



HANDBOOK FOR THE HOLY SOULS IN PURGATORY

PRAYERS, STORIES AND
CATHOLIC TEACHINGS

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PURGATORY



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THIS HANDBOOK BELONGS TO

*“Lead all souls to
Heaven, especially
those most in need
of Thy mercy.”*

OUR LADY OF FATIMA



The souls in Purgatory have entered into the realm of Divine Justice. The penance and satisfaction due for their faults must be made, either by the pain of Purgatory itself, or by the suffrages of the faithful, consisting in prayer, good works and the spiritual treasure of indulgences bestowed upon them; for the suffering souls can no longer merit and are entirely unable to assist themselves.

A sick man and a beggar have a tongue to ask for help, and the very sight of their misery will move others to compassion. The suffering souls, however, have no resource but that of patience, resignation and hope.

Hence, in their extreme desolation and distress, they incessantly cry out to us for relief and assistance. But since they cannot do this in a manner perceptible to us, holy Church does it for them by instituting many touching devotions in their behalf.

“I come to tell you that they suffer in Purgatory, that they weep, and that they demand with urgent cries the help of your prayers and your good works. I seem to hear them crying from the depths of those fires which devour them: ‘Tell our loved ones, tell our children, tell all our relatives how great the evils are which they are making us suffer. We throw ourselves at their feet to implore the help of their prayers. Ah! Tell them that since we have been separated from them, we have been here burning in the flames!’”

ST. JOHN VIANNEY



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INTRODUCTION

The Souls in Purgatory: “Poor” and “Holy”?

“The more one longs for a thing, the more painful does deprivation of it become. And because after this life, the desire for God, the Supreme Good, is intense in the souls of the just (because this impetus toward Him is not hampered by the weight of the body, and that time of enjoyment of the Perfect Good would have come had there been no obstacle) the soul suffers enormously from the delay.”

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

The souls in Purgatory died in the grace of God; this is why they are called “holy.” However, they must undergo a spiritual purification of their souls before they are able to fully love God with their whole heart, mind and soul for all eternity. Those who die in the love God but fall short of holiness due to an attachment to habitual sin must be made pure before being admitted to the beatific vision, that is, the vision of God that the saints in heaven enjoy for all eternity.

It is also a truth of our Catholic Faith that those in Purgatory, the Church Suffering, cannot pray for themselves; this is why they are also called “poor” souls. They can no longer merit anything for themselves and they must rely entirely on the charity of the members of the Church Militant to pray and make sacrifices on their behalf. As part of the Communion of Saints, the poor souls depend upon us to help assist them through their purification so that they can join the ranks of the saints in heaven, the Church Triumphant.



CHAPTER ONE

Catholic Teaching on Purgatory

Catholic Teaching

It is a teaching of the Catholic Church that the souls of the just which, in the moment of death, are burdened with venial sins or temporal punishment due to sins, enter Purgatory.

It is also a teaching that the living faithful can come to the assistance of the souls in Purgatory by their intercessions (suffrages).

Indulgences

The salvation of one's eternal soul is serious business. We are often left to wonder about the souls of our dearly departed who have left this life and gone on to the next. Is there any way we can know, or even help determine, where they will spend eternity?

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, there most certainly is. Through the power of prayer, it is actually not that difficult to obtain a plenary indulgence (a remission of the entire temporal punishment for sin). Saint Padre Pio reminds us that it is never too late to pray for a departed soul, whether a person died recently or long ago: "For the Lord... everything is an eternal

"My love urges Me to release the poor souls. If a beneficent king leaves his guilty friend in prison for justice's sake, he awaits with longing for one of his nobles to plead for the prisoner and to offer something for his release. Then the king joyfully sets him free. Similarly, I accept with highest pleasure what is offered to Me for the poor souls, for I long inexpressibly to have near Me those for whom I paid so great a price. By the prayers of thy loving soul, I am induced to free a prisoner from purgatory as often as thou dost move thy tongue to utter a word of prayer!"

OUR LORD TO ST. GERTRUDE

present. Those prayers had already been taken into account so that even now I can pray for the happy death of my great-grandfather!”

This is how an indulgence is defined in the Code of Canon Law (can. 992) and in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (n. 1471):

“An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints.”

To gain indulgences, whether plenary or partial, it is necessary that one:

- ◆ be a Catholic in a state of grace at the time the indulgenced work is completed;
- ◆ have the interior disposition of complete detachment from sin, even venial sin;
- ◆ go to confession (if you are in the state of grace, you don't need to go to confession on the same day. You may fulfill this obligation at the next opportunity);
- ◆ receive the Holy Eucharist and;
- ◆ pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff.



