



A Catholic Women's League led mission on behalf of Divine Infant Parish, Orleans, ON



THE SIXTH BEATITUDE



"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matthew 5:8)

Presented by the Pastoral Care Ministry

Bringing Our Lord Jesus to the sick and the homebound, providing a compassionate presence, prayer and the Eucharist to those who can no longer attend Mass at our parish in Orleans.



"God thus teaches us that, in His eyes, old age is a time of blessing and grace, and that the elderly are, for Him, the first witnesses of hope."

(Pope Leo XIV, July 2025, in his Message for the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly)

The Beatitudes reveal the divine path and purpose for a life lived in the name of Jesus. They are statements of grace, not law, revealed to us by Christ Himself. Through them He reveals the spiritual attributes that, by God's Grace, will ultimately guide us to His Kingdom.



The Beatitudes lead us from a life of material comfort and aspiration towards one of selflessness lead by the Spirit. (Pope Francis, *General Audience, Library of the Apostolic Palace, 29 April 2020*)

Presented in hierarchical fashion the Beatitudes infer that each one builds systematically upon the foundation of the first: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3) and ends on the eighth "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:11). (To see the progression of all eight Beatitude, please see the diagram on page 11).

This booklet will take you through a journey of learning about and living the sixth Beatitude, "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God*" over the course of two months.

In total there will be 7 weeks of challenges for you to complete. The challenges of Part I will focus on learning about this Beatitude. The challenges of Part II will focus on activities which help you to live this Beatitude; to do things for yourself, for your family and for your community



PART I: LEARNING ABOUT THE BEATITUDE

WEEK 1 CHALLENGE ~ POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION

Let us first begin learning about the sixth Beatitude by reading Pope Frances' reflection. As you read it, consider what it means to be pure in heart, and how you will see God?



POPE FRANCIS
GENERAL AUDIENCE

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good Morning,

Today, let us read together the sixth Beatitude which promises the vision of God and has *purity of heart* as a condition.

There is a Psalm that reads: "my heart says to thee, 'Thy face, Lord, do I seek.' Hide not thy face from me" (Ps 27[28]:8-9).

This language manifests the thirst for a personal relationship with God, not a mechanical one, not a somewhat vague one, no: personal, which the Book of Job also expresses as a sign of a sincere relationship. The Book of Job reads: "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see thee" (42:5). And often I think that this is the journey of life, in our relationship with God. We know God from hearsay, but with our experience, we go forward, forward, forward, and in the end, we come to know him directly, if we are faithful ... And this is the maturity of the Spirit.

How do we reach this intimacy, to know God with our eyes? We can think of the disciples at Emmaus, for example, who have the Lord beside them but "their eyes were kept from recognizing him" (Lk 24:16). The Lord will open their eyes at the end of a journey that culminates with the breaking of bread and had begun with a scolding: "O Foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk 24:25). This is the reprimand at the beginning. It is the root of their blindness: their hearts were foolish and slow. And when the heart is foolish and slow, things cannot be seen. Things appear foggy. Herein lies the wisdom of this Beatitude: in order to contemplate it, we need to enter within ourselves and make room for God because, as Saint Augustine says, God is "more inward than my innermost self" ("*interior intimo meo*" Confessions iii, 6, 11). In order to see God, there is neither the need to change eyeglasses or vantage point, nor to change the theological authors who teach the path: we need to free the heart from its deception. This is the only path.

This is a decisive maturity: when we realize that our worst enemy is often hidden within our heart. The most noble battle is the one against the inner deception that creates our sins. Because sins change our inner vision, they change our evaluation of things. They make us see things that are not real or at least not *that* real.

It is thus important to understand what *purity of heart* is. In order to do so, we should remember that, for the Bible, the heart does not consist only in feelings, but rather it is a human being's most intimate place, the inner space where people are themselves. This is according to the Bible.

The Gospel of Matthew itself says "if our eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness" (Matt 6:23). This light is the gaze of the heart, the perspective, synthesis and the point from which reality can be seen (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 143).

But what does having a "*pure*" heart mean? A pure heart lives in the presence of the Lord, preserving in the heart what is worthy of the relationship with him. Only in this way can one possess an intimate life that is "*unified*", linear and unwinding.

