



SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

1812 Lynn Avenue • Altoona, Wisconsin 54720 Vol. 44 • No. 37

FR. ALAN GUANELLA

The Requirements of Prayer

In St. Thomas Aquinas' *Commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, Aquinas makes an interesting reference when commenting on prayer. Aquinas mentions that St. Paul speaks of *petition* and then goes on to say that Paul mentions four things required in every prayer. Let us examine each of these four things in further detail.

The first thing Aquinas says is required of every prayer is that "prayer implies the ascent of the mind to God." In a certain sense, this is the very definition of prayer itself. Now, for Aquinas, the notion of prayer is rooted in *petition*. One prays when one asks something of God. But it would seem rather peculiar that Aquinas, with this petitionary understanding of prayer, is saying that *all* prayer implies the ascent of the mind to God. This is a good definition of what we today simply call *prayer*. It is interesting to note that Aquinas, in stating this first requirement of prayer, is really stating the implication of *what* prayer is, not really what is *required* of prayer. On the other hand, one could say that Aquinas must say this first requirement because there is no other way to pray than by the ascent of the mind to God.

But what does this ascent mean? Is it simply lifting one's mind to God? In today's modern understanding of prayer, it would seem so: that by simply lifting one's mind to God, one is able to pray. But it would seem that Aquinas is saying a bit more than only this. It would seem that for Aquinas, for one to pray he must lift his mind to God, yes, but also that his mind must *ascend* to God, that is, the one praying needs to raise not only his thoughts but also his very being. This is how one today might differentiate between talking *with* God and talking *at* God.

The second requirement of prayer that Aquinas lists is that it should be "accompanied by confidence of obtaining, and this from God's mercy." This is a remarkable aspect of Aquinas' commentary here: Aquinas states that *all* prayer requires that the one praying be confident that he will be obtain his request from the mercy of God. How often do we pray for something, only hoping (in a human sense) that God will grant our request? Aquinas here states that we need to be *confident* that it will be granted. This is not a presumption of God's goodness but rather an affirmation of God's mercy. In fact, this confidence is a humble confidence rooted in Christ's passion and death. It is in this requirement that Aquinas teaches us how we are to act when we pray: that we are to be humbly confident and appeal to God's grace and holiness. The one praying does not deserve what he is to receive but he can be humble and confident before God that the merits of Christ's passion and death have won for us the grace to receive so great a gift.

The third requirement of prayer that Aquinas mentions in this commentary is that of thanksgiving. Aquinas states that every prayer must have an element of thanksgiving in it because "a person who is ungrateful for past benefits does not deserve to receive new ones." How quickly Christians forget to thank God for all they have received. Prayers of supplication are common, prayers of adoration and thanksgiving are rare. Aquinas here gives a rather stark explanation of why thanksgiving is important: that the one praying doesn't deserve anything (Cont. on pg. 2)

Parish Contact Information

Office 715-855-1294
Office Fax 715-855-8664
E-mail stmarypar@gmail.com
Website www.stmarys-altoona.com
Rectory 715-514-5113
Prayer Chain ... generalbook@charter.net
St Mary's School Office 715-830-2278
Regis Catholic Schools 715-830-2273

Parish Staff

Pastor,

Fr. Derek Sakowski 715-855-1294
Email frsakowski@gmail.com

Parochial Vicar,

Fr. Alan Guanella 715-855-1294
Email aguanella@crossae.org

Parish Secretary/Administrative Assistant,
Sharon Stearns 715-855-1294

Director of Religious Education,

Mary Kneer 715-835-1692

Director of Sacred Music,

Josh Gallagher 262-203-3552

Maintenance, M Marcon ... 715-855-1294

Schedule of Masses

Weekend:

Saturday (vigil)	4:00 pm
Sunday	11:00 am
	1:00 pm (Spanish)
<i>Mass at St. Raymond's Sat. 6:00 pm</i>	
	<i>Sun. 8:30 am</i>

Sacramental Celebrations

Confession: St. Mary's: Saturday from 10:00 am –12:00 pm or by appointment.
St. Raymond's: Thursday at 7:00-9:00 pm
Baptism: Call parish office for appointment.
Marriage: At least six months advance notice. Call parish office for appointment.