CHAPTER TWO

Releasing Souls from Purgatory

There are many various prayers and means composed for the singular purpose of relieving and liberating souls from Purgatory and you will find many of the most efficacious listed here.

1. Visit a Catholic Church or Cemetery

Each November, the Church gives us an extraordinary gift that we can extend to our “dear suffering friends.” From November 1-8, a plenary indulgence is available for Catholics in a state of grace who visit a cemetery and pray for the dead. This plenary indulgence is applied to souls in Purgatory in general. We are free to ask that it be applied to a particular soul, but God may have other designs.

Besides benefiting the Holy Souls, visiting a cemetery is a healthy reminder of our own mortality, realizing that we too will pass from this life to the next.

Also, if you visit a church or oratory on All Souls Day and there recite the Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed, you can earn a plenary indulgence applicable only to the souls in Purgatory (under the usual conditions; see above).

2. Pray the Novena for the Holy Souls

Composed by Saint Alphonsus Liguori, these nine days of prayer for the Holy Souls in Purgatory are a more prolonged way to pray for the deceased, but the faithful may have recourse to this method of prayer any time throughout the year.

Traditionally, it is prayed in preparation for All Souls Day or in the days following the celebration.

Novena for the Holy Souls in Purgatory

O most sweet Jesus, through the bloody sweat which Thou didst suffer in the Garden of Gethsemane, have mercy on these Blessed Souls. Have mercy on them.

R. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer during Thy most cruel scourging, have mercy on them.

R. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer in Thy most painful crowning with thorns, have mercy on them.

R. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer in carrying Thy cross to Calvary, have mercy on them.

R. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer during Thy most cruel

Crucifixion, have mercy on them.

R. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer in Thy most bitter agony on the Cross, have mercy on them.

R. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through the immense pain which Thou didst suffer in breathing forth Thy Blessed Soul, have mercy on them.

R. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

(Recommend yourself to the souls in Purgatory and mention your intentions here)

Blessed Souls, I have prayed for thee; I entreat thee, who are so dear to God, and who are secure of never losing Him, to pray for me a miserable sinner, who is in danger of being damned, and of losing God forever. Amen.

3. Daily Prayers for the Holy Souls

Many of the following prayers are short but powerful. Easily incorporated into such daily activities as our prayers before meals or even driving past a cemetery, these spiritual gems can be memorized by young children and adults, too.

Saint Gertrude the Great's Prayer for the Holy Souls

One of the most popular prayers for the Souls in Purgatory is that of Saint Gertrude the Great. She received many visions of Our Lord during

her lifetime and expressed to Our Lord Jesus her great desire to pray for the deceased. In return, Our Lord taught Saint Gertrude the following prayer. It is piously believed that 1,000 souls are released from Purgatory by praying this prayer with the heart.

Eternal Father, I offer You the most Precious Blood of Your Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for all sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal Church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen.

Prayer before meals or when driving past a cemetery

Making a devout sign of the Cross pray:

May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

4. Offer up your Holy Communions for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

5. Have Masses said for your departed loved one, especially on the anniversary of his or her death.

You may do this by contacting your local parish office and requesting that a Mass be said on or near a certain date. Though a small stipend

(usually \$10) may be offered, you are not required to do so.

6. Pray the special Holy Souls Rosary. After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Holy Rosary is the most powerful prayer.

Saint Dominic declared that the redemption of the holy souls from Purgatory is one of the principal effects of the rosary. The venerable Alanus writes that many of the brethren had assured him that numerous souls had appeared to them whilst reciting the rosary, and had declared that, next to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, there was no more powerful means of helping the suffering souls than the rosary. Numerous souls were daily released thereby, who otherwise would have been obliged to remain there for years.

Saint Alphonsus Liguori, therefore, says: “If we wish to be of assistance to the souls in Purgatory, we must always remember them in our prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and especially offer the Holy Rosary for them.”

Rosary for the Holy Souls

Make the sign of the Cross...

V. O Lord, open my lips.

R. And I shall praise your name.

V. O God, come to my aid.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning...

Recite the Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty...

For the intentions of our Holy Father, the Pope:

Our Father, Hail Mary (x 3), Glory be...

Pray the Sorrowful Mysteries as follows:

Lord Jesus Christ... (as in the phrases enumerated on the next page)

Our Father...

