

1008674

Lahey, Thomas Aquinas
Instructions for Distributors...
- AEQ 6857 c. 1

Instructions for Distributors of "My Daily Prayer" Cards

There are millions of good, religious-minded people in the world who, because of ignorance, misunderstanding, certain honest but unaccountable prejudices, or the opposition of others are prevented from coming into the Church. Does that mean that all hope for their salvation is lost? By no means. Even though for the moment these people cannot be brought to see their obligations of coming to God through the regularly established channels—they do hold out their arms to Him in the yearning of their minds and hearts.

Now we know from Our Lord's life on earth that God never turns His back on people with such dispositions. The Church, as God's organ on earth, acknowledges the possibility of such people entering Heaven without the regular Sacrament of Baptism; when, for some good reason, that Sacrament is impossible and the persons in question make acts of Perfect Contrition or Love, such acts constituting what the Church calls Baptism of Desire. As one expression of her eagerness to help these separated children, she has given her approval to "My Daily Prayer," as it is called, which has been composed with a view to making more

certain and easy the progress of well-meaning non-Catholics into Heaven.

You will notice in reading the prayer that it contains an act of Faith in the fundamental teachings of Christ, an act of Hope, Love, and Perfect Contrition for all sins committed, a plea for the Mercy of God, as well as an act of Desire to do all that is necessary for salvation—a combination which, in the mind of the Church, is equivalent to that Baptism of Desire which is sufficient in itself to open the gates of Heaven to an unbaptized soul which, on account of circumstances, is unable to receive the regularly established Baptism of Water.

If therefore you have a well-meaning non-Catholic friend who for some reason cannot be brought into the Faith through the regular method of instruction and Baptism, you can help to bring that soul to Christ by presenting him or her with one of these cards with the request to recite the prayer thereon at least once a day. You do not need to mention anything about the ultimate purpose of your action—in fact, generally you should not. Simply explain how completely the prayer covers the spiritual needs of the soul, how powerful it is in its appeal to God—and then request its fervent daily recital.

If your friend happens to be suffering from some fatal ailment or if some unforeseen accident overtakes him or her, you can be reasonably certain

that by means of that prayer the gates of heaven will be opened through the Baptism of Desire which resulted from its sincere recital. If your friend happens to be in perfect health and destined to remain so for a long time, that recital may bring to a groping soul the light which may mean the actual entrance into God's holy Church. In any case, even if nothing comes of your effort, you have the satisfaction of knowing that you have made the actual effort to save an immortal soul.

In other words, you have done your part towards bringing a soul to God, and God will reward your efforts no matter whether that soul enters Heaven or not. But of this you can be assured: If you make the effort whenever the opportunity offers, not only one but many souls will be saved as a result of your efforts. Just think what a reward that will be, to have actually saved souls for Christ. To win that reward, some of our greatest Saints have spent their entire lives in penance, some of them even undergoing martyrdom for the opportunity. Yet, you can save souls so easily simply by distributing these prayer cards in a tactful, understanding way.

Two important final recommendations: 1. This instruction card is to be kept for the guidance of the distributor, not to be given to the patient. Doing the latter might destroy the whole effectiveness of the prayer by causing a lot of unneces-

sary misunderstanding. 2. When you distribute the prayer cards, be sure to urge the patient to put his whole heart and soul into the prayer and try his very best to make the sentiments expressed on the card his own sentiments. Much of the efficacy of the prayer will depend upon that.

REV. THOMAS A. LAHEY, C.S.C.

Prayer cards are available in English (different designs and Braille), French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish, Slovenian, Slovak, Croatian, Lithuanian, Bohemian, Hungarian, Finnish, Russian, Ukrainian, Greek, Chinese and Japanese.

By writing to any of the following addresses, you can receive samples and price lists of different designs for quantity orders of cards:

A. Rt. Rev. R. J. Markham, S.T.D.

Compton Road, Hartwell

Cincinnati 15, Ohio.

B. Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis

St. Clare Convent, Hartwell

Cincinnati 15, Ohio.

C. Sister M. Carmelita, R.S.M.

Convent of Mercy, 1409 Freeman Ave.

Cincinnati 14, Ohio.