

*Intercessory Poetry*

To our most Holy Father Saint Benedict (1658)

[281] Most glorious *Father*, in whose School<sup>1</sup>  
I live and hope to die,  
*God* grant I may observe<sup>2</sup> thy *Rule*,  
For in that all doth lie.  
For no perfection can be named, 5  
Which us it doth not teach.  
O happy she, who in her soul,  
The sense thereof doth reach!  
But many praise Obedience  
And thy humility, 10  
And yet conceive<sup>3</sup> not as they should,  
What either of them be.  
The simple humble *loving* souls  
Only the sense find out  
Of any discreet, obedient *Rule*, 15  
And these are void of doubt.  
Yea, under shadow of thy wings  
They up to heaven fly,  
And taste here in this vale of tears  
What perfect *peace* doth lie, 20  
Hid in performance of thy *Rule*  
That leadeth unto heaven;  
[282] O happy souls who it perform,  
The ways so sweet and even!  
By Prayer and Patience it's fulfilled, 25  
Charity, Obedience,  
By seeking after *God* alone,  
And giving none offense.  
The more I look upon thy *Rule*,  
The more in it I find; 30  
O do to me the sense unfold,  
For letter makes us blind!<sup>4</sup>  
And blessed, yea, a thousand times,  
Be thou who it hast writ,  
And thy sweet blessing give to them, 35  
Who truly perform it.

---

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the Prologue of the Benedictine Rule, which refers to the Benedictine monastery as a "school of God's service" (Dominici schola servitii).

<sup>2</sup> Obey.

<sup>3</sup> Understand.

<sup>4</sup> "Who also hath made us fit ministers of the new testament, not in the letter, but in the spirit. For the letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth" (2 Corinthians 3:6, Douay-Rheims Bible).

