession with self-preservation as the ideal of utilitarian wisdom. Folly is self-destructive, leading to eternal damnation and the company of devils, a state Bosch saw embodied in the lowest ranks of human society."

BIOGRAPHY

The most compact and accurate life of St. Peter Faber, SJ written by Joseph Tylenda, SJ (see it in Texts to Share).

Key locations of Peter's apostolic life in Chronological Order:

Paris (1525-1536)

Venice (1536, January to November)

Rome (1536-1539) - Teaches Theology & Scripture at the Roman (Sapienza) University

Parma (1539) - He would not see Ignatius for seven years

Worms & Ratisbon/Regensburg (1539-1544)

Portugal & Spain (1544-1546)

Rome (1546) - He returns to visit Ignatius after seven years and dies in his arms

Pope Pius IX on 5 September 1872 declares Peter Faber as "Blessed"

Pope Francis on 17 December 2013 canonized St. Peter Faber, SJ

Feast day: August 2nd each year (on the day after his death on August 1st)

In an article, Fr. Padberg, SJ writes:

Peter Faber arrived to study theology at the University of Paris in 1525 at the age of 19. He soon met fellow student Francis Xavier. **Two more opposite temperaments would be hard to find. Xavier was a Spanish nobleman, gregarious, athletically inclined, self-confident, ambitious, impetuous, looking toward a well-endowed ecclesiastical**

career. Faber came from a pastoral family of the Savoyard Alps; he was reserved, introspective, scrupulous and uncertain about his future. But they became the closest friends.

Soon, too, Faber so trusted Ignatius that he unburdened his temptations, his scruples, his uncertainties upon him. Ignatius understood them well; he had experienced similar trials during his conversion to the following of Christ. **In his memoirs Faber gratefully recounts how Ignatius helped him: "He gave me an understanding of my conscience and of the temptations and scruples I had had for so long without either understanding them or seeing the way by which I would be able to get peace. ...The temptations that I had experienced at the time were evil and foul carnal images suggested by the spirit of fornication...."**

In August 1534, Faber, Ignatius, Xavier and four other Paris students bound themselves to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land if possible. If they could not, they would offer themselves to the pope, to be "missioned" by him for the service of the universal church.

Yet his temperament favored gentleness, persuasion and conciliation. While Dr. Pedro Ortiz, the papal legate at the Colloquy of Worms in 1540, was easily roused to fury at Catholic and Protestant alike, **the tireless Catholic theologian Cochlaeus described Faber as "a master of the life of the affections." Faber's preaching dealt not with theological controversy but with personal reform.**

The year 1544 saw Faber sent to Portugal, with similar results, especially in Evora and Coimbra. He was "**endowed with charming grace in dealing with people, which up to now I must confess I have not seen in anyone else,**" writes Simon Rodrigues, another of the first companions/founders of the Society of Jesus and founder of its Portuguese province. "**Somehow he entered into friendship in such a way, bit by bit coming to influence others in such a manner, that his very way of living and gracious conversation powerfully drew to the love of God all those with whom he dealt."**

The Oxford English Dictionary at "**to charm**" - **1.a. - c1380 - transitive.** To act upon with or as with a charm or magic, so as to influence, control, subdue, bind, etc.; to put a spell upon; to bewitch, enchant. **5.a.- c1440 - figurative.** To influence, enthrall, powerfully attract or engage (the mind, senses, etc.) by beauty, sweetness, or other attractive quality; to fascinate, captivate, bewitch, enchant, delight. In Shakespeare's time, still a strong metaphor from sense 1; but now, from constant use, applied without any thought of this connection.

Summoned once again by the pope, this time to serve as theologian at the Council of Trent, he began his last journey in April 1546, working his way from Madrid to Rome by way of Gandía and Barcelona. He arrived utterly exhausted in the middle of July 1546. Two weeks later, on Aug. 1, he died in the midst of his brethren.

