

## A LESSON ON PRAYER

### Prepare Your Heart to Pray

By Dom Augustin Guillerand

**Prayer is, as it were, being alone with God.** A soul prays only when it is turned toward God, and for so long as it remains so. As soon as it turns away, it stops praying. The preparation for prayer is thus the movement of turning to God and away from all that is not God. That is why we are so right when we define prayer as this movement. Prayer is essentially a “raising up,” an elevation. We begin to pray when we detach ourselves from created objects and raise ourselves up to the Creator. Now, this detachment is born when we clearly realize our nothingness. That is the real meaning of our Lord’s words: “He that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”

This is what our Lord meant in that vital passage in the Sermon on the Mount, and what all human considerations on prayer repeat endlessly but without arriving at its full splendor: “But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber and, having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret.”<sup>95</sup> Enter this sacred chamber of your soul and there, having closed the door, speak to your Father, who sees you in these secret depths, and say to Him, “Our Father, who art in Heaven. . . .” This intimate presence; your faith in Him who is the secret depth of it and gives Himself there; the silence toward all that is not God in order to be all to Him — here is the preparation for prayer.

It is obvious that we do not reach such a state of soul without being prepared for it by quite a combination of circumstances. And this is just what we do not know sufficiently in practice. The way to prepare for prayer is by leading a divine life, and prayer, after all, is that divine life. Everything that reproduces God’s image in us; everything that raises us beyond and above created things; every sacrifice that detaches us from them; every aspect of faith that reveals the Creator to us in creatures; every movement of true and disinterested love making us in unison with the Three in One — all this is prayer and prepares us for a still more intimate prayer. All this makes real the divine word of the Sermon on the Mount and the dual movement it recommends: *shut the door and pray to thy Father*. When He spoke thus, the divine Word showed that He knew our being and its laws. He revealed Himself as our Creator and made Himself our Redeemer. He showed that He made us and that He alone can remake us.

In us, as in God, there are “many mansions.” God is within us in the depths of our soul, but by sin we no longer occupy those depths. When Eve looked at the forbidden fruit and stretched out her hand to take it and eat it, she went out of those secret depths in her soul. It was these depths that were the real terrestrial paradise, where God visited our first parents and spoke to them. Since the Fall, God is in us, but we are not!

The preparation for prayer consists in returning to those depths. Renunciation, detachment, recollection — whatever word we use, the reality is the same, and that reality is the true secret of prayer. *Close the door and enter. . .* We have to close the door on all that is not, and enter into HIM WHO IS. There you have the secret of all prayer.

Men ask, “Where is God?”

God is there — in the depths of their being...

The movement of the soul that prays has something special about it. It goes out from itself and yet remains in itself. It passes from its natural state to its supernatural state; from itself in itself to itself in God. At first glance, these expressions may seem strange. The mystery is not in the realities but in our understanding of them. Our mind is not used to these realities; we have to become accustomed to them.

Our soul is a dwelling with many apartments. In the first, it is there with the body. It sees when the eye sees, hears when the ear hears. It moves with the muscles; it remembers, imagines, and appreciates distances, when we take part in all the activities that are the common ground of its action with the body. In the second, the soul is alone and acts alone. The body is there — it is always there — but it no longer acts; it has no part in the soul’s action. The soul alone thinks and loves. The body with its senses prepares the matter and elements, the conditions of this spiritual activity, but it has no part in producing it. That room is closed; the soul is there alone and dwells there alone.

In that spiritual dwelling there is a part still more remote. It is the dwelling-place of being, who communicates Himself and makes us to “be.” We are so accustomed to live turned outward, we hardly ever open the door of that chamber, and scarcely give it a glance; many die without ever suspecting its existence. Men ask, “Where is God?” God is there — in the depths of their being — and He is there communicating to them. The soul that prays enters into this upper room. It places itself in the presence of that Being who gives Himself, and it enters into communication with Him. To *communicate* means to have something in common and, by this common element, to be made one. We touch, we speak, we open out to one another. Without this “something,” we remain at a distance; we do not “communicate.” God is love. We enter into communication with Him when we love, and in the measure of our love. The soul that loves and that has been introduced by Love into that dwelling-place where Love abides can speak to Him. Prayer is that colloquy. God will not resist that love which asks. He has promised to do the will of those who do His will. [www.catholicexchange.com](http://www.catholicexchange.com)

Dom Augustin Guillerand (1877-1945) was a French Carthusian monk who entered La Valsainte monastery in Switzerland in 1916. During the tumults of the 20th Century, Dom Augustin would become famous for his calm and peaceful demeanor and his spiritual teachings.