A purified heart is, therefore, the result of a process that implies liberation and renunciation. Those who are pure of heart are not born that way but rather they have experienced an inner simplification, learning to renounce the evil within oneself, which the Bible calls circumcision of the heart (cf. Dt 10:16; 30:6, Ex 44:9; Jer 4:4).

This inner purification implies recognition of the part of the heart that is under the influence of evil — “You know Father, I feel this way, I think this way, I see this way and this is bad”: recognizing the bad part, the part that is clouded by evil — in order to learn the art of always allowing ourselves to be trained and guided by the Holy Spirit. The journey from a sick heart, from a sinful heart, from a heart that cannot see things well because it is in sin, to the fullness of the light of the heart, is the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the one who guides us to take this journey. Through this journey of the heart, we can achieve “seeing God”.

In this *beatific vision*, there is an escatological dimension of the future, as with all Beatitudes: it is the joy of the Kingdom of Heaven towards which we are directed. But there is also the other dimension: to see God means understanding the design of Providence in what happens to us, to recognize his presence in the Sacraments, his presence in our brothers and sisters, especially the poor and the suffering, and to recognize God there where he manifests himself (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2519).

This Beatitude is somewhat the fruit of the preceding ones: if we have listened to the thirst for good that dwells within us and we are aware of living of mercy, a journey of freedom begins which lasts an entire lifetime and leads us to Heaven. It is serious work, work that is carried out by the Holy Spirit if we give him the room to do it, if we are open to the action of the Holy Spirit. This is why we can say that it is mostly the work of God in us — in the trials and the purifications of life — and this is the work of God and of the Holy Spirit who brings great joy, true and profound peace. Let us not be afraid, let us open the doors of our heart to the Holy Spirit so that he may purify us and lead us forward in this journey towards full joy.

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Action: This week let us take the opportunity to spend some quiet time and

1. contemplate Pope Francis’ words on the need to free the heart from its deception in order to reach intimacy with God.
2. reflect in prayer on the importance of inner integrity, purity of heart and single-minded devotion to God.

What will you do this week to make room for the Holy Spirit to purify your heart so you can live daily in the presence of God, actively putting Christ’s teachings into practice through love, kindness, and compassion towards others?



WEEK 2 CHALLENGE ~ SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

***“You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.”
(Confessions 1.1.1).***

St. Augustine's battle with chastity and towards purity, is as inspirational as it is well-known. For many years he struggled to change his life, while at the same time being so completely enslaved to his sins that he was unable to make the changes necessary.



Augustine and his family were Berbers, an ethnic group indigenous to North Africa. He was born in November 354 AD in modern-day Algeria, on the fringes of the Roman Empire that was declining in its status as a global superpower. His father was an ill-tempered pagan, while his mother, St. Monica, was a model Christian who prayed incessantly for the conversion of her family.

St. Augustine needed a conversion to purity of heart. He lived a hedonistic lifestyle. He and his friends routinely stole and boasted of carnal exploits. Augustine recalls in the *Confessions* that as a boy he stole fruit not because he wanted it but because it was not allowed. *“It was foul, and I loved it. I loved my own error—not that for which I erred, but the error itself.”*

“Too late have I loved you”

Augustine became a great intellectual, and at age 30, a professor of Rhetoric in the city of Milan. He lived in relative luxury and enjoyed a life of sin. He was drawn to Christianity at the age of 31 through listening to the teachings of St. Ambrose – whom he admired for his rhetorical prowess – and through the constant encouragement, prayers, example and actions of his mother, St. Monica. He was baptized at age 32.