The *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. – **Trent, Council of (1545–63)**. This Council, reckoned by RC theologians the Nineteenth *Oecumenical Council, was the most impressive embodiment of the ideals of the *Counter-Reformation. ... In 1542 the Pope again convoked the Council, this time to Trent. After yet another postponement it eventually met on 13 Dec. 1545. At the outset it was a very small assembly, composed of 3 legates, 1 cardinal, 4 archbishops, 21 bishops, and 5 generals of orders. ... The revolt of the princes against Charles V led to the suspension of the Council on 28 Apr. 1552. **Under the austere and violently anti-Protestant *Paul IV (1555–9, Carafa) there was no hope of its reassembly**, and it first met again ten years later under his more tolerant successor, *Pius IV. ... Though the Council failed to satisfy the Protestants and its reforms were less comprehensive than many Catholics had hoped for, it had established a solid basis for the renewal of discipline and the spiritual life in the RC Church, which emerged from Trent with a clearly formulated doctrinal system and an enhanced religious strength for the subsequent struggle with Protestantism.¹

Faber was someone who moved from one responsibility to another, year after year, as is often the case for people today. **But he did so with a conviction that *wherever he was, he was in God's presence and surrounded by a community of friends on earth***. He also could not help but experience the often wrenching changes in the church and society around him, such as exist today, and he was often assailed by discouragement and doubt. Ultimately, though, he saw the world and the church around him with a sense of measure and proportion. **He was a person of great sensitivity to his own interior state, but he was equally sensitive to both the physical and psychological circumstances of those with whom he came into contact.**

Butler's Lives of the Saints:

Peter Favre (Faber) was the senior of the first companions of St Ignatius Loyola and held the highest place in his master's estimation with St Francis Xavier; **and he was the first among the Jesuits to come to grips with the Protestant Reformation**. He was a Savoyard by birth, born in 1506 of a family of farmers, and while still a shepherd-boy of ten years old longed for a chance to study. To his great joy he was sent to school, first with a priest at Thônes and then to a local college. In 1525 [age 19] Peter went to Paris and was entered at the college of Sainte-Barbe. Here he shared the lodging of a Navarrese student, one Francis

RC Roman Catholic, Roman Catholicism.

RC Roman Catholic, Roman Catholicism.

¹ The *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed.

Xavier, and met a backward undergraduate from Salamanca, Ignatius Loyola. The three became firm friends.

The mind that turned to such gentle reflection was naturally opposed to coercion when dealing with Protestants, and he had little faith in diets and formal conferences. **When it was required of him he could and would meet such opponents as Bucer and Melanchthon face to face, and confute them in argument, and such victories were not without good effect.** But he attached far more importance to winning men to a change of heart, to amend their lives, and so lead them back to Christ and His Church.

THE FABER INSTITUTE ICON



A FEARFUL AGE

The *Oxford English Dictionary* at “**fear**” - **2.a. - c1175** - The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil. Now the general term for all degrees of the emotion; in early use applied to its more violent extremes, now denoted by *alarm, terror, fright, dread*. In 14th cent. sometimes pleonastically **dread and fear**.

Barbara Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror* (1978) -

“When the gap between ideal and real becomes too wide, the system breaks down.”

“For belligerent purposes, the 14th century, like the 20th, commanded a technology more sophisticated than the mental and moral capacity that guided its use.”

“Once people envisioned the possibility of change in a fixed order, the end of an age of submission came in sight; the turn to individual conscience lay ahead. To that extent the Black Death may have been the unrecognized beginning of modern man.”

Jon Sweeney (2021) - Page 99 - It was a tempestuous time for any Christian leader. Christianity itself had just entered a period of intense humiliation. Every major institution of the Catholic Church, and by extension, of Western civilization itself, was in a crisis of meaning. Every foundation was being questioned. *To be Christian* had been a given of nearly every society, large or small, a century earlier, but now there was dispute over what that even meant. Before, its meaning was simply implicit. Even worse, the churches and the institutions that fed them and were fed by them were tagged with the label of *corruption*. **In real terms, Christianity was in ruins.**

Diarmaid MacCulloch - If you study the sixteenth century, you are inevitably present at something like the aftermath of a particularly disastrous car-crash. All around are half-demolished structures, debris, people figuring out how to make sense of lives that have suddenly been transformed.

Marc Rastoin, SJ (April 2024): In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke, the evangelist who seeks to present the Christian faith to the elites of the Greco-Roman world, tells how Peter’s shadow could heal the sick just like the handkerchiefs that belonged to Paul (cf. Acts 5:15 and 19:12). At other times, Luke is very critical of magic. He tells us that in Ephesus new converts to Christ burned talismans and magic books worth 50,000 silver coins (cf. Acts 19:19). **The ancient world was fond of magical procedures and protective amulets. Our world is not so different, as evidenced by widespread use of**

horoscopes and recourse to self-styled witches and wizards. How did Jesus find his way in such a world? What did he think of those who came to him with requests for healing or protection?