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**MASSES & SERVICES**  
Saturday: 5pm  
(Anticipated Mass)  
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm  
Monday – Wednesday 8am  
Thursday Mass/Novena:  
8am & 7pm  
Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am  
(Fridays in July & August: 8am)  
Reconciliation  
Saturday: 4-4:45pm  
Adoration  
Saturday 9:30-10am  
Library Hours  
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

**OFFICE HOURS**  
Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm  
**STAFF**  
**Pastor**  
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**Associate Pastor**  
Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.  
**Office Manager**  
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**Pastoral Coordinator**  
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## OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

February 19, 2017

7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

### A Fine Farewell For Fr. Brendan Boland

Dear Parishioners,

For some of you who were away for the long weekend, it may come as news to you that Fr. Brendan Boland’s funeral was held last week. He had been suffering from cancer for some time and after months of considerable pain found peace in death. The morning of the funeral was just the kind of day Fr. Brendan loved... beautiful, bright and sunny. He would have been dressed in jacket and beret, and off with bus pass in pocket! Happily, he had an even better destination this time in a celestial domain somewhere. What a happy reunion it must be with God our Father!

It was wonderful to see so many parishioners, as well as friends and family from out-of-town present for the funeral and reception. So many people had wonderful stories to share about how this good priest and friend touched their lives. Among them were Kathleen Habliston who was the goddaughter of Fr Boland. Kathleen is the little baby on the back page of last week’s special bulletin which featured tributes to Fr Brendan. Because of the driving conditions, Kathleen was unsure if she could make it from Washington State to pay her last respects. Make it, she did, and she was very happy to be here. Fr Brendan was a longtime friend of her family and her mother dearly wanted Fr Brendan to be the godfather of her child. Fr Brendan had to get a special dispensation as a priest to be her godfather. Kathleen over the years had all her daughters baptized by Fr Brendan even though she didn’t live here. Hers is just one of the many hearts and lives touched by Fr Brendan, I am sure many more stories will be shared among you. My sincere thanks to all who helped with the vigil, funeral and reception. It was a good send-off!

This week we will begin our prayers for the success of the Parish Mission in April to be led by Deacon Bob and his wife, Joan Williston. You will find out more about them in the coming weeks in the bulletin. Please mark your calendars for the evenings of April 2-5.

Yours in Christ,  
**Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R**



The Lord is merciful and gracious. - Psalm 103

## NEWS & NOTICES

**With Gratitude:** Thank you to the CWL, Kof C, Music Ministry and all other volunteers who helped at last week's vigil and funeral for Fr. Brendan Boland.

**Ash Wednesday Masses:** Lent begins on March 1. Ash Wednesday Masses are at 8am, 9am (School Mass) and 7pm.

**PEC Meeting:** Tuesday Feb 21 at 7pm in the Madonna Room. If you have an interest in school matters you are welcome to attend.

**Children's Mass:** The next Children's mass is on Sunday March 5 at 9am. If you can help with providing refreshments, please email Heather Sage. Email: hleachsage@gmail.com

**Mass of Remembrance:** Join us for our monthly Mass of Remembrance as we pray for our family members who have passed away this month on Sunday, Feb. 26. Mass is at 2:30pm in our Evangelist Chapel, at Gardens of Gethsemani, Surrey.

**Volunteers for Gardens of Gethsemani:** Gardens of Gethsemani needs volunteers to expand their monthly memorial Mass services. Your help will assist to continue extending the love of Jesus to all the families supported by these Masses. Please consider signing up as a reader, Eucharistic minister, usher, musician, or altar server. Please contact Terry Whiteley at twhiteley@rcav.org to sign up.

**Vocations Fair:** All are invited to attend the Archdiocesan Vocations Fair on Tuesday Feb. 21, at Notre Dame Regional Secondary School, Vancouver from 4-8 p.m. Contact Sr. Rhonda, rbrown@rcav.org.

**Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius for Men (Silent Retreat):** Returning for a second year (4th retreat), the priests of Miles Christi will be here to offer their signature Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Two priests will work directly with retreatants in this silent retreat for men, March 24-26 at Westminster Abbey, Mission. Cost is \$210. Space is very limited, so please register early. For more info or to register, please contact Jody Garneau at adultfaith@stannabbotsford.ca or 604-576-8802.

**Estate Basics and Memorial Planning Presentation:** These presentations by Archdiocese of Vancouver Catholic Cemeteries deal with matters you may not have thought about but will help you gather your thoughts before you write your first will or prepare to update your will.

