

# SoulSpace

SERIES: GREAT CATHOLIC PRAYERS

Season colour: GREEN

In this series, **Brendan McConvery CSsR** looks at great Catholic prayers and their stories and meaning.

**A**lthough usually known as "The Prayer of St Francis" it was probably not written by him. A shorter saying close to it has been ascribed to one of Francis's disciples, Brother Giles: "Blessed is he who loves and does not therefore desire to be loved; blessed is he who fears and does not therefore desire to be feared; blessed is he who serves and does not therefore desire to be served; blessed he who behaves well toward others and does not desire that others behave well toward him; and because these are great things, the foolish do not rise to them."

The prayer in its present form first appeared in French in 1912 in a small Catholic magazine as a prayer to be said during Mass. In 1920, it circulated widely as a prayer for peace, still without an author, but accompanied by a picture of St Francis. It was translated into English about 1927 in America for a Quaker magazine. It spread widely during the Second World War as a prayer for peace. There is no denying either its popularity or the genuine desire for peace and service of one's fellow human beings to which it gives expression.

## THE PRAYER



*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;*

*Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
Where there is sadness, joy.*

*O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
To be consoled as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,*

*To be loved as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
It is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.*

## THE MEANING OF THE PRAYER

**T**he prayer falls into two parts. In the first part, we pray that God may make us "instruments of peace." Six situations of conflict or discord are mentioned, each introduced by "where there is." The prayer is that, as agents of peace, we will be able to offset the conflict by planting the virtue which will replace it – love instead of hatred, pardon instead of injury and so on.

The second part of the prayer is more challenging. The two sections move more or less around the same theme of contrast and willingness to embrace suffering. We offer to walk a way of generosity even though it may entail pain and self-sacrifice, renouncing the joy of consolation, the relief of having our motives clearly understood by others, to love selflessly rather than to experience the gladness of being loved. The final part has another series of contrasts. This time it entails three paradoxes or things that seem contradictory or absurd, such as the belief that it is in giving we receive, in pardoning we are pardoned or that death is the way to eternal life. It is the paradox of the Gospel with which every believer must struggle: "anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it" (Mar 8:35).

Although this prayer may not have been composed by St Francis, there is no doubt that it is very close to the spirit of il Poverello, "the little poor one," who tried so earnestly to imitate the Crucified Christ and whose greeting for everyone was "Pace e Bene" – "Peace and every good thing." ■



## Today's readings

Zph 2:3; 3:12-13  
1 Cor 1:26-31  
Mt 5: 1-12

## GOD'S WORD TODAY

In this Sunday's Gospel, it is the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and he wants to set out his moral teaching, offer his vision of the values and attitudes his followers must have. So he begins to teach the people. He teaches with great authority. He gives them what is known as the Sermon on the Mount.

This Gospel is from the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus offers a series of eight blessings or words of praise. These are usually known as the 'beatitudes.' The beatitudes have been called, with good reason, the 'happy attitudes.' These are the attitudes or values the follower of Jesus is called to have.

Living the beatitudes means living in a different way to the prevailing false values of our world. It means putting aside ruthless ambition to become poor in spirit, choosing to act gently instead of aggressively, hungering and thirsting for what is right, being prepared to endure persecution for the sake of the Gospel.

The beatitudes are a summons to be set free from the various addictions - to material things, to power, to the esteem of others - that keep us from putting God first.



## THE PRAYER OF ST FRANCIS

### STORY OF THE PRAYER

This is one of the best-known prayers of modern times. It was quoted by both (St) Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Desmond Tutu when they received the Nobel Peace Prize. President Clinton used it to welcome Pope St John Paul II to the United Nations, and Mrs Thatcher on the day she became Prime Minister of Great Britain. It has been set to music several times.

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**FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME.**

**Today, Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

Our weakness and limitations can sometimes frustrate us, but they can also lead us to see our dependence on God. If we turn to him as the only source of our life and strength, his power will work through our weakness, and we will be blessed.

**WORDS FROM POPE FRANCIS ON THE FAMILY**

*"The life of every family is marked by all kinds of cries, yet these are also part of its dramatic beauty". ( Amoris Laetitia, Par 232)*

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK - JANUARY 29 - FEBRUARY 4 2017**

There will be a special celebration to mark the opening of the week at **12 Noon Mass, this Sunday January 29<sup>th</sup>**. This annual celebration gives us all the opportunity to be more aware of the unique contribution that our Catholic schools make to Irish life. This year's theme is 'Learning with Pope Francis to care for our common home'. During this week we invite you to take time to reflect on the service that Catholic schools give to children, parents, families and communities. We ask you to consider how best you can offer support to the service that your child's Catholic school provides in so many different ways. The daily themes for the week are:

- Monday:** Seeing the beauty of our common home.
- Tuesday:** Caring for our common home.
- Wednesday:** Grandparents watching over our common home.
- Thursday:** Protecting our common home.
- Friday:** Sharing our common home.