From the "Introduction" to the *Memoriale* by Murphy, SJ & Padberg, SJ -

The *Oxford English Dictionary* at "**malaise**" - 2. - 1877 - *figurative*. Uneasiness of mind or spirit; the unhealthy state of an institution, organization, activity, or situation.

Pages 6-7 - In spite of widespread abuses and disorders [in Christian governance and structures], the spiritual level of the common people remained high, in many ways as high as that of the previous age. But unusual and disquieting characteristics began to manifest themselves, the symptoms of a **deep spiritual malaise**. ... The imagination and the emotions now began to play a greater part than ever before in the spiritual life, and this change came to be reflected in religious art. ... A cumulative psychological effect that unsettled further the precarious balance that the devotional life had to maintain between reason, the new emotions, and the imagination. **On the one hand new luxury and the new lusts arose; on the other a deep melancholy began to invade people's minds**. ... A new obsession began to haunt the imagination of Europe, a new preoccupation with sin and its consequences and a morbid brooding on death and judgment as the moment when merited punishment would begin. Man is born to die; the doleful message was repeated in a thousand different ways, but the world too is in the process of passing away.

Page 7 - Inevitably, the grossest superstitions took root, grew, and began to spread throughout Europe, insinuating themselves into even the most orthodox devotions. Belief in witches, warlocks, werewolves, vampires, and such-like could be found everywhere; witchcraft, astrology, and magic flourished; the educated classes and even the clergy dabbled in the occult.

Werwolf (French, *loup-garou*). A bogie who roams about devouring infants, sometimes under the form of a man, sometimes as a wolf followed by dogs, sometimes as a white dog, sometimes as a black goat, and occasionally invisible. Its skin is bullet-proof, unless the bullet has been blessed in a chapel dedicated to St. Hubert. This superstition was once common to almost all Europe, and still lingers in Brittany, Limousin, Auvergne, Servia, Wallachia, and White Russia. In the fifteenth century a council of theologians, convoked by the Emperor Sigismund, gravely decided that the *loup-garou* was a reality. It is somewhat curious that we say a "bug-bear," and the French a "bug-wolf." ("Wer-wolf" is Anglo-

Saxon *wer*, a man, and wolf – a man in the semblance of a wolf. “Gar” of *gar-ou* is *wer* or *war*, a man; and “ou,” a corruption of *orc*, an ogre.)²

War’lock. A wandering evil spirit; a wizard. (Anglo-Saxon, *wær-loga*, a **deceiver**, one who breaks his word. Satan is called in Scripture “the father of lies,” the arch-warlock.)³

Witch - The *Oxford English Dictionary* at “witch” - **I.1.a. - Old English** - A person (in later use typically a woman; see note) who practises witchcraft or magic, esp. of a malevolent or harmful nature.

From the Old English period onwards, *witch* has carried negative connotations of malevolent or harmful magic, but this is complicated by the fact that, according to orthodox Christian belief, practitioners of both benevolent and harmful magic derived their powers (wittingly or otherwise) from the Devil or evil spirits. **In the late medieval and early modern period, during a period of heightened fear of witches, it was believed that practitioners of witchcraft had knowingly entered into a compact with such beings.** It appears that, in early modern popular usage, *witch* remained largely restricted to practitioners of harmful magic, while practitioners of benevolent magic were referred to as *cunning* or *wise*. Where *witch* was applied to all practitioners of magic, a differentiation was made between benevolent *white witches* and malevolent *black witches*.

Vampire. An extortioner. According to Dom Calmet, the vampire is a dead man who returns in body and soul from the other world, and wanders about the earth doing mischief to the living. He sucks the blood of persons asleep, and these persons become vampires in turn. The *vampire* lies as a corpse during the day, but by night, especially at full moon, wanders about.⁴

The *Oxford English Dictionary* at “**to extort**” - *literally*, To wrest or wring (something) from a person; to extract by torture.

1. **1. transitive.** To obtain from a reluctant person by violence, torture, intimidation, or abuse of legal or official authority, or (in weaker

² E. Cobham Brewer, LL.D., *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (1895).

³ E. Cobham Brewer, LL.D., *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (1895).

⁴ E. Cobham Brewer, LL.D., *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (1895).

sense) by importunity, overwhelming arguments, or any powerful influence. Const. *of, from, out of, †upon.*

Page 7 - Horrifying visions, terrors that flew by night, haunted minds and filled imaginations; everyone had tales to tell of wonders that passed belief; prodigies and portentous natural phenomena abounded; comets frightened everyone. **Europe experienced a thirst for the irrational and the mysterious that was impossible to slake.**

Jon Sweeney (2021) -

Page 32 - Religious illiteracy and insincerity among the clergy were commonplace. Immorality among church leaders, often of an openly sexual nature, was also too common.

