

*Intercessory Poetry*

To our most Holy Father Saint Benedict (1658)

[281]	Most glorious <i>Father</i> in whose School, <sup>1</sup> I liue and hope to dye, <i>God</i> grant I may obserue thy <i>Rule</i> , for in that al doth lye. For no perfection can be named, which vs it doth not teach. 5 O happy she, who in her soul, the sense thereof doth reach! But many praise Obedience and thy humility, 10 And yet conceaue not as they should, what either of them be. The simple humble <i>louing</i> souls only the sense find out Of any discret obedient <i>Rule</i> , 15 and these are void of doubt. Yea vnder shadow of thy wings they vp to heauen fly, And tast heere in this vaile of teares what perfect <i>peace</i> doth lye, 20 Hid in performance of thy <i>Rule</i> that leadeth vnto heauen;
[282]	O happy souls who it performe, the ways so sweet and euen! By Prayer and Patience its fulfilled, 25 Charity, Obedience, By seeking after <i>God</i> alone, and giuing none offence. The more I looke vpon thy <i>Rule</i> , the more in it I find, 30 O do to me the sense vnfold, For letter makes vs blind! <sup>2</sup> And blessed, yea a thousand times, Be thou who it hast writ, And thy sweet blessing giue to them, 35 who truly performe it. For those are they which wil conserue this house in perfect <i>peace</i> ,

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<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.”

<sup>2</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).

Without which al we do, is lost,  
    and al thats good wil cease.                   40  
And praised be our glorious *God*,  
    who gaue to thee such grace,  
Not only *him* thy-self to seeke,  
    but also out to trace  
A way so easy and secure,                   45  
    if we wil but thee heare,  
To haue relation to our *God*,  
    who is to vs so neere,  
For at this thou dost chiefly aime,  
    that *God* our souls do teach.                   50  
O if we did truly obey,  
    *he* would by al things preach  
*His wil* to vs by euery thing  
    that did to vs befall;  
And then as thou desirst it should           55  
    *he* would be *al in al*—  
O pray deare Father that he euer be,  
    our only *loue* and *al* eternally. *Amen.*

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