

## Morning Prayer on St. Joseph Freinademetz' Feast day



### Opening prayer:

Heavenly father, we thank you for this bright dawn and the precious life of each one of us. Thank you for bringing us together in this holy place to sing your glory. We thank you for your blessings and graces that you have bestowed on us.

Thank you for the gift St. Joseph Freinademetz - a zealous missionary and role our model of missionaries. St. Joseph was a man of prayer, who prayed without growing weary. Prayer was the air he breathed and the joy of his life. His love for the neighbors, enthusiasm and willingness to sacrifice for the welfare of others, as well as his profound religiosity is very inspiring.

O Holy Spirit, you guided St. Joseph to do the will of the Father at all circumstances, we also invoke you in our midst through his intercession that we may become the persons of prayer and adapt the cultures of the land wherever we are send. May we have the courage like St. Freinademetz, to go ahead when we are faced with immense odds and hardships to live out our call faithfully.

- Creator spirit

Freinademetz was born on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1852, as the fourth child of Giovanmattia and Anna Maria. Joseph's early years were uneventful. He helped with the farm chores, attended daily Mass at his local parish and on the advice of the parish priest, attended a school walking many hours from his home. He eventually entered the major seminary and was ordained a priest for the Brixon diocese in 1875. His initial assignment was to be a teacher. But soon an article in the local diocesan newsletter about the new mission House at Steyl, Holland, founded by Fr. Arnold Janssen caught his attention. Joseph went to visit the mission house. The visit was enough to convince Joseph that this is where he could follow his vocation to be a missionary priest. He joined the fledgling group at Steyl in 1878, and barely a year later, had he received his mission cross along with Fr. John Baptist Anzer, SVD. He had one more brief visit to his family home to say goodbye for the last time, as he would never return to his homeland again. He was to be a missionary in China. In 1881; the mission house had received its own mission territory, the province of Shantung. Joseph was so devoted to his mission that, except to recover from an illness, he never left Shantung.

He so enculturated himself to China that he took on a form of dress similar to the local Chinese spiritual leaders. His most frequently repeated words were, "I would like to be a Chinese in heaven too." He truly loved Chinese with whom he lived and worked; he was especially energized by the local clergy and catechists. He promoted the idea that they should become the leaders in the local church before Rome was quite ready for this. It was decades later that Rome appointed the first Chinese bishops and also the first non-white cardinal, Thomas Tien, SVD. Toward the end of his all-too-few years, he was appointed the provincial for the society of the Divine Word, a post he held until his death, due to tuberculosis in 1908 at the age of 46.

In 1975 by Pope Paul VI beatified him and then was canonized on October 5, 2003, by Pope John Paul II in, Rome. Pilgrims regularly find their way to pray at the small Parish Church of St. Martin where Joseph served as a curate for three years. Or they visit the little mountain Chapel high above the family farm or visit his ancestral home. It is a beautiful surrounding that seems to speak of prayer and devotion.

- Hymn- We greet you St. Joseph
- Scripture reading: 1 Cor. 9: 22- 23

Word is not just a word but is full of meaning with its value and life .So let us join St. Joseph Freinademetz in praying aloud his sayings:

1. I do not regard being a missionary as a sacrifice offered to God, but as a grace that God gives to me.
2. True virtue is made possible by prayer and joy.
3. A missionary must not be attached to anything, not even to his spiritual children.
4. Prayers are the best help you can give as a missionary.
5. The language of love is the only language everyone understands.
6. The most beautiful fortune in life is to be a missionary.
7. I am happy to be there where the cross and suffering is, for god is there.
8. People are converted only through the grace of god and may we add by our love.
9. May the will of God, supreme and almighty be done.
10. To suffer with joy is the most beautiful thing in the world and the saints in heaven envy because of it.
11. Let us see life for what it really is; Seed sown for Eternity.
12. Prayer is our strength, our sword, our consolation and the key to paradise.

- Intercessory prayer from Prayer Book Page-143

### **Concluding-prayer**

O Lord, with all our heart, we thank you for sending your son St. Joseph Freinademetz to become our brother and way for the mission through his wonderful life. He lived as a living saint throughout his life. He brought many people to God through his way of living. May the blessings of His presence continue in us, during all our duties and labors of our vocation. Bless us and give light to our understanding, strength to our will, peace to our hearts, and purity to our love. Guide our feet along your path, strengthen our hands in your service, sanctify our tongues and protect our eyes from all evil. Together with St. Joseph, we make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

- Angelus

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