Page 35 - There was *a new kind of cynicism about people in power* that was becoming more common. Any innocence that had existed in people's imaginations about kings and queens, princes and rulers, even cardinals and bishops in the Catholic Church was quickly vanishing. The Italian humanist and diplomat Niccolò Machiavelli's shock-packed little book *The Prince* (1513) had much to do with this.

Page 35 - Machiavelli (1469-1527) exposed how the powerful think and the cunning approaches they use to achieve power, for all to see.

Niccolò Machiavelli - Moreover he was sent in various capacities to one or other locality within the State of Tuscany, and on twenty-three occasions he acted as legate on important embassies to foreign princes, e.g. to Catherine Sforza (1499), to France (1500, 1510, 1511), to the emperor (1507, 1509), to Rome (1503, 1506), to Cæsar Borgia (1502), to Gian Paolo Baglione at Perugia, to the Petrucci at Siena, and to Piombino. On these embassies **he gave evidence of wonderful keenness of observation and insight into the hidden thoughts of the men he was dealing with**, rather than of any great diplomatic skill.⁵

Page 35 - Machiavelli - "A good deceiver will always find one willing to be deceived."

⁵ Umberto Benigni, "[Niccolò Machiavelli](#)," *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: The Encyclopedia Press; The Universal Knowledge Foundation, 1907-1913) I:-XV.

Grove Art (Oxford) at Hieronymus Bosch –

The concept of threat plays a central part in Bosch's world view: the individual is attacked in his moral and spiritual integrity by his own impulses, rooted in sensuality, by the external world, and by supernatural forces of evil. Fear, both of material ruin and of spiritual damage, was a basic element of bourgeois culture c. 1500. The self was regarded as an extremely weak entity, constantly obliged to resist and remain firm. Hence the admiration for stern anchorites, who are strong, courageous, and self-contained. Along with the sense of the individual's weakness goes an obsession with *self-preservation* as the ideal of utilitarian wisdom. Folly is self-destructive, leading to eternal damnation and the company of devils, a state Bosch saw embodied in the lowest ranks of human society.

THE DISTINCTIVE WAY

VIRTUE (KNOW THYSELF)

Romano Guardini (1885-1968) – Then, what does VIRTUE mean? It means that the motives, the powers, the actions, and the being of man are gathered at any given time into a characteristic whole by a definitive moral value, an ethical dominant, so to speak.

1 Corinthians 2: For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God.¹¹ Among human beings, who knows what pertains to a person except the spirit of the person that is within? Similarly, no one knows what pertains to God except the Spirit of God.¹² **We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the things freely given us by God.**¹³ And we speak about them not with words taught by human wisdom, but with words taught by the Spirit, describing spiritual realities in spiritual terms.*⁶

* *In spiritual terms: the Spirit teaches spiritual people a new mode of perception (1 Cor 2:12) and an appropriate language by which they can share their self-understanding, their knowledge about what God has done in them.* The final phrase in 1 Cor 2:13 can also be translated “describing spiritual realities to spiritual people,” in which case it prepares for 1 Cor 2:14–16.

⁶ *New American Bible*, Revised Edition. (Washington, DC: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011), 1 Co 2:10–13.

DIALOGUE - ON PAYING ATTENTION

From the “Introduction” by Murphy, SJ and Padberg, SJ in *Memoriale* on what is meant by a DIALOGICAL spirituality – Page 2 – God intervenes to make known the divine will, while also aiding in its accomplishment; the daily remembrance of favors receives is a participation in the desire to know and do the will of God. Such remembrance enables Favre to discern the work he should undertake and reveals how he ought to pray. **His prayer is always a dialogue, and this is its most fundamental characteristic.** During the dialogue he has the trinitarian God as his primary partner, and secondarily the angels, the saints, and the souls in purgatory. **Favre conducts his side of the dialogue through desires and longings; the divine side causes him to experience spiritual motions which, when interpreted correctly, reveal themselves as signs, warnings, answer, favors, and so forth.** *But in order to interpret them correctly, Favre has to remember these motions, study and scrutinize them until they become unambiguous.* Yet even at this stage the process is itself a dialogue, since he is aided by God and the good spirit to interpret, to understand, and to discuss.