MASS INTENTIONS

September 19/27

Sat. 4:00 pm † Bill Bluem
Sun. 11:00 am † Jerry Shermo
1:00 pm Spanish Mass: St Mary's & St Raymond's Parishioners
Mon. No Mass
Tue. 8:00 am Mass at St. Raymond's
Wed. 8:00 am † Lee Torres
Thu. 8:00 am Mass at St. Raymond's
3:00 pm Mass at Fall Creek NH
Fri. 9:00 am † Luanne Wanke
Sat. 4:00 pm † Joseph Slota
Sun. 11:00 am † Cherie & Steven Boley
1:00 pm Spanish Mass: St Mary's & St Raymond's Parishioners

(Cont. from pg. 1) new if he hasn't been thankful for what he's already been given. It seems like such a simple concept, yet children always need to be taught to say "thank you" when they receive something. How quickly this is forgotten when it involves God and yet everything we have—everything that we are—is a gift from God. It does make sense that Aquinas makes thanksgiving the third requirement of prayer.

Aquinas' fourth requirement of prayer is that it be a petition. One might question this fourth requirement as it might seem to be in conflict with the first one. This is not the case, however. The difference is in the verb: Aquinas states that prayer *implies* the ascent of the mind to God and that prayer *is* a petition. One is an implication, one is an essence. Thus, we see that for Aquinas, all prayer is, in essence, a petition. Does this equate with our modern understanding of prayer? Some people might disagree but if we acknowledge that God is the source of all, everything that is received from Him is a gift, and thus everything we ask is a petition. How does a prayer of adoration or thanksgiving alone fit into this? It is still the desire of the one praying to *want* to adore or thank God: it is a petition to God. The one praying can never thank God fully for what God has given him, so in a sense the petition is to make up for what is lacking in the prayer of the person praying.

Thus, Aquinas concludes by reflecting on these four requirements: "all the prayers of the Church contain these four marks: first of all, God is invoked; secondly, the divine benefits are thankfully acknowledged; thirdly, a benefit is requested; and finally, the supplication is made is made: 'Through our Lord...'" Certainly one can see how the collects from Mass and the liturgy reflect this four-fold requirement of prayer. In the modern understanding of prayer, this four-fold definition is perhaps not the most accurate way of describing prayer, but it would seem to shed light on *what* prayer is and even to promote a method of prayer using these requirements as the steps in the practice of prayer.

Briefly, it should be stated that Aquinas reacts to why one needs to ask God for something if God already knows what is in the mind of the one praying. Aquinas states three reasons why one should petition God: First, so that the prayers may be approved in God's presence and counted worthy and holy. This prevents the one praying from requesting something evil. Second, so that we may recognize that our prayers always reach God by making them known to ourselves. And finally, thirdly, Aquinas states so that the angels may hear our petitions and intercede for us; not that God needs the angels to bring Him our petitions but because they intercede for us, an intercession which is their very ministry. These three reasons sufficiently and adequately explain while God knows our petitions, we still need to bring them to Him so that they may be counted worthy and holy.

BINGO VOLUNTEERS

Bingo is every Tuesday evening. Begin selling at 6:00 pm. Early bird bingo starts at 7:00 pm. Regular bingo starts at approximately 7:30 pm. Bring the family and enjoy a fun evening together.

Thank you to our bingo workers for their dedication: Bob Hawker (supervisor); Carol Mastej (caller); Mona Kleist, Judy Ciske, Rachel Olson, Dru Pace, Colleen Campbell, Andrea Duncan, Bridgit Chilson Dave Cullinan (workers); Linda Schuh (pull tab); PCCW (concession). Thank you.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education Teachers needed: 7th Grade teacher is needed for the 2015-2016 school year. Please contact Fr. Sakowski or Mary Kneer.

Religious Education Registration, Wednesday, September 23, 6-7 p.m. in the narthex. If you have a child starting 1st Grade reli-

gious education, receiving First Holy Communion or Confirmation, please bring their baptismal certificate.

