

TEILHARD'S FEAST DAY

Easter fell on April 10 in 1955. That sunny day in New York City, Teilhard de Chardin arose, made his morning meditation, attended Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral with his friend Rhoda de Terra and her daughter, went with them to Central Park in the afternoon, and eventually retired to Rhoda's apartment for pre-dinner cocktails.

At about 6 o'clock that evening, gazing out the window with a drink in his hand, Teilhard collapsed to the floor unconscious. When he came around briefly he said to those gathered close to him, "This time it is terrible." It was not the first time he had experienced a heart attack, and he recognized how serious this event was.



PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

A doctor was called. His roommate, Fr. Emmanuel deBreuvery, SJ, was out of town so another Jesuit was called for last rites, which he administered although Teilhard was already dead.



Now, April 10, is the day Teilhard is venerated in the Episcopal liturgical calendar. The reading for the day in the *Peoples' Companion to the Breviary* is taken from Teilhard's own words from *The Divine Milieu*. Their selection is a worthy one, but we wish it had been the one that follows below, which we recall whenever the death of someone we love passes away

PRAYER OF FINAL SURRENDER

by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

*When my hour comes, O God,
grant that I may recognize you
under the species of each alien or hostile force
that seems bent upon
destroying or uprooting me.*

*When the signs of age begin to mark my body
(and still more when they touch my mind);
when the ill that is to diminish me or carry me off
strikes from without or is born within me;*

*when the painful moment comes
in which I suddenly awaken
to the fact that I am ill or growing old;
and above all at that last moment
when I feel I am losing hold of myself
and am absolutely passive within the hands
of the great unknown forces that have formed me;*

*in all those dark moments, O God,
grant that I may understand that it is you*

*(provided only my faith is strong enough)
who are painfully parting the fibers of my being
in order to penetrate to the very marrow
of my substance and bear me away within yourself.*

*Teach me to know my death
as an act of communion with you.*

-- The Divine Milieu