Pope Francis I (3 January 2014) – It was this restlessness that Peter Faber had, a man of great aspirations, another Daniel. **Faber was a “modest, sensitive man with a profound inner life. He was endowed with the gift of making friends with people from every walk of life”** (Benedict XVI, *Address to the Jesuits*, 22 April 2006). Yet his was also a restless, unsettled, spirit that was never satisfied. Under the guidance of St Ignatius he learned to unite his restless but also sweet – I would say exquisite – sensibility, with *the ability to make decisions*. He was a man with great aspirations; he was aware of his desires, he acknowledged them. Indeed for Faber, it is precisely when difficult things are proposed that the true spirit is revealed which moves one to action (cf. *Memoriale*, 301). **An authentic faith always involves a profound desire to change the world.**

HUMILITY (VS SELF-PREOCCUPATION)

A wise thought that I heard once: “Humility is not about thinking less of oneself; it is about thinking about oneself less.”

Jon Sweeney (2021), Page 60 – The difference between Faber and his two more famous friends rests, in part, on **a certain natural humility in Peter**. Xavier and Loyola were dark, gallant, and handsome; Faber was simple in appearance and demeanor. **He wanted to blend in.**

THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY – The virtue of humility may be defined: “A quality by which a person considering his own defects has a lowly opinion of himself and willingly submits himself to God and to others for God’s sake.” St. Bernard defines it: “A virtue by which a man knowing himself as he truly is, abases himself.” **These definitions coincide with that given by St. Thomas: “The virtue of humility”, he says, “Consists in keeping oneself within one’s own bounds, not reaching out to things above one, but submitting to one’s superior”** (*Summa Contra Gent.*, bk. IV, ch. lv, tr. Rickaby).⁷

The four cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, and all other moral virtues are annexed to these either as integral, potential, or subjective parts. **Humility is annexed to the virtue of temperance as a potential part, because temperance includes all those virtues that refrain or express the inordinate movements of our desires or appetites.** Humility is a repressing or moderating virtue **opposed to pride and vainglory** or that spirit within us which urges us to great things above our strength and ability, and therefore it is included in temperance just as meekness which represses anger is a part of the same virtue.⁸

ADDRESSING THE INNER TURMOIL/DISORDER

Plato in *Republic* taught that “the state is the soul writ large.” In other words, it can be too subtle and difficult a thing to achieve a sufficient self-knowledge. But if a person were to pay close attention to what is happening in the “us” of the State (Plato’s city-state), then what is being played out in a magnified way reveals what is happening within “us”, the people.

Abigail L. Rosenthal (2 December 2021) - Socrates draws a suggestive analogy. **Imagine that we’re trying to read a page of text but the letters are too small to decipher. If we are to read the letters, we’ll need to magnify them.** The thing we can look at that is closest in character to the psyche, but is an enlargement of its features, is the state. (In Plato’s time, the city-state.) If we can detect its salient features, we can get down to its individual members later.

⁷ Arthur Devine, [“Humility,”](#) *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: The Encyclopedia Press; The Universal Knowledge Foundation, 1907–1913) I:–XV.

⁸ Arthur Devine, [“Humility,”](#) *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: The Encyclopedia Press; The Universal Knowledge Foundation, 1907–1913) I:–XV.

Butler's Lives of the Saints: But Bd Peter saw clearly what both the emperor and high ecclesiastics could not or would not see, that what Germany needed was not so much discussions with heretics but a reformation in the life and discipline of Catholics, both clergy and lay-people. He was appalled by the state of the country in general and by the lethargy and ill-living of Catholics in particular, and he devoted himself to preaching and direction in Speyer and Ratisbon and Mainz; at the last-named place Peter Canisius, then a layman, made the Spiritual Exercises under his direction and was received into the Society of Jesus. The Catholicity of the Rhineland today is to a considerable degree due to the work and influence of Peter Favre from Savoy.

SWEETNESS OF DISPOSITION

The *Oxford English Dictionary* at "to charm" – 1.a. - c1380 – *transitive*. To act upon with or as with a charm or magic, so as to influence, control, subdue, bind, etc.; to put a spell upon; to bewitch, enchant. 5.a.- c1440 – *figurative*. To influence, enthrall, powerfully attract or engage (the mind, senses, etc.) by beauty, sweetness, or other attractive quality; to fascinate, captivate, bewitch, enchant, delight. In Shakespeare's time, still a strong metaphor from sense 1; but now, from constant use, applied without any thought of this connection.