Religious Education Classes begin Wed., Sep. 30, grades 1-8 meet 6-7 p.m. & grades 9-10 meet 6-7:30 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

Sep. 20, PCCW General Meeting after 11 a.m. Mass. Guest speaker: Moira Kneer on "Mary: A Woman For All Seasons" Bring a dish to pass for a potluck luncheon. All women are invited!!

Sep. 22, Young Adult Meeting 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Sep. 22, Financial Peace University, 6:30 p.m. For more info, call 715-379-6792.

Sep. 23, Religious Education Registration in the narthex, 6-7 p.m.

Sep. 23, RCIA, 6:30-8:30 p.m., every other Wednesday. For more info, email frsakowski@gmail.com or go to www.srsmRCIA.com

Sep. 24, Understanding the Scriptures Bible study, 6:30-8p.m.

Sep. 25-27, St. Mary's Fall Festival

Sep. 28, ABCD's of Medicare 1-3 p.m.

Oct. 8, Mission Ladies, 10-2 p.m. Potluck luncheon at noon. All women invited.

Oct. 11, Social Sunday after 11 a.m. Mass in the Community Center.

Oct. 13, The Bible Timeline Study, 9 a.m. All women are invited to participate. To register for the study or for more information, contact Marianne by Oct. 2 at macallaghan115@gmail.com or 715-835-8840.

Oct. 14, Adoration 8:30 a.m.—8:30 p.m. Please sign-up for an hour with our Eucharistic Lord. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex. Adoration is on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

Please check out the bulletin board for detailed information.

Please submit information for the bulletin by Monday and inserts by Wednesday before that weekend.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Week of September 20, 2015

Sun: Wis 2:12, 17-20/Jas 3:16-4:3/Mk 9:30-37

Mon: Eph 4:1-7, 11-13/Mt 9:9-13

Tue: Ezr 6:7-8, 12b, 14-20/Lk 8:19-21

Wed: Ezr 9:5-9/Lk 9:1-6

Thu: Hg 1:1-8/Lk 9:7-9

Fri: Hg 2:1-9/Lk 9:18-22

Sat: Zec 2:5-9, 14-15a/Lk 9:43b-45

Sun: Nm 11:25-29/Jas 5:1-6/Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48



LITURGICAL MINISTERS

The Weekend of 26/27

Lectors

4:00 pm R Endres
11:00 am M Doney

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

4:00 pm R Kneer
11:00 am L King

Servers

4:00 pm L Kovacevich, M Talley, I Petersilka
11:00 am T Doney, M & N Mullenberg

Attendant Servers

4:00 pm R Kneer
11:00 am J Fox

Organists

4:00 pm S Alexander
11:00 am J Gallagher

Cantors

4:00 pm S Stearns
11:00 am L Gallagher

Ushers

4:00 pm R Verdean C Lynum, M Rohn,
P Connell
11:00 am B Behounek, R Mullenberg, J
Cooley, M Chilson

Counters C Mastey, I Lewis, J Thom

BAPTISM PREPARATION

Expecting a child? Begin the baptismal preparation now. The next brunch at St. Mary's is **Sun., Oct. 4**, 12:15-2 p.m. and the baptismal prep class is **Mon., Oct. 5**, 6-7 p.m. At St. Raymond's, the baptismal prep class is on **Thu., Dec. 10**, at 6-7 p.m. and the luncheon is on **Sat., Nov. 14** at 7:15-9 p.m. Baptism information, forms, and documents are available online at www.stmarys-altoona.com. At least two (2) months advance notice needed. See website for details, or contact parish office now to start the process.

KNIGHTS NEWS

Regular Monthly Meeting, Mon., Oct. 5, 6 p.m. Officers meeting in the Knights room, followed by regular meeting at 7 p.m.



STEWARDSHIP

Last Week

Adults	\$9,838.99
Endowment Fund	\$0.00
Young People.....	\$0.00
Children	\$9.16
Offertory.....	\$1,085.52
Total	\$10,933.67
Capital Campaign (Rec'd to Date)	\$244,349.55

ELIZABETH MINISTRY



- To add a name, due date/birth date, request a meal, or to volunteer, please call Emily Thurner at 715-864-3048.
- Please pray for those who are expecting.

