

fourth, that if delivering their own persons to the overlords, if necessary, to ransom Christians.

The Order spread rapidly, Peter and his comrades traveled throughout Christian Spain, recruiting new members and collecting funds to purchase the captives. Then they began negotiations with the slave-owners. They penetrated Andalusia, crossed the sea to Tunis and Morocco, and brought home cargo after cargo of Christians. Although Peter, as general of the Order, was occupied with its organization and administration, he made two trips to Africa where, besides liberating captives, he converted many Moors.

After a long illness, Peter died on Christmas night of 1256. He was canonized by Pope Urban VIII in 1628 who ordered his feast day to be kept on January 31. This was later moved to January 28. He is inscribed in the Roman Martyrology, the official list of saints, on December 25, the day of his death according to tradition. His Order continues its religious services, now devoted to preaching and hospital service.

*(excerpted from: www.magnificat.ca; [//catholicarboroffaithandmorals.com](http://catholicarboroffaithandmorals.com); [//en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org))

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Saint Peter Nolasco

Feast Day: January 28



For the Ransom of Christian Captives

Saint Peter Nolasco

*Peter Nolasco was born at Recaud, near Carcassonne, in France, of noble parents in 1189. His distinguishing virtue was the love of his neighbor, which seemed to be presaged by this incident that when he was a babe in his cradle, a swarm of bees one day lighted upon him, and formed a honey-comb on his right hand. He lost his parents early in life.

The Albigensian heresy was, at that time, making its way into France. Peter withdrew into Spain after having sold his estates. This gave him an opportunity of fulfilling a vow at our Lady's of Mount Serrat, which he had made some time previous. After this, he went to Barcelona where the Moors still held much of Spain, and in sudden raids from the sea they carried off thousand of Christians, holding them as slaves in Granada and in their citadels along the African coast.

Peter spent the fortune he had inherited in ransoming the Christian captives from the slavery of their enemies. He was obsessed with the thought of their suffering, and desired

to sell his own person to deliver his brethren and take their chains upon himself. God made it known how agreeable that desire was to Him.

Due to the large sums of money he expended, Peter became penniless. He was without resources and powerless, when the Blessed Virgin appeared to him and said to him: "Find for me other men like yourself, an army of brave, generous, unselfish men, and send them into the lands where the children of the Faith are suffering."

Peter went at once to Saint Raymond of Pennafort, his confessor, who had had a similar revelation and used his influence with King James I of Aragon and with Berengarius, Archbishop of Barcelona, to obtain approbation and support for the new community. On August 10, 1218, Peter and two companions were received as the first members of the Order of Our Lady of Ransom, dedicated to the recovery of Christian captives. To the three traditional vows of religion, its members joined a