Butler's Lives of the Saints – There was a grace and sweetness about Bd Peter that Father Simon Rodriguez met in no other man; "I am at a loss for words to express the way in which, by his lovable and pleasing manner, he earned everyone's good-will and affection and won all who met him to the love of God. **When he spoke of divine things it was as though he had the keys of men's hearts on his tongue, so powerfully did he move and attract them; and the love he inspired was equaled by the reverence they had for the sweet gravity and firm virtue which informed all he said.**"

UPPERMOST: PRESERVING UNITY OF MIND AND HEART

St. Peter Faber, SJ in a Letter to Alvaro Alfonso on Fraternal Charity (Spring 1542) – However, the Enemy has often learned to his hurt how great a good is peace and union of hearts among those who in Christ bind themselves to each other as members of one body. And so he bends every effort and ingenuity to attack it, attempting, by spreading his tares [bad seeds; weeds], to overwhelm this fruitful seed [of unity and peace] and to pull up, scatter, and destroy those whom God has linked together.

St. Peter Faber, SJ in a Letter to Laynez, SJ – “Anyone wanting to help the heretics of this age must be careful to have great charity for them and to love them in truth, banishing from his soul all considerations that would tend to chill his esteem for them. *We need to win their goodwill, so that they will love us and accord us a good place in their hearts.* This can be done by speaking familiarly with them about matters we both share in common and avoiding any debate in which one side tries to put down the other. We must establish communion in what unites us before doing so in what might evince differences of opinion. ... On another of his journeys, this time in the lovely alpine region of Savoy, his country, he and his party were arrested by a group of soldiers. Let us allow Faber to speak for himself: “Our Lord was favorable to us giving us the grace to converse with those who kept us in detention with profit for their souls. The captain himself wanted to confess and made his confession to me”.

Saint Peter Faber (Favre)

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Peter Faber (Favre) was Fr. Ignatius' first recruit. He was born on April 13, 1506, in the village of Villaret, Savoy. As a youth he shepherded his father's flock on the high pastures of the Alps and had no other education than what one receives at home. He was endowed, however, with an extraordinary memory; he could hear a sermon in the morning and then repeat it verbatim in the afternoon for his friends. He longed to go to school, but his family was too poor, and years later he wrote in his Memorial that in his sadness at not being able to study, he wept himself to sleep every night.

Peter's parents heard his weeping and finally acquiesced to his wishes and sent him in 1516 to a small school operated by the parish priest seven miles away. The 10-year-old quickly learned to read and write and the following year went to La Roche, a dozen miles away, where he remained until he went to the University of Paris in 1525.

Peter arrived in the French capital about October of that year and resided at the College of Sainte-Barbe, where his roommate was [Francis Xavier](#). Francis had just come from Navarre and was the same age as Peter. Both gave themselves to their studies, beginning with philosophy and advancing to theology. In October 1529, they accepted another roommate, [Ignatius of Loyola](#), who had been in Paris for over a year, and of whom it was said that whoever came into contact with him invariably changed for the better.

Ignatius had difficulties with Greek so Peter tutored him in Aristotle. While Peter served as Ignatius' guide in academic matters, Ignatius served as Peter's guide in spiritual matters. Now in his mid-twenties, Peter was still undecided about his future. Should he be a lawyer? A teacher? A priest? A monk? It was while living in Paris that he learned of Ignatius' plan to follow Christ. This was what Peter needed to give direction to his life. Under Ignatius' influence he decided to become a priest, and shortly before his ordination Ignatius led him through the Spiritual Exercises for a period of thirty days....

On August 15, 1534, the feast of our Lady's assumption, Ignatius and his six companions met in the crypt of the Chapel of Saint-Denis on Montmartre, and while Fr. Faber celebrated Mass—he was the only priest among them—each pronounced his vows....

When Ignatius returned to Spain for a period of convalescence, Fr. Faber was left in charge of the group. They left Paris in November 1536 and arrived in Venice in January of the following year to find that Ignatius had arrived before them. While waiting for the sailing season to the Holy Land to open, they worked in two of the city's hospitals. In March Ignatius sent Fr. Faber and the others to Rome to request Pope Paul III's approval of their proposed journey. Though His Holiness readily granted their request, he at the same time informed them that it was unlikely that the group would get there, because war with the Turks seemed imminent. Fr. Faber and companions returned to Venice; since the pope's fears proved correct, he and Ignatius directed their steps toward Rome in November to offer their services to the pope. The pope responded by appointing Fr. Faber to Rome's Sapienza University, where he lectured on theology and Scripture until May 1539.