*Thank you for giving of your time to this ministry.
It is appreciated by those who are blessed.*

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please Pray For... Please keep Cliff Abrahamson, Pat Gerseth, Richard Lasiuk, Jim Ramsay, Betty Nelson, JoAnn Deters, Sr. Theodore Nelson, Karen Solberg, Shelly Allen, Sheila Lehnen, Foresten Family, Lucille Welter, Mary Beth Pierce, Pat & Don Kamrowski, Lee & Darlene Henrichs, Linda Gesche, Eileen Niehoff, Megan Olszewski, Roger Forcier, Jeanne Reali, Clarence Nowobielski, Julie Rohn, Arla McFadden, Duane Fanetti, Walt Nguyen, Danell Leland, Linda Gabriel, Rose and Kevin Sigmund, Dick Sires, Sarah Marble, Bob & Betty Haas, Plets family, Erica Nerbonne, Ron Sisko, Steve & Ella May Kassa, Judy Ciske, Kelly Hawker, Maureen Kollar, Ed Hofacker, Sam P, Eleanor Wildrick, Dave Rosener, Mike Moses, Carol Bridges Rothfus, Abby Williamson, infant Elizabeth and her parents, Laurie, Lucille Plautz, Kip Schultz, Doreen Bauer, Kristin Soley, Dylan Snyder, Sue Arrell, Pabich intention, Melgard intention and their families in your prayers.



REMINDERS & TIDBITS

Gluten Allergy? You have the option of a low gluten host beginning September 6. Simply approach the priest's communion line and ask him.

Adorers needed at Benedictine Chapel on Tuesdays, 12-1 p.m. Call Ann at 715-874-5794.

Understanding the Scriptures Bible Study will begin on Thursday, September 24, 6:30-8 p.m. in the Conference Room. To register and for more info call Steve at 715-579-7734 or email ssgberry1842@gmail.com.

A Journey to Healing and Forgiveness through God's Mercy is the focus for the diocesan Gospel of Life Celebration, Oct. 8 beginning at 6 p.m., at Blessed Sacrament Parish in La Crosse.

Elegant Autumn Tea, Sun., Oct. 11, 1-4 p.m. at Notre Dame Parish Life Center, Chippewa Falls. Please join us for the annual Elegant Autumn Tea to be hosted at the Notre Dame Parish Life Center, 22 South Prairie Street, Chippewa Falls on Sunday, October 11 from 1-4 p.m. This afternoon will include some delightful entertainment and delicacies as well as an uplifting presentation by inspiring speaker Pat Millea. Please pick up an invitation registration today! Contact Beth DeCook edecook@wwt.net or 715-874-4776, if you have any questions. Reservations required. Nursing infants welcome. \$15 Early Bird registration by Sep. 28, \$20 by Oct. 5.

Presentation: *Living Out an Ancient Faith in a Modern World*: Pat Millea is a life-long, wacky

Catholic who is blessed to serve as Director of Senior High Faith Formation at a vibrant parish in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota. Pat will engage and inspire any audience with his upbeat style, his energetic commitment to the faith and his personal approach to speaking. Pat prays and plays with his beautiful wife and children in St. Paul, MN. *Find info, media & more about how to bring Pat to your community at www.pat-millea.com.*

Men of the Cross Catholic Men's Conference "The Call to Fatherhood", Sat., Oct. 24, at Viterbo University Fine Arts Center, La Crosse. Cost, \$35 /person, \$40 after Oct. 10. To register go to www.menofthecross.org/

Large baskets needed for Fall Festival Silent Auction. Accepting gently used and new items. Please place your donation in the Silent Auction box in the Narthex.

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\$CRIP NEWS

\$crip Volunteers for next weekend,

4:00 pm (Mary Kneer and volunteer),
11:00 am (Loann Sumner and volunteer)

Last Week

Number of Orders.....	21
Amount Sold	\$4,735
Profit (approximately).....	\$236.75
Monthly Profit	\$448.00

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