

*Novena to St Peter Chanel*  
*for vocations to*  
*The Society of Mary*



2016

The custom in the Society of Mary is that the nine days leading up to the Feast of St Peter Chanel are dedicated to Prayer for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. You are invited to pray during this novena for Vocations to The Society of Mary. The prayers and reflections in this booklet can be used individually, in a group setting or as part of community prayer.

**The structure of each day is:**

- A Quote from Peter Chanel
- Intercessions for various needs in the church
- A Prayer for vocations(Choose one)

**Prayer for vocations**

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, in joy, and in fraternal 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. **Amen**

**OR**

**Prayer for vocations:**

Lord Jesus you gave the church St Peter Chanel to Marists and the people of Oceania as an example of gentleness, compassion and love in action. Welcome many young men and women into the Marist Family, as priests, brothers and sisters. Help us 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 through the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

**Prayer to Mary:**

Mary mother of the church and our mother choose more young men and women to follow Jesus your son in religious life and priesthood and to bear your name as members of your Society. **Amen**



Quotes are taken from: *Ever Your Poor Brother Peter Chanel :Surviving Letters and Futuna Journal*. Presented by WJ Stuart & A Ward. APM. Rome. 1991

## Day One: 19th of April

**2 May 1838, Futuna. Letter from Fr Chanel  
to Fr Bataillon in Wallis.**

*On arrival by boat from Uvea, Chanel witnessed a killing between  
locals, there in the surf.*



'We dropped anchor at nine on Friday evening.... The attacker (in the water), instead of embracing his victim, grabbed him firmly by the arm, and waited for reinforcements. Soon his other arm was seized, then a third man coolly speared him several times in the belly. He was finally struck a blow on the forehead with an axe and let to drop. In spite of the heavy loss of blood, he kept on swimming for all he was worth, but since he was swimming out backwards, he headed away from the shore, and was lost in the waves.' (page 158)

### **Intercessions:**

Lord, from the earliest days St Peter knew the possibility of a violent death. Give courage to missionaries today who work in hostile communities and constant danger.

***Lord, hear us.***

From the island of Futuna, Peter Chanel encouraged the young people of the college of Belley to support the spread of the Gospel. May he intercede for college and university students, that from among them many will hear and answer the call to Marist life.

***Lord, hear us.***

For those young people sensing God's call to the priesthood or to a special consecration: that they might encounter the support and encouragement they need to respond positively to that invitation.

***Lord, hear us.***

That Marists strive to create the conditions that permit many young people to say "yes" in response to God's loving call.

***Lord, hear us***

**Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Two: 20th of April

**22 May 1838 Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Bataillon.**

*A British whaling ship had called at Poi, to buy provisions.*



'Once the row-boat from the ship was moored, the market opened. These poor people gave away their produce rather than sold it, masses of coconuts going for a pipe, three sizeable pigs and a hundred yams fetched a rifle. As luck would have it, they only bought three (rifles).... I was very sorry indeed to see guns and powder arrive on this side of the island, because the peace recently concluded will not last long.' (page163-4)

### **Intercessions:**

That in the meeting of cultures, all exploitation and domination may be carefully avoided.

***Lord, hear us.***

St Peter Chanel was inflamed by God's love to proclaim the Gospel to the peoples of Oceania. May his example stir up a similar desire in the hearts of the young.

***Lord, hear us.***

That lay and professed Marists by their lives of faith might proclaim the divine call to younger generations.

***Lord, hear us.***

We pray for the young; that inspired by the appealing beauty of divine love, many will follow the call to serve as religious and priests.

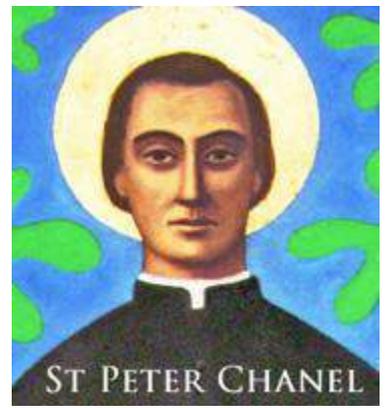
***Lord, hear us.***

### **Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Three: 21st of April

22May 1838 Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Bataillon

*Chanel gives more detail about passing whaling ships buying provisions.*



'What I was sorriest to see go, was a fine billy goat, a nanny and a kid... For another thing the dogs of Sigave eat the young of any tame goats. This is a real catastrophe for my poor goats. One of my two turkeys also died of hunger in Alo, while Marie Nizier was away.... And a superb goose was sold to the American ship the Walter Scott. How many misfortunes attend every passing ship, especially for the animals.' (page163)

### **Intercessions:**

We pray for an adequate and just distribution of food and all the resources that you have generously given to us.