St. Augustine had this gift of purity of heart, and it went from unchastity, even asking God to let him be unchaste for a while – “O Lord, make me chaste, but not yet!” (Confessions 8,7) - to a purity of heart when nothing else would satisfy him but God. Original sin, he believed, was manifested in our desire to be cruel to others, and our constant anxieties, pride and egotism. According to Augustine, our lives are imperfect by definition because we are human. He reminds us that, while we must fight with all our strength, the true source of our purity comes from *the power of God’s grace*. We are set free from sin by Christ through the power of His Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

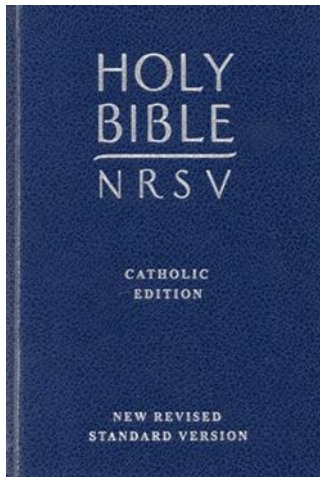
Without the Holy Spirit, we are as helpless in the battle for purity as Augustine was.

“Christ is not valued at all, unless He is valued above all” (St. Augustine, Sermon 123)

Action: We live in a restless society, in a culture that distracts and pulls our hearts in every direction. St. Augustine gave voice to this great ache of the soul, when he wrote, *“Our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”* **This week let us take a moment to pause and reflect on our own restlessness.** It is a great consolation that the Lord Jesus gently shepherds us, through the powerful intercession of His Mother, the Holy Spirit and all the Saints, each encouraging virtuous living and a deeper prayer life, with the intention of strengthening our interior life and the ultimate goal of keeping ourselves in the peaceful presence of God as much as possible.

WEEK 3 CHALLENGE ~ SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 24, our Scripture reading this week, is a psalm that makes demands of us. It tells us of the conditions required for receiving the Kingdom of God. It speaks about the characteristics of someone who can approach God's presence, emphasizing the importance of both "**clean hands**" and a "**pure heart**": those who *do no evil* and *think no evil*. (Holy Bible, NRSV, New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition, *Psalms*, Imprimatur, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops)



PSALM 24: 3 -5

ENTRANCE INTO THE TEMPLE

A Psalm of David

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?

And who shall stand in His holy place?

Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,

who do not lift up their souls to what is false,

and do not swear deceitfully.

He will receive blessing from the LORD,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

Clean hands refers to our ethical conduct. A pure heart goes even further: it refers to all our intentions, all that we think, and all that we intend to do. For example, it is one thing to commit adultery (*conduct*). It's another if you have lustful thoughts (*intention*). In the sixth Beatitude, Our Lord underlines the importance of the pure intentions of the heart.

We see this also in 1 Samuel 16:7 ***"For the Lord sees not as mortals sees; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart"***. Being pure of heart is far more than passive chastity. It is a single-mindedness in following God absolutely. It is a recognition of what God inscribed in our heart right from the beginning. He put a desire for Him in there and He allows us a lifetime to recognize that this is truly what we want and it is truly going to satisfy us more than anything else. It is *only* when we are seeking Him that we can truly be happy. (Kapaun's Men <https://watch.formed.org/kapaun-s-men>)

Purity of heart is a virtue continually developed and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. It is active practice, not a passive state. It is built over time through cultivation of habit, the rightful stewarding of our thinking patterns and actions that become ingrained in character. The movement is from corruption into purity which is a gradual and lifelong process only possible through divine grace.

The impure cannot love God; and those who are without love of God cannot really be pure. Purity prepares the soul for love, and love confirms the soul in purity. (St. John Henry Cardinal Newman)

ACTION: Let us take intentional steps this week to reorient our lives to God and to cultivate a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus. Prioritize daily time for prayer and Lectio Divina: meditating on the words of Sacred Scripture to have a fruitful conversation with God and build strong spiritual roots. It provides the framework to understand God's will and transform our lives according to His purpose.

"Abide in me, as I abide in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me". (John 15:4)

PART II: LIVING THE BEATITUDE

WEEK 4 CHALLENGE ~ LIVING THE BEATITUDE AS AN INDIVIDUAL

It is essential to understand the full meaning of this beatitude as it encompasses so many elements of our human behaviours consequently impacting our relationship with God. **Purity of Heart** not only refers to sexual purity, it focuses on other aspects of purity and on the importance of '*inner integrity and a sincere devotion to God alone*' without any other divided loyalties – '*No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.*' (Matthew: 6:24)

The heart of this beatitude focuses on our complete devotion to God - '*a single-minded desire to wholly dedicate oneself to God and his glory*'. Such loyalty leads to a transformation and a deeper connection with the divine.

