

crisscrossed Germany successfully loaded down with the Tridentine tomes—250 pages each—not to mention the three sacks of books he took along for his own university.

With the success of this mission, Peter quickly produced two new versions of a Catholic catechism: a Shorter Catechism for middle school students which concentrated on helping this age group choose good over evil by concentrating on a different virtue each day of the week; and a Shortest Catechism for young children which included prayers for morning and evening, for mealtimes, and so forth to get them used to praying. These two new versions did not supplant the original Catechism he produced which presented true Catholic beliefs undistorted by fanatics.

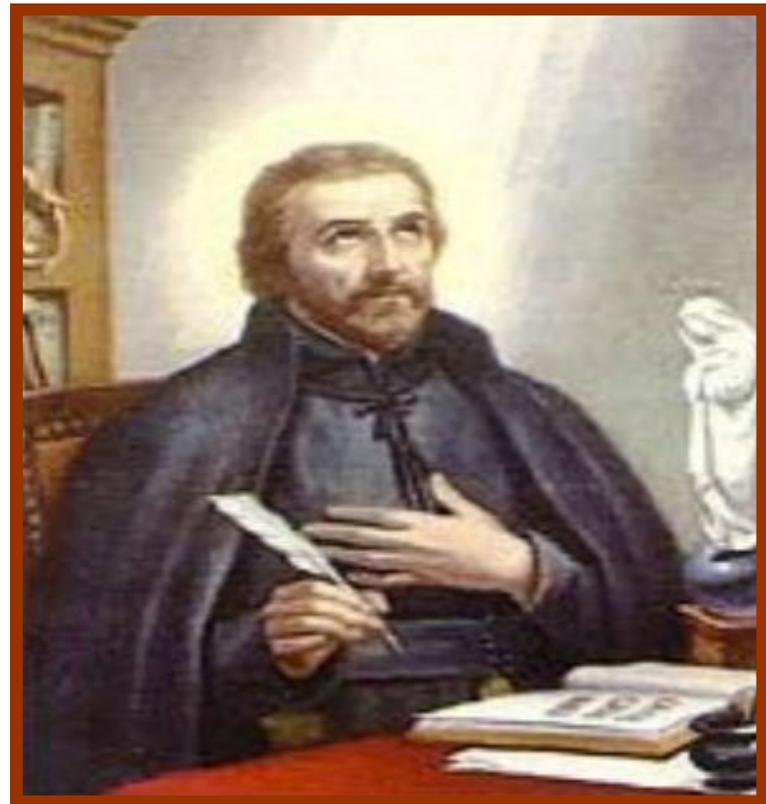
Saint Peter Canisius died on 21 December 1597. He was beatified by Blessed Pius IX in the year 1864, and later canonized and declared a Doctor of the Church on 21 May 1925 by Pope Pius XI. His feast day was included in the General Roman Calendar in 1926 for celebration on 27 April (Latin Rite). In 1969, it was moved to 21 December (Novus Ordo), the anniversary of his death, the normal day for celebrating a saint's entry into heaven.

Peter Canisius lived in the age of Reformation and dedicated much of his work to the clarification of the Catholic faith in light of the new Protestant doctrines. His lasting contribution are his three catechisms, which he published in Latin and German, and became widespread and popular in Catholic regions. * (excerpted from: www.catholic.org)

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Saint Peter Canisius

Feast Day: April 27



Prayer:

Saint Peter Canisius, you saw the good in even the most troublesome of people.
You found their talents and used them.
Help me to see beyond the behavior of others that may bother me,
to the gifts God has given them.
Amen.

Saint Peter Canisius

*Peter Kanis was born on 8 May 1521 at Nijmegen, in the Duchy of Guelders (until 1549 part of the Spanish Netherlands within the Holy Roman Empire, now the Netherlands). In the University of Cologne, he met Blessed Peter Faber, one of the founders of the Society of Jesus. Saint Peter Canisius became the first Dutchman to join the Jesuit order in 1543.

Through his work in the order, he became one of the most influential Catholics of his time. He supervised the founding and maintenance of the early German Jesuit Colleges, often with little resources at hand. Because of his frequent travels between the colleges, a tedious and dangerous occupation at that time, he became known as the Second Apostle of Germany.

Saint Peter Canisius also exerted a strong influence on Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I; he ceaselessly reminded Ferdinand of the imminent danger to his soul should he concede more rights to Protestants in return for their military support. When Peter Canisius sensed a very real danger of Ferdinand's son and heir, King Maximilian, openly declaring himself a protestant, he convinced Emperor Ferdinand to threaten disinheritance should Maximilian desert the Catholic Faith.

While an important Jesuit who fought against the spread of Protestantism in Germany, Austria, Bohemia Moravia (Czech Republic) and Switzerland, it is the restoration of the Catholic Church in Germany after the Reformation that is most attributable to his work. An

influential teacher and preacher, especially through his "German catechism", a book that defined the basic principles of Catholicism in the German language and found many readers in German-speaking countries. He was offered the post of bishop of Vienna, but declined in order to continue his travelling and teachings. However, he was administrator of the Diocese of Vienna from 1554 to 1555 and main pulpit spokesman in Augsburg Cathedral from 1559 to 1568, where he strongly witnessed to his faith on three or four occasions each week. His preaching was said to have been so convincing that it attracted hundreds of Protestants back to the old faith. He was one of the main theologians at the Colloquy of Worms in 1557.

By the time he left Germany in 1590, the Jesuit order in Germany had evolved from almost nothing into a powerful tool of the Counter Reformation. Canisius spent the last twenty years of his life in Fribourg, Switzerland, where he founded the Jesuit preparatory school, the Collège Saint Michel, that prepared generations of young men for careers and future university studies, and under cantonal administration continues to exist as a coeducational preparatory institution.

In 1565, the Vatican was looking for a secret agent. It was shortly after the Council of Trent and the pope wanted to get the decrees of the Council to all the European bishops. At 43, he was a well-known Jesuit and this gave a cover as official "visitor" of Jesuit foundations. Peter traveled from Rome and