[After a stay in Parma, Fr. Faber] was instructed to accompany Dr. Pedro Ortiz, Emperor Charles V's representative to the religious colloquy to be held between Catholics and Protestants at Worms in Germany. They arrived in Worms in late October, and though it was a Lutheran city Fr. Faber set about preaching, hearing confessions, and giving the Exercises. The colloquy was late in starting and when it did begin on January 14, 1541, it lasted only four days, for the emperor then transferred it to Ratisbon (today's Regensburg). Fr. Faber moved to Ratisbon in February and spent the next six months working among the Catholic faithful there. He was not directly involved in the theological discussions, but he followed them closely and sent letters to Fr. Ignatius describing the events taking place in the city. Fr. Faber had more requests from priests, prelates, and princes to make the Spiritual Exercises than he himself could handle, and he wrote Fr. Ignatius that there was enough work in Ratisbon for ten more Jesuits. The colloquy's momentum, unfortunately, began to slow down and when it came time to discuss the Eucharist and Christ's real presence, a point bitterly disputed among the

participants, the colloquy collapsed and the emperor's fond hope of unifying the Catholics and Protestants met a sad end....

In July 1544 Fr. Faber was assigned to Portugal at the request of King John III, who wanted him to pursue establishing the Society in that country. Fr. Faber spent the next two years in Portugal and Spain. Then in the spring of 1546, Pope Paul appointed him one of the papal theologians at the ecumenical council being held at Trent. Fr. Faber again had to set about traveling, but his health was greatly weakened from the frequent bouts of fever that he had suffered over the past years. He wanted to visit Fr. Ignatius before going to Trent in northern Italy so he sailed from Barcelona and made his way to Rome, arriving on July 17. He had not seen Ignatius for seven years and their greeting was as warm as the Italian sun above them. Before Fr. Faber had a chance to set out for Trent, the fever again attacked him. Though only 40 years old, he knew that his end was coming and waited for it peacefully. On July 31 he made his confession, and on the morning of August 1 he heard Mass and received the last sacraments. That afternoon, while in the company of Fr. Ignatius, the gentle Fr. Faber went to God in the company of the angels to whom he was singularly devoted. Fr. Faber was buried in the church of Our Lady of the Way in Rome, but when the church of the Gesù was being erected in 1569 on the site of the former church, Fr. Faber's remains and those of other early Jesuits were reinterred.

On September 5, 1872, Pope Pius IX, acknowledging the cult that had been paid to Peter Faber in his native Savoy, confirmed it by apostolic decree and declared that he was among the blessed in heaven. Pope Francis announced the canonization of Peter Faber on December 17, 2013. Peter Faber's memorial is celebrated on August 2.

Prayer

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, you revealed yourself to Peter Faber, your humble servant, in prayer and in the service of his neighbor. Grant that we may find you and love you in everything and in every person. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,

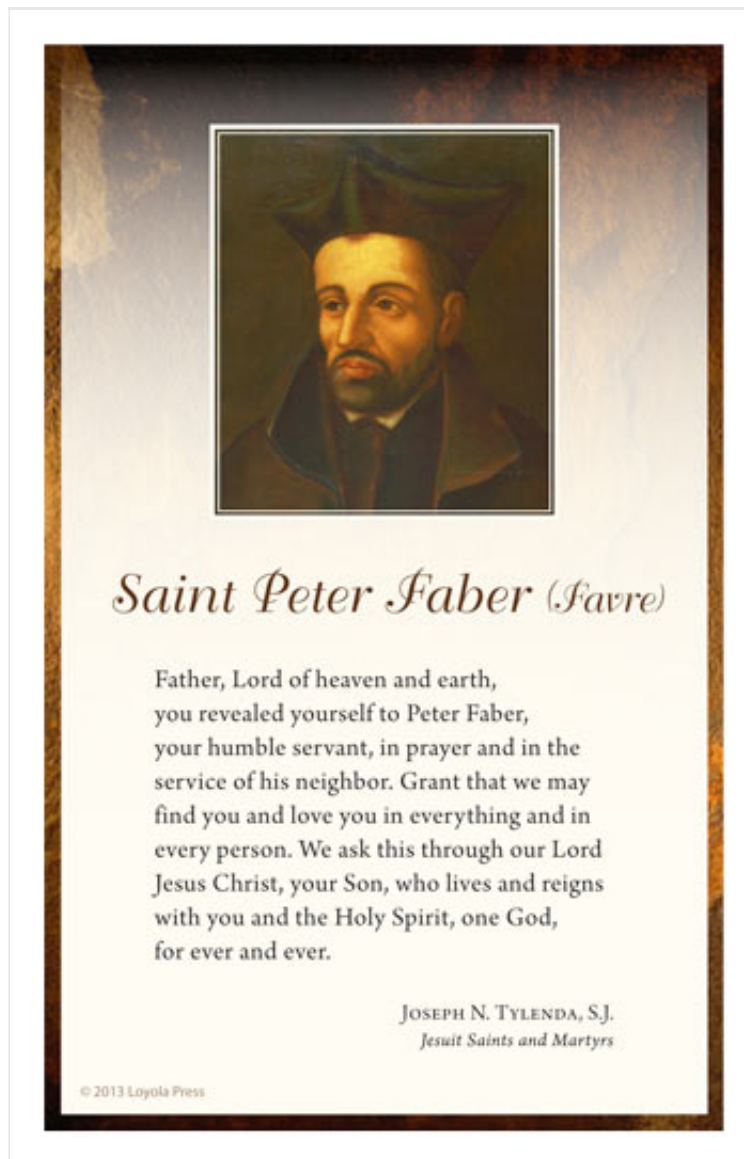
your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