Other aspects of Purity of Heart include:



Living with Integrity

Cultivating a heart free from deceit, hypocrisy and malice.

- Doing what is right in all situations.
- Being honest with yourself and others.

Seeking God's Presence:

- Exercising spiritual discernment.
- Recognizing God's presence in yourself and your surroundings.

ACTION: This week let us look for opportunities:

1. ***To Reflect and Contemplate*** - Take time to be with the Lord and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in identifying your areas of vulnerability.
2. ***For Contrition & Reconciliation*** – Acknowledge any wrongdoings and express sorrow. Consider receiving the sacrament of reconciliation once this week: put yourself in the presence of God and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in preparing your daily examination of conscience.
3. ***To Express Gratitude*** - Thank God for the day's blessings. Thank the Lord for having guided you in this reflection and for all the wonders He has done and will continue to do in your life.

Above all, let us remind ourselves that **Purity of Heart** is about intention and the will to try, the will to accept defeat and the will to try again!

WE DON'T HAVE TO HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS. The journey is ongoing and God promises to guide us if we just reach out to Him.

*Let the words of my mouth and
the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer!
(Psalm 19:14)*

WEEK 5 CHALLENGE ~ LIVING THE BEATITUDE AS A FAMILY

The family is the first place the Beatitudes are shared and lived. The Catholic Church considers the home to be the 'domestic Church' because what we do in our homes, and as a family, is considered holy and sacred.

The sixth Beatitude, "**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God,**" can be profoundly understood within the context of family life. It is a call to cultivate an undivided heart, devoted to God and to one another. This beatitude asks that we prioritize God's presence, guidance, and principles in every aspect of family life. It means seeking to understand and follow His will in daily interactions and decisions, not just on Sundays and during religious services.



***'How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!'** (Psalm 133.1).*

Cultivating an Undivided Heart: Refers to giving complete love and loyalty to God, and also extends to loving and being loyal to one another within the family unit. It involves striving to embody the character of Christ as a family, in words and actions, regardless of the circumstances.

ACTION: This week let us look for opportunities:

1. To Create a Space for God in the Home for:

- a. **Prayer and Worship** - Make prayer a regular part of family life, fostering a sense of connection with God and each other.
- b. **Spiritual Conversations** - Engage in conversations about faith, values, and God's presence in your lives. A good spiritual conversation in the Ignatian practice is about *listening* to the other.
- c. **Hospitality** - Open your home to others, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that reflects God's love. Hospitality is a means to serve others and Christ in them.

2. To Live with Pure Intentions:

- a. **Sincere Love** - Within the family is crucial and multifaceted. It's a love that mirrors the love of the Trinity, flowing from the mutual love of spouses to their children, and encompassing forgiveness, selflessness, empathy and a commitment to holiness.
- b. **Forgiveness and Reconciliation** - Forgiveness is the path to freedom for a pure heart. Understand that holding onto resentment only poisons you. Forgiveness and reconciliation are vital for healing wounds, keeping family relationships, and fostering a loving and harmonious home environment.

3. To See God in Each Other and in Creation:

- a. **Recognizing God's Image** - See each family member as created in God's image and likeness, and treat them with respect, love, and compassion.
- b. **Finding God's Work in Nature** – Take the time to appreciate the beauty and wonder of the natural world together. Creation is a powerful reminder of His grace, love and benevolence.
- c. **Being receptive to God's love and grace** - Grace is undeserved, unmerited, unearned — a pure gift. Gifts, to realize their full potential, must be received, opened, and used. We can create a more loving, peaceful, and God-centered environment every single day, where each member can experience the joy and blessings that come from a pure heart.

***'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me'** Psalm 51:10*

WEEK 6 CHALLENGE ~LIVING THE BEATITUDE AS A COMMUNITY

Purity in an impure world is a big ask. It means consciously striving to remove every unchaste thought, action, and inclination, *every moment of every day*, that mars the purity God demands from us. The sixth beatitude is not a mere suggestion; it is a divine mandate for you and me to cultivate a life of holiness. It challenges us not just to avoid sin but to actively guard, nurture, and promote purity in every aspect of our lives and those around us. In a world that often celebrates moral compromise, God calls His people to rise above, to shine as beacons of righteousness, and to uphold the sanctity of chastity with unwavering commitment. This approach to purity demands vigilance in every area of our lives.