**SAINT BRIGID'S FEASTDAY-WEDNESDAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY**

WEDNESDAY February 1<sup>st</sup> marks the feast day of St Brigid, secondary patron saint of Ireland. Mass will be celebrated at 8 am and 10.30 am. Our sincere thanks once again to the Sisters of the Presentation and their volunteers for producing the beautiful crosses to be distributed in our Cathedral.

RHS Home Care is a Non Commercial Home Care Provider bringing professional home care services to those who need assistance to remain living in their own homes. New Healthcare Assistants are being recruited in your area. Potential applicants must have the required Fetac/QQI level 5 (two modules completed care skills and care of the older person). Please email you CV to [jobs@rshhomecare.ie](mailto:jobs@rshhomecare.ie) or call Aoife on 090 66 25988

**THANK YOU** from Sligo branch of Diabetes Ireland who collected €594.62 in a Church Gate collection at the Cathedral recently.

**READINGS FOR SUNDAY NEXT, 5<sup>th</sup> February** 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Is. 58:7-10 ; 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: 1 Cor. 2:1-5.; Gospel: Matt 5:13-16

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK** May your spirit inspire those who live their baptismal commitment by professing the vows of poverty, Chasity and obedience. Amen.

**BINGO - GILLOOLY HALL - tonight Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> January at 9.00 p.m.**  
With a jackpot of €3,100.

SLIGO CATHEDRAL PARISH – 2200 FAMILIES  
SUNDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY PARISH ENV: €1692 PL/STAND. ORD: €1462  
THANK YOU for your contribution.  
ST MARY'S PRESBYTERY ☎ 071 9162670 SACRISTY ☎ 071 9161261

**FIRST FRIDAY** is FEBRUARY 3<sup>RD</sup> Mass will be celebrated at 7 pm.  
Confessions will take place before the 8 am, 10.30am and 7 pm Masses.  
**FEAST OF ST BLAISE-BLESSING OF THE THROATS** To mark the Feast of St. Blaise the Blessing of the throats will take place after all Masses on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February

**YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE-WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS**

Consecrated life is called to embody the Good News, in following Christ, dead and risen, making its own the "mode of living & acting as the Incarnate Word of Jesus to the Father and to the brethren".

**DAY FOR CONSECRATE LIFE-THURSDAY, 2<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY  
PRESENTATION OF THE LORD-CANDLEMAS DAY**

Inspired by the words of the canticle "a light to the revelation of the Gentiles" by the 11<sup>th</sup> century the custom had developed in the West of blessing candles to be used in the Church for the year ahead on this day. We would be most grateful for any contributions to help defray the cost of candles for our Cathedral. The blessing of candles will take place at 10.30 am Mass.

**25TH WORLD DAY OF THE SICK-SATURDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**

A Special Blessing for those who care for the sick and also Anointing of the Sick will take place at the 10.30am Mass on this day. Please inform all the household and sick you know and consider helping them attend by providing transport or the means to join in watching our ceremony online.

**CAMINO DE SANTIAGO: Young Adult Pilgrimage with Bishop Kevin Doran. 20<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017. 18 – 35 age group. Cost €650.** Includes flights, accommodation, 20kg Check-in luggage plus hand luggage, transfers and insurance. Places Limited. Walk from Sarria to Santiago de Compostela, total distance 120Km, approximately 20Km per day. Three preparation walks: Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March and Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May. To secure place, applicants, not later than 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2017 must: pay **€100 Non-Refundable Deposit**; provide **signed letter from Doctor** indicating appropriate fitness/health to walk 120Km in 6 days; **complete application form** and agree to participate in at least **two** of the preparation walks. For more information, please see [www.elphindiocese.ie/camino2017](http://www.elphindiocese.ie/camino2017) or contact: **Frank McGuinness**, Director of Youth Ministry on 087 9880690 or [frank.mcguinness@elphindiocese.ie](mailto:frank.mcguinness@elphindiocese.ie)

