

Memorial JANUARY 14

## **BLESSED PETER DONDEERS, PRIEST**

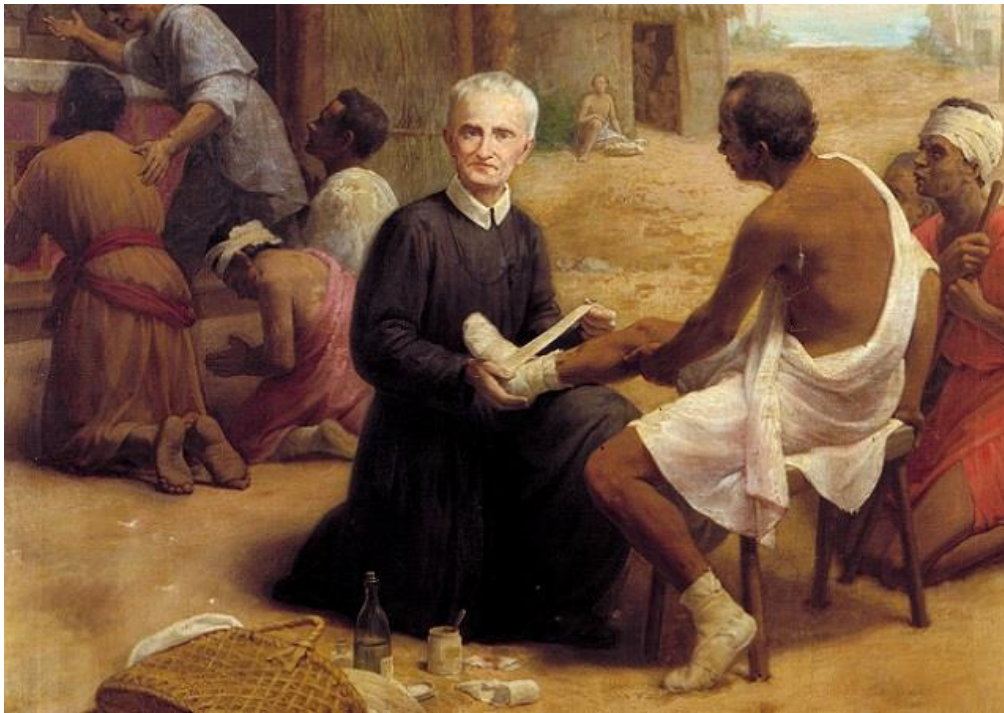
PETER DONDEERS WAS BORN IN TILBURG IN HOLLAND on October 27, 1809. From his youth, he felt himself called to the priesthood, but because of the poverty of his family, his schooling was cut short so he could take up the weaver's trade of his father. This did not prevent him from teaching catechism to children in his free time. He also had a good influence on young people his age. At the age of twenty-two, with the help of his parish priest, he entered the minor seminary of St. Michael Gestel as a seminarian and part-time worker, thus paying for his room and board. He was ordained a priest on June 5, 1841. He was able to follow his missionary vocation, setting out for Suriname, which was then a Dutch colony.

For the next fourteen years, his base of ministry was in the city of Paramaribo where he dedicated himself to some 2,000 resident Catholics and also regularly visited the slaves of the plantations (around 8,000 of them in the

Paramaribo area of some 40,000 in all of Suriname), as well as the military garrisons and the native Indians and black slaves along the rivers. In 1856, he offered himself as a volunteer for the government leprosarium of Batavia, where he remained, with the exception of a few short intervals, for the next twenty-eight years, caring for the residents bodily and spiritually. He left them, only for a few months in 1866, when he asked to join the Redemptorists to whom Pope Pius IX had confided the Apostolic Vicariate of Suriname. He was invested with the religious habit on November 1 of that year and professed his vows on June 24, 1867.

Religious profession, in associating him with a missionary congregation, gave him a more vivid sense of the apostolic life in community, allowing him to leave Batavia more often to give himself to the conversion of the native Indians and black slaves. But the name of Donders remained bound to the leprosarium of Batavia. He died among his lepers, poor among the poor, on January 14, 1887, mourned as their benefactor and invoked as a

saint. Pope John Paul II beatified him in St. Peter's on May 23, 1982, during the 250th jubilee year of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.





remain dead; to hate your neighbour is to be a murderer, and murderers, as you know, do not have eternal life in them. This has taught us love - that he gave up his life for us; and we, too, ought to give up our lives for one another.

If a man who was rich enough in this world's goods saw that one of his brothers or sisters was in need, but closed his heart to them, how could the love of God be living in him?

My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 112

*R. The Lord loves those who give with joy.*

Happy the man who fears the Lord.  
who takes delight in all his commands.  
His children shall be powerful on earth;  
the children of the upright are blessed. **R.**

Riches and wealth are in his house;  
his justice stands firm for ever.  
He is light in the darkness for the upright;  
he is generous, merciful and just. **R.**

The good man takes pity and lends,  
he conducts his affairs with honor,  
The just man will never waver:  
he will be remembered for ever. **R.**

He has no fear of evil news;  
with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord.  
With a steadfast heart he will not fear;  
he will see the downfall of his foes. **R.**

Open-handed, he gives to the poor;  
his justice stands firm for ever.  
His head will be raised in glory. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 13:34

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I give you a new commandment,  
that you love one another,  
just as I have loved you.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

## GOSPEL

Matthew 22:34-40

*You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself.*

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

At that time when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ On these two hang all the law and the prophets.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Presider :

Blessed Peter Donders was a man who devoted his priestly life to caring for the sick, particularly the lepers and the outcasts. May his example stir in our hearts compassion and love, and enable us to see Christ in those in need.

Response: *Lord, hear us, we pray.*

1. For the Redemptorists, that they may pursue the Church's mission to the poor and abandoned with the same zeal of Blessed Peter Donders. We pray to the Lord. **R.**
2. For world leaders, that they may work in partnership with God's plans to bring peace, reconciliation and relief to suffering nations. We pray to the Lord. **R.**
3. For young men and women, that they may respond courageously to God's call to religious life. We pray to the Lord. **R.**
4. For the poor, the sick and the marginalized, that they may experience God's providential care through the



generosity of His people. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

5. For our own community, that the missionary life of Blessed Peter Donders may inspire us to build a caring community that welcomes all people. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

Presider :

Father, as we commend our prayers to you, we pray that we may imitate the selflessness of Blessed Peter Donders and his unfailing trust in God to be of greater service to the Church. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

God, our Father, accept our gifts in this memorial of the infinite love of your Son, and through the intercession of your saints, strengthen us in generous dedication to you and to our brothers and sisters. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## PREFACE

Priest : The Lord be with you.

People : And with your spirit.

Priest : Lift up your hearts.

People : We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest : Let us give thanks to the Lord our  
God.

People : It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in the Saints who consecrated themselves to Christ for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, it is right to celebrate the wonders of your providence, by which you call human nature back to its original holiness and bring it to experience on this earth the gifts you promise in the new world to come.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim:

Communion Antiphon Jn 15:13  
No one has greater love than this, to lay down  
one's life for one's friends.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O God, you have made us companions at your table, grant that we may imitate the example of Blessed Peter Donders, who devoted himself to you with his whole heart and gave himself untiringly for the good of your people.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen