

{Gary - Sounds like #8 in SAVE YOUR SOUL: "Remember: Death-Judgment-Heaven-Hell ... persevere ..."}
}

MY TICKET TO HEAVEN

(Published with ecclesiastical approbation) (A Roman Catholic Pamphlet)

After receiving the letter below, it was decided to put MY TICKET TO HEAVEN into pamphlet form.

Dear Father,

Many, many thanks for such a beautiful meditation — "My Ticket To Heaven".

It is a message of salvation . . . There are many of us who need an uplift, an inspiration which you express so wonderfully well. I cannot think of a better formula for peace, and eternal happiness to be achieved in this modern world's corruption than your "Meditation".

May God bless you for such a Masterpiece.

Sign: Joseph F. Bernard Retired High School Principal Pa.

1.

A MEDITATION

Lord Jesus Your holy will be done . . . first . . . last . . . and always. But it is your holy will that I go to heaven . . . When I die. Therefore, may this be . . .

2.

MY TICKET TO HEAVEN

Only one thing is necessary. Luke 10:42 Therefore My Creed . . . My Commitment . . . My Reasons There is a day ahead of me . . . on the calendar . . . that God has put a ring around . . . On that day my heart is going to give its **last beat** . . . It will give this beat . . . and then **beat no more**. On that day I am going to **die**. On that day . . . there is only one thing that is going to matter to me. Only one . . . and that one thing is this:

3.

Are those gates of heaven in front of me . . . ? Or are they . . . the **gates of hell** . . . ? Did I make it? Or did I miss? Not another thing is going to matter one whit . . . Only DID I MAKE IT . . . ? And that this moment will come . . . is **more certain** than that the sun will come up tomorrow morning.

4.

Since that is the **most important** . . . and most **certain** thing in my life . . . if I have **any sense at all** . . . If I have only the tiniest bit of common sense . . . I will begin right now . . . And not tomorrow, but **right now**, to make sure . . . that when that moment comes . . . those **will** be the gates of heaven in front of me . . . and **not** the gates of **hell**. Now, in this job of getting myself to those gates of heaven, I have everything going for me . . .

There is no reason whatsoever, why I shouldn't make it. Because: First: --- **God** wants me in heaven . . . That's the one and **only** reason He made me . . . He wants to **love me** and **share His heaven with me** for all eternity. "Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter into the joy of Thy master." Matthew 25:21 "Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of thy kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34 and He wants me in heaven . . . even more than I want to be there.

5.

. . . And that's saying a lot, I assure you . . . That's God's **will** for me . . . That's God's **plan** for me . . . He has it all set up. Now to the second point: I want to be in heaven . . . I want to be there with every fiber of my being . . . My whole being is hungering for it . . . thirsting for it . . . longing for it . . . pining for it. St. Augustine said it so well. And he should know. Because, in a mighty search for happiness, he tried everything . . . including so many kinds of sins. But after about 30 years of trying to find happiness in this world . . . and in so many kinds of sins . . . he looked up into the heavens and exclaimed: "You have made us for Yourself, O God, and we will be ever restless until we rest in You." And I too, will be ever restless until I rest in God. I will **never** be **perfectly** happy until I rest in Him in heaven.

6.

And if I don't get there . . . well, it would have been better if I had never been born . . . Indeed, if I don't get there, it would be . . . it **will** be the greatest **calamity** . . . the greatest **disaster** . . . the greatest **catastrophe** imaginable! Yes, if I don't get there, I will never enjoy the face to face vision of Him who is infinite goodness and love. I will never enjoy the association with the angels and saints, my family and my friends, that God had intended for me to enjoy. "What does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?" Mark 8:36 *But I can be sure of making it to heaven. God gave me the perfect blueprint for getting there. He gave me exact directions . . . And every aid I will need. And those directions are simply this:*

7.

KEEP MY FACE TURNED TOWARD GOD Keep moving **toward** those gates of heaven. **Never** turn your face away from God. **Never** turn around to go in the opposite direction.

We have a word for *turning our face away from God* . . . for turning around and going in *the opposite direction*; we call it: **DEADLY or MORTAL SIN** So to commit a mortal sin is the most **stupid** thing **I** can do. There is Absolutely **nothing more stupid** . . . nothing more nonsensical . . . than for me to turn away from going toward those

gates of Heaven and start going toward the gates of hell. And worst of all: there's nothing more **disastrous** . . . Nothing more

8.

catastrophic. Indeed it's **so** disastrous . . . **so** catastrophic, that before **I** should commit a mortal sin, it would be better if **I** would cease to exist. Much better to cease to exist, than to turn away from God: to turn away from heaven. Much better to cease to exist than to commit a **deadly** sin. That means then, when Satan comes along, and tries to get me to **commit** a mortal sin, **I must I will** always, (with the help of God's grace) set myself against it with all my will and mind and heart and soul. **I will** fight off the temptation with all that is in me. No matter how strong the temptation . . . or how persistent, **I will** set Myself against it with the immovability of the Rock of Gibraltar. **I will** Say . . . and keep saying with all my might and mind" **"Me commit sin? Never . . . never . . . never . . . never . . . never."** **"But me remain faithful to God? Ever . . . ever . . . ever . . . ever."**

9.