by Joseph N. Tylenda, SJ

Jesuit Saints and Martyrs, 2nd Edition © 1998 Loyola Press

Prayer Card

[Download a PDF of this prayer to share in your parish or school.](#)



Activities and Other Resources

Activities for Celebrating Peter Faber

Introducing Students to the “Quiet Jesuit,” Peter Faber

Peter Faber Activity Session for Older Students

Prayer for Detachment

by Peter Faber

Who was Pierre Favre?

by Jim Martin, America Magazine

Related Reading

The Quiet Companion

Mary Purcell, Paperback



In *The Quiet Companion*, by the noted Irish historian Mary Purcell, Peter Faber, the importance of his works, and the upheaval of the times in which he lived are brought to life.



The Italian Peninsula in 1499

- Crown of Aragon
 - Duchy of Milan
 - Florentine Republic
 - Habsburg Monarchy
 - House of Savoy
 - Kingdom of France
 - Kingdom of Sicily
 - Kingdom of Hungary
 - Most Serene Republic of Venice
 - Old Swiss Confederacy
 - Papal States
- All other colors are arbitrary

- B: Bishopric
- C: County
- Co: Commune
- D: Duchy
- M: Margraviate
- L: Lordship
- R: Republic
- P: Principality

Country Abbreviations

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Republic of Ancona 2. Bishopric of Augsburg 3. Archduchy of Austria 4. Lordship of Bologna 5. Bishopric of Brixen 6. County of Carpegna 7. Margraviate of Ceva 8. Lordship of Dolceacqua 9. Margraviate of Finale 10. Bishopric of Freising 11. Republic of Geneva 12. Bishopric of Lausanne 13. Lordship of Loano 14. Margraviate of Lunigiana 15. County of Masserno 16. Lordship of Mirandola 17. County of Monaco 18. Margraviate of Montferrat 19. County of Neuchâtel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Republic of Noli 21. Lordship of Novellara 22. Principality of Oneglia 23. Principality of Orange 24. The Papal States 25. Lordship of Pesaro 26. County of Piombino 27. Republic of Poljicka 28. Bishopric of Regensburg 29. Lordship of Rimini 30. Bishopric of Salzburg 31. Republic of San Marino 32. Lordship of Savona 33. City of Senigallia 34. Commune of Siben Komoin 35. County of Sovana 36. County of Vaduz 37. County of Ventimiglia 38. County of Vernio |
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Subdivision Abbreviations

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| <p><i>Florentine Republic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bagno b. Barga c. Borgo Santo d. Cortona <p><i>Most Serene Republic of Venice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bassano b. Brazza c. Cherso d. Cologna e. Crema <p><i>Old Swiss Confederacy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Appenzell b. Bern c. Engelberg d. Freie Ämter e. Glarus f. Gruyère g. League of God's House | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Romagna f. San Gimignano g. Val d' Arno h. Val di Nievole <p><i>Kingdom of Hungary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baranya b. Dubica c. Komárom d. Verocb <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Dogado g. Feltre h. Polesine i. Ravenna j. Veglia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> h. League of the Ten Jurisdictions i. Saint-Gallen j. Sargans k. Unterwalden l. Zug m. Zürich |
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SAINT PETER FABER