Hail Mary...(x 10)

Glory be...

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Your mercy.

The Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony in the Garden

Lord Jesus Christ, through Your bloody sweat of fear that You shed on the Mount of Olives, we ask You to have mercy on the Holy Souls in Purgatory. Bring to completion their purification and console them with the Cup of heavenly comfort.

2. The Scourging at the Pillar

Lord Jesus Christ, through Your painful Scourging which You tolerated so patiently for us sinners, we ask You to have mercy on the Holy Souls in Purgatory! Bring them to live forever with Christ and give them eternal relief.

3. The Crowning with Thorns

Lord Jesus Christ, through Your painful

Crowning which You suffered so patiently for us sinners, we ask You to have mercy on the Holy Souls in Purgatory and give them the crown of eternal delight.

4. The Carrying of the Cross

Lord Jesus Christ, through Your painful Carrying of the Cross, which You suffered so patiently for us sinners, we ask You to have mercy on the Holy Souls in Purgatory! Bring them to the everlasting peace of perfect life with the Most Holy Trinity and lead them into eternal joy.

5. The Crucifixion of Jesus

Lord Jesus Christ, through Your painful Crucifixion, which You suffered so patiently for us sinners, we ask You to have mercy on the Holy Souls in Purgatory! Turn Your Holy Face towards them and let them be in Paradise with You today.

After the fifth decade we pray:

Lord, Jesus Christ, through Your five Holy Wounds and through all of Your Sacred Blood that You shed, we ask You to have mercy on the Holy Souls in Purgatory, and in particular on our parents, spouses, relatives, spiritual guides and benefactors. Complete the healing of their purification and let them enjoy and participate fully in Your Salvation. Amen.

The Hail Holy Queen

Hail Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry,

poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. O God, Whose only begotten Son, by His life, death and resurrection, has



purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech Thee, that meditating upon these mysteries in the most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Memorare

Remember, O Most Gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled unto thy protection, implored thy help or sought thine intercession, was left unaided by thee. Inspired by this confidence I fly onto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. Do not, O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise my petitions but, in thy clemency, hear and answer me. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Michael

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God restrain him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust Satan down to hell and with him all the wicked spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



CHAPTER THREE

The Souls I'm Praying For

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

*"If only you knew with what great
longing these holy souls yearn for relief
from their suffering. Ingratitude has
never entered Heaven."*

ST. MARGARET MARY

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

*“In our prayers, let us not forget
sinners and the poor souls in Purgatory
especially our poor relatives.”*

ST. BERNADETTE

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

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Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

Name: _____

Date of Death: _____

*“The fire of Purgatory is the same
as the fire of Hell; the difference
between them is that the fire of
Purgatory is not everlasting.”*

ST. JOHN VIANNEY



CHAPTER FOUR

Fatima and Purgatory

Our Lady appeared to three shepherd children, Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco, a total of six times in Fatima, Portugal. At her first apparition on May 13, 1917, Our Lady referred to Purgatory when asked by Lucia about someone who had recently died.

The conversation developed in the following manner:

Our Lady: Do not be afraid; I will not harm you.

Lucia: Where is Your Grace from?

Our Lady: I am from heaven .

Lucia: And what does Your Grace wish of me?

Our Lady: I have come to ask you to come here for six months in succession on the thirteenth day of each month at this same hour. Later I will tell you who I am and what I want. Afterward, I will return here a seventh time.

Lucia: And will I go to heaven, too?

Our Lady: Yes, you will.

Lucia: And Jacinta?

Our Lady: Also.

Lucia: And Francisco?

Our Lady: Also, but he must say many rosaries.

Lucia: Is Maria das Neves already in heaven?

Our Lady: Yes, she is.

Lucia: And Amélia?

Our Lady: She will be in Purgatory until the end of the world.

Sister Lucia of Fatima on Purgatory

The reflection below on Purgatory by Sister Lucia was published in *Como vejo a Mensagem*:

“I have been asked many questions concerning this reply of Our Lady and I don’t know too well how to answer them. I didn’t ask Our Lady for a clarification; I was too young to think about that. But I have meditated a lot about this detail of the Message.

“After all—I ask myself—what is Purgatory,

actually? We see that the word ‘Purgatory’ means ‘purification,’ and as all of us are more or less sinners, all of us need being purified of our own sins, faults and imperfections, in order to be admitted to the enjoyment of the possession of the Kingdom of eternal glory.