***Lord, hear us.***

St Peter Chanel drew strength from prayer, God's Word and the sacraments. May his intercession and example strengthen those missioned to serve their neighbour.

***Lord, hear us.***

That each one of us will deepen our self-offering and openness to the love of God through prayer, reflection on the Word and in the Eucharist.

***Lord, hear us.***

We pray that young people be open to God's love so the seed of vocation, especially priestly and religious vocations, may germinate in the soil of their self-offering.

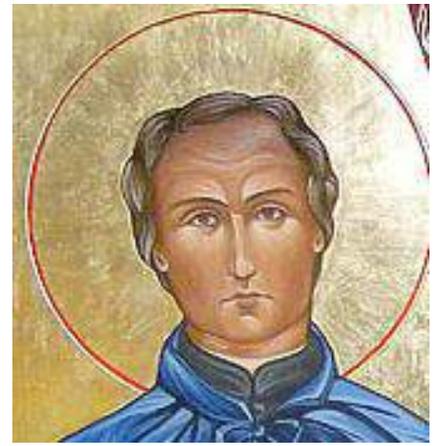
***Lord, hear us.***

### **Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Four: 22nd of April

**22 May 1838 Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Bataillon**

*Chanel sends encouragement to the Brother who works with  
Bataillon*



Convey my kind regards once again to Brother Joseph-Xavier. I have every confidence that he will remain in the same dispositions as when I left you (to disembark in Futuna). Besides the good of his soul, to be prized by all else, he knows well that this is a means of gladdening the whole of the Society of Mary.' (page 164)

### **Intercessions:**

For all who follow Jesus; that we might grow in love of the Lord and our response to his call will be complete and deeply joyful.

**Lord, hear us.**

Compelled by God's love, St Peter Chanel offered himself to preach the Gospel to the people of Futuna. May all priests and religious mirror that divine love in their lives.

**Lord, hear us.**

That all young men and women will experience God's love; may they live joyful lives fully given and lived out in service of others.

**Lord, hear us.**

We pray that many young people will answer the Lord's call to special consecration through priestly ordination and the profession of the evangelical counsels.

**Lord, hear us.**

**Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Five: 23rd of April

**22 May 1838 Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Bataillon.**

*Marie Nizier and Chanel have little privacy and they have difficulties with language.*



'Brother Marie-Nizier and I are still living in (a corner of) the king's house. The numerous wedding feasts have prevented his Majesty from getting on with (building) our house. I have no idea how long this provisional arrangement will last. The crowd is still all over us and we can do very little work. I am forever confusing a large number of words - despite your efforts in teaching me. The principal reason (for the confusion) is that there are so many letter s's among the words.' (page 164)

### **Intercessions:**

We pray for priests and religious; that advocating for those who suffer and are in greatest need they might inspire their faith communities to work for justice and peace.

**Lord, hear us.**

St Peter Chanel ministered to the sick and infirm on Futuna; his kindness and sacrifice showed them God's love for them and they came to know the Lord. May we follow his example of practical love.

**Lord, hear us.**

For those who suffer and are in need; that the Lord will call many young men and women to be builders of communion and sowers of hope.

**Lord, hear us.**

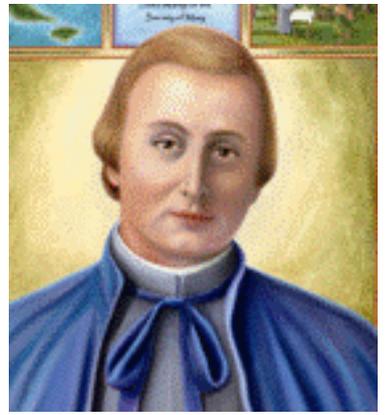
Set on fire by God's love for them, may many young people answer the call to minister that love to people in the priesthood and religious life.