As we are created in the image of a Trinitarian God, we are inherently relational beings designed for love and community. It is not enough for us to live lives of purity alone. We are called to be life rafts for one another, offering the conversation, prayer, and accountability that our brothers and sisters need. A community that prioritizes **purity of heart**, understood as a state of moral and spiritual integrity and single-minded devotion to God, can foster a profound experience of God's presence through various shared practices.

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” 1 Corinthians 12:12

ACTION: This week let us look for opportunities to:

Build a strong community through intentional participation: For example,

- a. **Cultivate meaningful, Christ-centered relationships:** Surround yourself with friends and mentors who will hold you accountable in your pursuit of purity. True community is essential in overcoming sin.
- b. **Be Present and Visible:** Integrity is the foundation of a pure heart. This means that your thoughts, words, and actions align with your values. You do the right thing even when it's hard. Showing up with trust in God, participating with a genuine desire to connect and contribute, and consistently demonstrating your commitment to your parish and community binds a pure heart.
- c. **Engage in daily individual and communal prayer:** Individual prayer allows for personal reflection and a deeper connection with the divine, while communal prayer fosters a sense of unity, shared purpose, and mutual support within a community.
- d. **Acts of Charity** - A pure heart cannot help but radiate kindness. Purity of heart blossoms through selfless service. Let us be devoted to making a positive difference, not to gain reward, but because uplifting others uplifts us too. With faith in Christ, we understand that all beings are interconnected and that our highest purpose is to be a conduit for more love and mercy in the world in His name.

In a world where impurity is not just tolerated but celebrated, we are called to be different. As we do, we will not only honor God but also become a powerful witness to the world around us, to people of all faiths, demonstrating the beauty and freedom of a life lived in obedience to Jesus' beatitudes.

“But if we walk in the light, as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin”. (1 John 1:7)

WEEK 7 CHALLENGE ~ BLESSINGS RECEIVED & CLOSING PRAYER

As our reflection on the *Sixth Beatitude* – **Blessed are the Pure of Heart** - draws to a close, let us continue to ponder its profound meaning and impact on our spiritual life by going back to Pope Francis' reflection (included at the beginning):-

“A pure heart lives in the presence of the Lord, preserving in the heart what is worthy of the relationship with him. Only in this way can one possess an intimate life that is ‘unified’...A purified heart is, therefore, the result of a process that implies liberation and renunciation. Those who are pure of heart are not born that way but rather they have experienced an inner simplification, learning to renounce the evil within oneself.”

The prayer below, the most celebrated prayer in *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, expresses his late realization and embrace of God's love. It provides a vivid interpretation of what St. Augustine experienced in his process of ‘inner simplification’ and his search to seek God.



LATE HAVE I LOVED YOU

Late have I loved you, Beauty so ancient and so new,

Late have I loved you!

Lo, you were within,

But I outside, seeking there for you,

And upon the shapely things you have made I rushed

Headlong.

I, mis-shapen.

You were with me, but I was not with you.

They held me back far from you,

Those things which would have no being

Were they not in you.

You called, shouted, broke through my deafness;

You flared, blazed, banished my blindness;

You lavished your fragrance, I gasped, and now I pant for you.

I tasted you, and I hunger and thirst;

