



Essential Evangelization

St. Paul of the Cross

Can you believe this man wrote the name of Jesus into his chest with a hot iron and walked barefoot on missionary journeys to experience the Passion of Christ more intimately! His feast day was this past week, October 20th. At the age of 26, Saint Paul of the Cross, had a series of prayer experiences that sold him on a life of evangelism to promote the love of God as revealed in the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Born Paolo Francesco Danei to a wealthy and pious family in a small town in northern Italy, Paul of the Cross is considered to be one of the great Catholic mystics of the 18th century. At 19 years of age Paul experienced a conversion that led him into a life of prayer. He even renounced the offer of an honorable marriage and a good inheritance from a rich uncle to consecrate his life to God.

St Paul was inflamed with a desire to know God as revealed through the Passion and Death of Jesus. He was even given a mystical vision of a scourge whip with the word "LOVE" written upon each of the thongs. Paul had a passion for the conversion of souls and would go from town to town preaching missions on the Passion. Followers of Paul formed a new order, the *Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ*, who later became known as the *Passionists*. The devil and even the Church of the time made things difficult for Paul, but he persevered in his inspired goal and passion. God was pleased with Paul's heroic sacrifices and devotion to Him, and many extraordinary miracles were performed through his intercession and prayers.

Saint Paul of the Cross was canonized in 1867, and his body lays today in the Basilica of SS. John and Paul in Rome. Today there are almost 2200 Passionists in 59 nations on the five continents, preaching missions and retreats on the love of God, converting souls and changing lives. For more information regarding the Passionists and local opportunities for retreats, check out www.passionists.org.

"Look upon the face of the Crucified, who invites you to follow Him. He will be a Father, Mother ---- everything to you."

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*This is one of a series of articles
on Evangelization from the
Evangelization Committee*