“We can still realize this purification during this life, if God gives us the time for it: by asking God for forgiveness, with sincere repentance and the resolution to change our life by doing penance, receiving the sacrament of Confession. [At this point, Sister Lucia sums up all kinds of sins and continues]: “All these things, and many others, too numerous to mention, are against the commandments of the Law of God and require a great purification, even if they have already been confessed and forgiven with respect to their punishment . . . but not expiated with respect to their purification; until this [expiation] renders us worthy to be admitted to the immense ocean of God’s Being.

“This purification—that is called ‘Purgatory’—can be more or less extended, depending on the number of our sins, faults, and imperfections, and on their gravity, for which we have not given complete satisfaction by means of reparation, good works, penance, and prayers.”





CHAPTER FIVE

Stories of Padre Pio and Purgatory

“No one is barred from heaven. Whoever wants to enter heaven may do so because God is merciful. Our Lord will welcome us into glory with His arms wide open. The Almighty is pure however, and if a person is conscious of the least trace of imperfection and at the same time understands that Purgatory is ordained to do away with such impediments, the soul enters this place of perfection gladly to accept so great a mercy of God. The worst suffering of these suffering souls is to have sinned against Divine Goodness and not to have been purified in this life.”

ST. CATHERINE OF GENOA

While praying alone, Padre Pio opened his eyes to see an old man. He was surprised by the presence of another person in the room and explained in his testimony, “I could not imagine how he could have entered the friary at this time of night since all the doors were locked.”

Seeking to unravel the mystery, Pio asked the man, “Who are you? What do you want?”

The man responded, “Padre Pio, I am Pietro Di Mauro, son of Nicola. I died in this friary on the September 18, 1908, in cell number 4, when it was still a poorhouse. One night, while in bed, I fell asleep with a lighted cigar. The mattress caught fire and I died a terrible death. I am still in Purgatory. I need a holy Mass in order to be freed. God permitted that I come and ask you for help.”

Pio comforted the poor soul by saying, “Rest assured that tomorrow I will celebrate Mass for your liberation.”

The man left and the next day Pio did some investigative work, discovering that a man of the same name died on that day in 1908. Everything

was confirmed and Padre Pio celebrated a Mass for the repose of the man's soul.

This was not the only appearance of a soul from Purgatory asking Padre Pio for prayers. Pio claimed, "As many souls of the dead come up this road [to the monastery] as souls of the living." Many times the souls would ask for a Mass to be said for them, highlighting the spiritual weight of a Mass and how it can lessen the time a person spends in Purgatory before embracing the glories of Heaven.

One night the friars heard loud voices coming from downstairs saying "Viva Padre Pio!"

The superior, Padre Raffaele, told the doorkeeper, Fra Gerardo, to let the people out and lock the door properly. Fra Gerardo went downstairs, found no one, and the door was double locked as it was every night.

He went back to report. Padre Raffaele was puzzled and asked Padre Pio if he knew something about this strange occurrence.

An unfazed Padre Pio responded, "Oh! Those were soldiers who had died on the battleground, and came to thank me for their salvation."

Padre Vittore da Canosa died suddenly on January 29, 1958. His sister Carmela asked Padre Pio about the sudden death. Padre Pio replied with this beautiful imagery, "Do you know what Jesus did regarding your brother? Jesus went into the garden, and there were many flow-

ers, and one was more beautiful than the others. He leaned down to the most beautiful and picked it."

Carmela asked, "Is he saved?"

"Yes, but we need to pray."

On July 29th, she asked again if he was saved.

"My daughter," Padre Pio replied, "we priests are more responsible in front of God. Let's continue praying."

On December 29, 1958, she asked Padre Pio again where her brother was. She was rewarded with the following words, "He is in Paradise."

Padre Pio told the following story to one of his fellow priests:

"One night I was alone in the choir and I saw a friar cleaning the altar late at night.

"I asked him to go to bed since it was so late. He said: 'I'm a friar like you. I did my novitiate here. When assigned to take care of the altar, I passed in front of the Tabernacle many times without making the proper reverence. For this sin I am in Purgatory, and the Lord sent me to you. You decide how much longer I have to suffer in those flames.'"

"I told him he must remain in Purgatory until the Mass in the morning. To which he responded, 'Cruel' and disappeared.