- Monday, March 13 at 7pm at St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Vancouver. To register, visit [rcav.org/events/94](http://rcav.org/events/94)
- Thursday, March 16 at 7pm at Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Vancouver. To register, visit [rcav.org/events/96](http://rcav.org/events/96)

**Unfailing- Women's Retreat:** This women's retreat is an opportunity to get away from the busyness of life and personally encounter God. There will be opportunities for prayer and worship, fellowship, workshops, sacraments, music, laughter, and rest. Enjoy the beauty of nature and hear inspiring teaching. Our speakers will be Sr. Miriam James Heidland, SOLT, Michelle Benzinger, Debra Herbeck and Heather Khym. Cost: \$265 dorm shared room. March 31-April 1. For more info or to register, visit [rcav.org/unfailing](http://rcav.org/unfailing).

### DECEMBER COLLECTIONS: THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

	DECEMBER
Regular Envelopes for the entire month	\$34,207.99
Collection for the Needy	\$1,635.00
Christmas	\$9,726.00
Youth Ministry	\$1,354.25
Icon of Love Scholarship	\$250.00
Jubilee Grotto Collection	\$200.00

### Stewardship Reflection

*"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..." Matthew 5:44*

*Love your enemies, easier said than done, no doubt. But, remember, the foundation of stewardship is prayer. When we are in close communication with God, it opens our heart and it turns our attention away from "me" and moves it towards God and others. It allows us to have a little more empathy for "our enemy". When we pray for others, even "our enemies", maybe it softens their hearts as well.*

**Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis**

## CALENDAR

### MARCH

#### LENTEN TALKS

Please look out for more information on our series of Friday Lenten Talks beginning on March 3 on the theme of Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (the Joy of Love). Talks will be held after the 7pm Way of the Cross.

### APRIL

#### PARISH MISSION April 2 - 5

**RECEIVE, GIVE THANKS, BREAK AND SHARE: THE EUCHARIST UNFOLDING THE MERCY OF GOD**  
Presented by the Mission Team:  
Deacon Bob Williston and Joan Williston

**Sunday Evening: "Receive The Mercy of God".**  
Like the Father in the Prodigal Son story, the mercy of God is ever-present, and waiting for our return home. The mercy is freely given, with no strings attached. God's mercy is best seen in the encounters between Jesus and those most in need of His mercy!

**Monday Evening: "Give Thanks for God's Mercy".**  
Our response to this invitation of mercy is molded deep in our hearts by the Eucharist we celebrate regularly. The Greek word "Eucharistia" means to give thanks! We can fashion a heart of gratitude both in our prayer life and in our relationships with people.

**Tuesday Evening: "Our Brokenness Needs the Merciful Touch of Jesus"**  
The healing touch of Christ from the cross reaches out to any wounded heart. His gentleness and compassion can transform and heal us when we find it difficult to love or be loved. "By his wounds we are healed."

**Wednesday Evening: "Sharing the Mercy of God with a World in Need"**  
The Eucharist is meant to transform us into a people of compassion and care. We live in a world so desperately in need of our healing and merciful presence. The mercy we have received is meant to be shared with others.



## A Beautiful Mass and Tribute to Fr. Brendan

Over 250 people came to bid farewell to Fr Brendan Boland last Saturday February 11 in a poignant celebration which celebrated the life of a good man and great priest.

Archbishop J Michael Miller was the presiding celebrant, Provincial Superior Fr. Mark Miller was the homilist. Also concelebrating were brother Redemptorists, Fr Babu, Fr Bill and Fr Joseph. Priests from St Mark's Parish, where Fr Brendan was once chaplain, were present as well as the Franciscan friars and other clergy men who were friends.

4<sup>th</sup> Degree Knights of Columbus were also present to escort Fr Brendan after the commendation rites. It was a beautiful and dignified ceremony for a man who was known and loved for his humour and humility.

At the reception in the school gym, tributes were given by Fr Bill Comerford, Fr. Brendan's niece and close friends. It was clear Fr Brendan retained his Irish sense of humour to the very end. It was alluded to in every eulogy that was given.

Fr Brendan's niece, Mary Kelly who lives and works in Maine, spoke of how much the nephews and nieces loved their time out with Fr Brendan when they were in Ireland. Mary Kelly's two brothers, Michael and James from Ireland were also here for the funeral, as well as their cousin, Brig Glenn. A framed artwork by OLPH students was presented to Ms. Glenn by the principal, Lora Clarke.

To remember some of the places where Fr Brendan served as a Redemptorist, a variety of foods were served at the luncheon - Irish stew, soda bread and shamrock cookies, Indian-style chicken and naan as well as sandwiches. Fr. Brendan would have loved it all!

Fr. Brendan's body was flown to Edmonton on Tuesday for burial at Holy Cross Cemetery on Thursday, Feb 16. May his soul rest in peace.