Brain Health Talk ' Say Hello to Brain Health' Muintir na Tire in association with Sligo Lend a Hand are hosting Professor Sabina Brennan, Director of the Neil Dementia Research Programme at Trinity College, in the Clayton (Clarion) Hotel Sligo on Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 7.30pm sharp. Learn how simple lifestyle changes can boost your brain health and reduce your risk of developing dementia. She will share Top Tips for Brain Health and take questions after the talk. Tickets €5. Please book early to reserve your place and avoid disappointment. Contact 087 1776386 or 086 6000757 or [sligolendahand@hotmail.com](mailto:sligolendahand@hotmail.com)

**BAPTISMS** We welcome into God's family SOPHIE LEWANDOWSKA recently baptised in our Cathedral.

**CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

Upcoming **EVENTS** THE WEEK AHEAD

Wed 1<sup>st</sup> Feb Feast of St Brigid & "Wednesday Tea" after 10.30am Mass  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> Presentation of the Lord  
Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Blaise  
Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> Confessions 2.00p.m. - 4.00p.m.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**HSE RETIRED ASSOCIATION GROUP** Monthly meeting takes place in St Michael's Family Life Centre on Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> February at 3pm. New members welcome.

**P.T.A.A. SLIGO** - Meeting in St. Mary's Presbytery at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February immediately after the 7pm Mass.

**WEEKEND RETREAT ON ST JOHN PAUL'S TEACHINGS ON THE FAMILY**

A weekend retreat will take place in Star of the Sea Retreat Centre, Mullaghmore, Sligo on February 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> to expound on St. John Paul's teachings on Family and Prolife issues. It will be a weekend of formation, prayer, intercession and fellowship. The retreat will be directed by Fr Maurice Colgan O.P. Full board €140 with own private room. Please contact Angela 086-3342289/Lisa 087-6284621 for more information.

**EDDIE STONE**—Bus to Emmanuel House, Clonfert on Saturday, 4th February as part of the five First Saturday devotion to Our Lady of Fatima. For details tel 086 8383725.

**ST BERNADETTE'S CHAPEL**, Rockwood Parade. Mass will be celebrated on Monday February 6th at 5.15 pm. All welcome.

**MERCY COLLEGE SLIGO ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES** will take place on Tuesdays in the Mercy College Italian at 7pm, German Beginners also 7pm and Intermediate at 8.15pm. For further information phone Mercy College on 9143476 or email [mercycollegesligo@eircom.net](mailto:mercycollegesligo@eircom.net).

**RETOUVAILLE** - A Lifeline for Married Couples: Do you feel lost, alone or bored in your marriage? Are you hurt, frustrated or angry with your spouse? Does talking about it only make it worse? The Retrouvaille programme can help marriages at all stages. Next programme starts 10th – 12th February 2017. For information contact Tony & Anne (01) 495 3536, Mike & Anne (01) 450 0922, or email [info@retrouvaille.ie](mailto:info@retrouvaille.ie) or visit [www.retrouvaille.ie](http://www.retrouvaille.ie)

**FAMILY CARERS IRELAND** are providing the QQI Level 5 Healthcare Support Award in your area based on demand in February 2017. One Day workshops also available. Tel: 0579322920.

**ELPHIN DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES** Monday 28<sup>th</sup> August to Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2017. For further information and to book contact JWT on 01 2410800.

**CATHOLIC MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER** Gift yourselves a special weekend break together to boost and refresh your relationship by making a Marriage Renewal Weekend. The next Weekend will be at The Creggan Court Hotel, Athlone from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2017. For more info and / or to book, visit [www.marriageencounter.ie](http://www.marriageencounter.ie) or call 087 7840408. Weekends are presented by Catholic Marriage Encounter in Ireland.

**Anniversary & remembrances**



DAY	8.00am	10.30am
MON 30 <sup>th</sup>	MICHAEL MCLOUGHLIN	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary</b> WILFRED & MARGARET RENNICK
TUES 31 <sup>st</sup>	MICHAEL & JOHN MASTERSON	CHRISTY QEENAN
WED 1 <sup>st</sup>	—	<b>Months Mind</b> SEAN MCGUINNESS
THURS 2 <sup>nd</sup>	—	KATIE MCDERMOTT
FRI 3 <sup>rd</sup>	—	<b>Months Mind</b> MICHAEL MCDONAGH 7.00 PM MAUREEN MULLEN
SAT 4 <sup>th</sup>	MARGARET ALLEN	<b>Months Mind (10.30am)</b> HELEN KERRIN

**Rest in peace** Your prayers are asked for the repose of the souls of: CLAIRE BREEN, Heather View & formerly Carrick-on Shannon; TONY BRENNAN, Maugheraboy and PATSY BOLAND, aunt of Pauline Cushman. *May God grant them eternal rest and comfort and console their bereaved families and friends.*