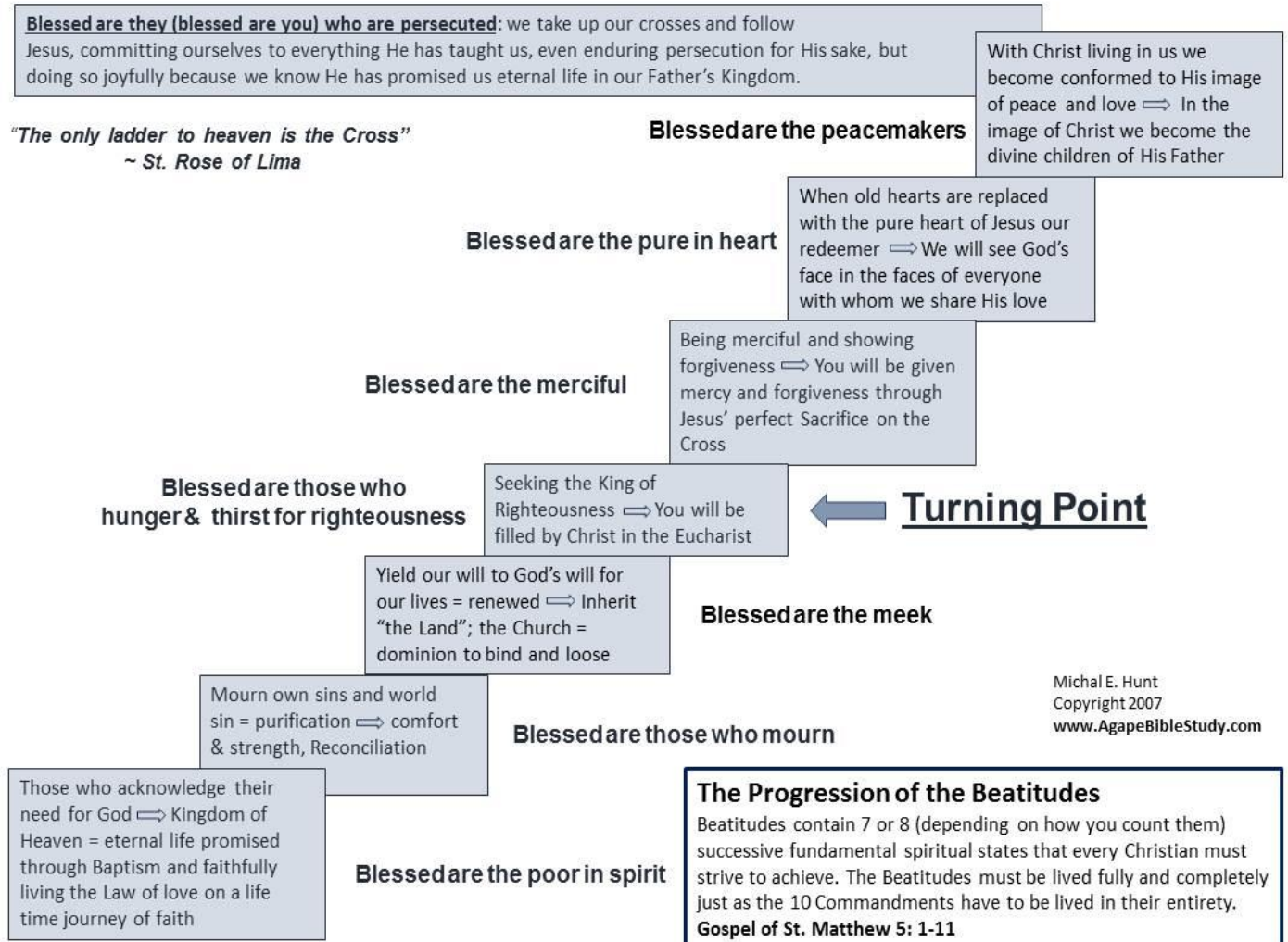
You touched me, and I burned for your peace.

ACTION: This final week, as the Holy Spirit continues to guide our personal, family and community actions and our reflection on the sixth Beatitude, **Purity of Heart**, let us ask ourselves: **“What does purity of heart mean to me? What long-term change(s) am I willing to make to improve my relationship with God? How can I be a sign of hope to others?”**

May our hearts be filled with hope in the anticipation that one day

WE WILL SEE GOD!

THE BEATITUDE LADDER



To learn about the Catholic Women's League
please visit our parish website at
www.divineinfant.on.ca/cwl.html



Catholic Women's League
Divine Infant Parish
Orleans ON

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- Fully Active:** Attends meetings, serves on committees, and takes advantage of the personal and spiritual opportunities the League offers.
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- Prayerfully Active:** Prays for the League and members
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