**Lord, hear us**

**Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Six: 24th of April

21 June 1838. Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Bataillon.



'At long last, I have had the consolation of conferring holy Baptism on a little sick boy. I christened him Marie-Marcellin, to bear the name of one of the two martyr brothers whose feast we celebrated on 18 June, a blessed day for this child. Brother Marie-Nizier was in Sigave, and has brought me back a small kid. That leaves only a nanny-goat and a little billy-goat still needed... I don't know when I shall be able to send you a little herd.' (page168)

### **Intercessions:**

For all Christian families: that in the day to day tasks of the home, sharing and generosity, they might help their members to see the Gospel in practice, and the beauty and value of priesthood and consecrated life.

**Lord, hear us.**

Peter Chanel first learned of God's love and call from his family. May his example and prayer inspire children to dedicate their lives to proclaiming the Gospel.

**Lord, hear us.**

We pray for parents growing their families as "communities of life and love"; that they might encourage their children to consider the priesthood and religious life.

**Lord, hear us.**

That young people will consider each Christian vocation: single life, marriage, parenthood, priesthood and consecrated life and discern the path to which the Lord is calling them.

**Lord, hear us.**

**Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Seven: 25th of April



16 May 1839. Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Jean-Claude Colin.

'It is with inexpressible joy that, after a stay of eighteen months in Futuna (the 'u' is pronounced 'oo'), with young Brother Marie-Nizier, I finally received a visit from the first reinforcement of apostolic workers that you were kind enough to send out here to help us. (Arriving) on the eve of the Ascension... these dear confreres sprang such a pleasant surprise on me. We said five Masses on the feast.' (page 169)

### Intercessions:

We thank you Lord for our Marist community. As individuals and as a group, may we support and encourage one another in our Faith.

**Lord, hear us.**

Peter Chanel gave his life to speak the Word where it had not been heard. Through his example and prayer may young men and women offer themselves to spread the Gospel.

**Lord, hear us.**

May our local communities become more and more “manifestations of the Love of God”: may young people be inspired to serve in the priesthood and religious life.

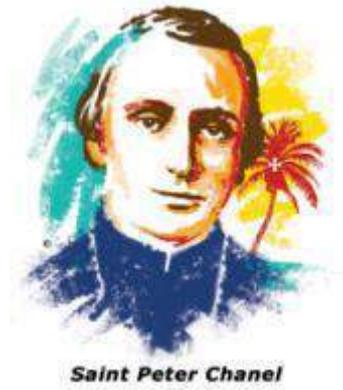
**Lord, hear us.**

We pray for those discerning a calling to serve the Lord and his people as priests or religious. May they receive the counsel and support they need.

**Lord, hear us.**

**Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Eight: 26th of April



**16 May 1839. Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Jean-Claude Colin.**

'The island is not yet Christian; apart from my lack of zeal, there are a thousand and one fears and prejudices to be dispelled.... The king and most of the chiefs are reputed to have gods that descend on them... inspiring fear. Twenty baptisms, four of which were adults and the rest children, and all in danger of death, make up the entire harvest I have reaped in eighteen months.' (p171)

### **Intercessions:**

For all those young people who are trying to decide what to do with their lives: that they grow in knowledge and love of the Lord, and clearly hear his voice amid all the voices of their daily life.

**Lord, hear us.**

The young Peter Chanel overcame discouragement after praying for light and comfort. May all Marists encourage and guide the young into a deeper love of prayer, scripture and the Eucharist.

**Lord, hear us.**

We pray that the Lord will call many young people to serve the Church in religious life. May they learn of "the beauty of a life spent fully in service of the Kingdom".

**Lord, hear us.**

For those young people called to be religious: that they might grow in faith and friendship with the Lord and hear clearly His invitation to them.