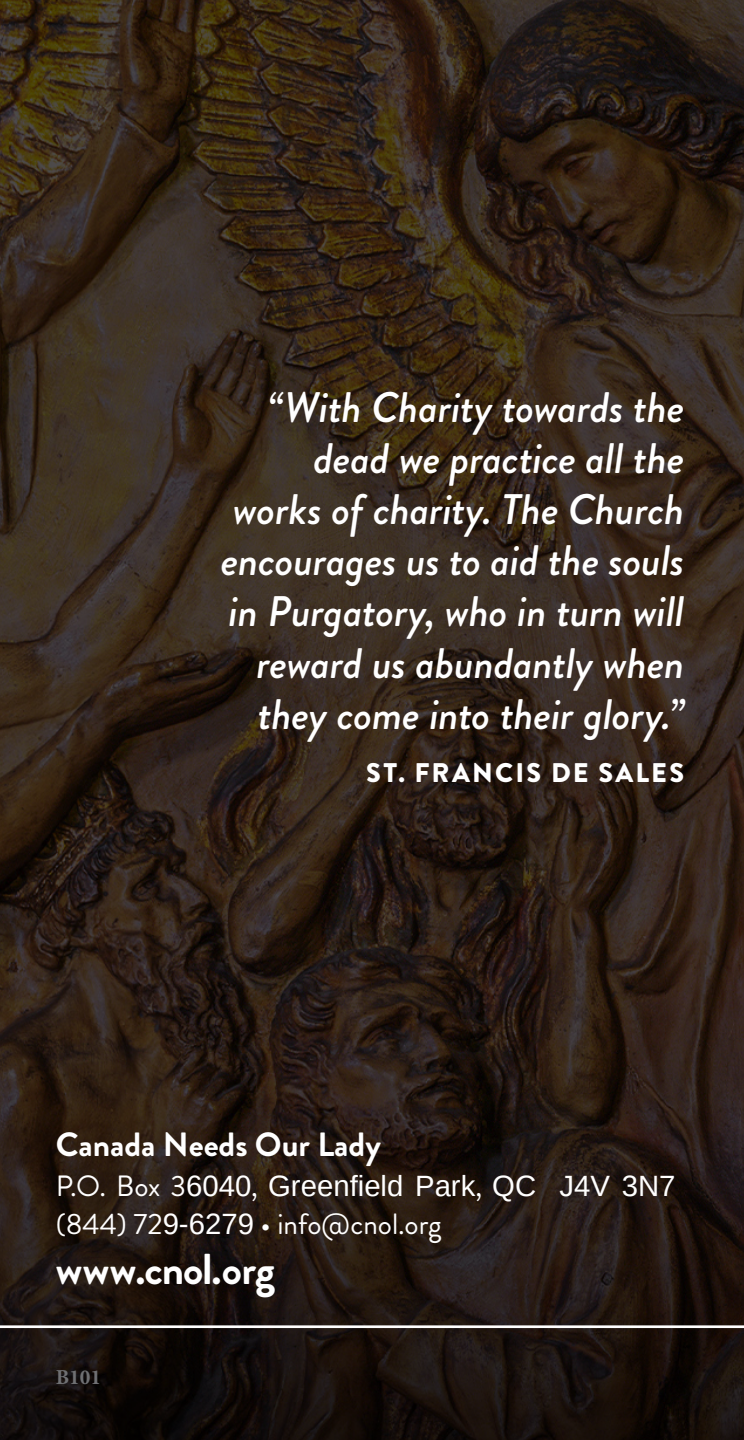
"I still have a wound in my heart. I could have sent him immediately to Paradise; instead he had to stay one more night in the flames of Purgatory."

America Needs Fatima (ANF) is the American TFP's special campaign to spread the message of Fatima in the United States. The goal of America Needs Fatima is to win the heart and soul of America for Mary by spreading Our Lady's Fatima message and promoting devotion to Her Immaculate Heart.

America urgently needs the prophetic messages of Our Lady at Fatima. Above all, America needs a clear direction, a great purpose, and the means to achieve it. The admonitions, requests, and warnings of Mary Most Holy can rightly be called a heaven-sent survival manual.

Please contact us at:

P.O. Box 36040, Greenfield Park, QC J4V 3N7
(844) 729-6279 • www.cnol.org • info@cnol.org



*“With Charity towards the
dead we practice all the
works of charity. The Church
encourages us to aid the souls
in Purgatory, who in turn will
reward us abundantly when
they come into their glory.”*

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

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P.O. Box 36040, Greenfield Park, QC J4V 3N7
(844) 729-6279 • info@cnol.org

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