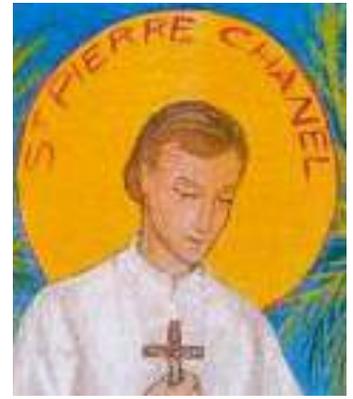
**Lord, hear us.**

**Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Day Nine: 27th of April

16 May 1839. Futuna. Fr Chanel to Fr Jean-Claude Colin.

'The (recent) arrival (the reinforcement group) of confreres produced the best possible effect on everybody. The natives are happy to listen to us. All are anxious to see the newcomers and ask their names without respite. We see tears welling up in the eyes of some, when we speak to them about the interest and friendship that there is for them in France. Then we hear acclamations of 'malie Falani', 'the French are good', which go on interminably. ' (page171)



### **Intercessions:**

We thank you Lord for the many missionaries who have come to our country from overseas, and who still come to sustain and build the church here.

**Lord, hear us.**

For priests, especially Marist priests: that their lives and ministry might witness to the limitless love that precedes, sustains and calls them along the path of life.

**Lord, hear us.**

For Marist seminarians: may they experience God's free gift of love and dedicate themselves to love and serve his people in the priesthood.

**Lord, hear us.**

Full of the love of God, Peter Chanel gladly sacrificed his life to preach the Gospel: through his intercession and following his example may all Marists act with a sense of love and service.

**Lord, hear us**

**Daily Prayer to Peter Chanel (Pg.1)**

## Prayer to St Peter Chanel

O God, who for the spreading of Your Church crowned Saint Peter Chanel with martyrdom.

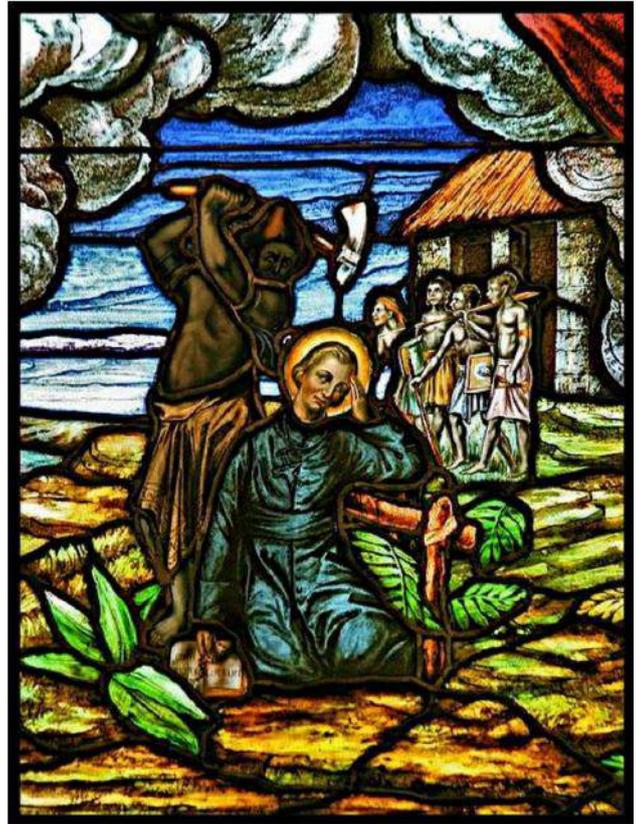
Grant that, in these days of paschal joy, we may so celebrate the mysteries of

Christ's Death and Resurrection

as to bear worthy witness to newness of life.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.



**Born:** 12 July 1803 at Cuet, Ain, France

**Ordained:** 15 July 1827, France

**Professed:** 24 September 1836, France

**Died:** 28 April 1841 at Poi, Uvea, Futuna

**Body:** Recovered and taken back to France in 1842

**Venerated:** 25 November 1888 by Pope Leo XIII (decree of martyrdom)

**Beatified:** 17 November 1889 by Pope Leo XIII

**Canonized:** 12 June 1954 by Pope Pius XII

**Relics:** Returned to The Island of Futuna in 1977



Society of Mary New Zealand  
Vocations Coordinator  
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