And if **I maintain** always . . . this determination . . . this disposition Of mind and soul . . . **I** can be sure of never committing sin. And I can be sure, thereby, of going to heaven! If **I** make this my policy throughout my life, to anyone asking me if I am Going to heaven when I die, **I can say: "Well, if I don't make it, it Won't be my fault: that I guarantee you" And right there is the guarantee that I will make it.** To look at this from **another** angle, it would be a **sin** for me to go to hell. Because it is against God's will for me to go to hell. And anything that is against God's will is a sin. But I refuse to do anything that is against God's will. With God as my helper I absolutely refuse to commit sin. Therefore, I refuse to go to hell. **It's as simple as that.**

10.

And nobody can force me to commit sin. Not all the demons of hell put together, can make me commit a sin. I — and I alone — can do that. And that I refuse to do. You can do anything you want. You can torture me. Yes: You can kill me. But **you can't make me commit a sin.** If I may inject a bit of humor, I will say: "If at my death, the devil tries to take me to hell, I am going to do some awful foot-dragging. Some of the worst (best) foot-dragging you ever saw. **That I guarantee you.** Remember this: Actually, **God doesn't put anyone in hell. They put themselves there. They freely choose hell themselves when they decide to turn their face away from God . . . to turn their back on God, and to turn over to the Devil.** God gives us the theological virtue of HOPE. We express it in the Act of Hope when we say: **"Relying on Your infinite goodness and promises,**

11.

I hope to obtain . . . life everlasting.” In other words, if I do my part, God will do **His** part. He will keep **His** promise. **He will take me to heaven.** If we adopt this policy . . . If we make it a part of our nature. If we live by it. If we stick to it. **We will go to heaven when we die.** We **will** carry out God’s **plan** for us . . . God’s **will** for us. And now to a — let’s call it a bonus. **Or an extra reward God gives us when we give our allegiance to Him 100%.** This bonus: this extra reward that He gives us, is that **we won’t fear death.** We **won’t be afraid to die!!!!** We will see death **as it really is.** As St. Paul tells us in Philippians 1:21 “To die is gain.” Indeed we will **welcome** death. We will see death as **God** sees it. As **we** will see it after we have gone through it. And seeing it as it **is**, we will even **long** for it. We will **pine** for it.

12.

And here is still **another benefit: We will be able to recite those beautiful psalms that speak of our longing for death—without being hypocrites. Without telling lies.** In fact, **until** we reach that stage of truth . . . of truthfulness . . . of commitment . . . we really **cannot** pray those beautiful psalms without telling lies . . . one after another. Let’s listen to some of those beautiful, meaningful, heart-warming prayers. Now remember: **We must mean what we say:**

Psalm 41:1-2 “As the deer **longs** for the running waters so my soul **longs** for you, O God. Athirst is my soul for God, the living God. **When** shall I go and behold the face of God?”

13.

Psalm 62:2 “O God, you are my God whom I seek: for you my flesh **pines** and my soul **thirst**, like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water.”

Psalm 83:3-4 “My soul **yearns** and **pines** for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh **cry out** for the living God.”

Psalm 54:7 “Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest.”

Psalm 72:26 “For thee my flesh and my heart have fainted away.”

Psalm 117:19 “Open to me the gates of justice. I will go into them and give praise to the Lord.”

Psalm 83:11 “Better is one day in Thy courts above a thousand elsewhere.”

14.

Psalm 26:4 “One thing I have asked of the Lord: this will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.”

When I am saying those inspired prayers, constantly I am praying to **die**. So, if I don't want to die, I must quit praying them. Otherwise I am telling lies . . . one after another.

Or: there is another way out. Before beginning them, I can preface them with something like: “When I say these words of the Psalms, **I don't mean them**. I'm only **quoting** the Psalmist. They are **not** my words. And I **don't go along with them at all**.” But that would be utter nonsense. Rational beings don't say such things.

15.

After all, heaven is our true **home**. This world down here, although it has many beautiful things: joys and pleasures — compared to heaven — it comes off a **terribly poor second**. Indeed, in God's plan it is only a place of trial. And — since Original Sin — a place of exile: a vale of tears. It is constantly fraught with sickness, suffering, sorrow, and sadness. Worse than that, it is a place of evil, of sin, of wickedness and woe.

It is only common sense to want to get away from these evils. For evils they are. And we must always want to get away from evil. And that means **we must want to go to heaven**.

And let us not miss **this** telling point: **as long as we are in this world, we are in danger of sinning! In danger of offending God. In danger of doing something that's against His will. In danger of being fooled away from God by Satan, like Adam and Eve were fooled away from Him.**

16.

Yes. As long as we are in this world, we are in danger of going to hell. And what an unspeakable danger that is! But we can get away from this danger by going to heaven. Let's go then: and at the earliest moment that we can persuade God to take us.

As we said above, we pray in the psalms that we pine for God: for heaven. Because heaven is our home. And we won't be perfectly happy until we get there.

But how inconsistent we are. For example: When the doctor tells us we have a terminal illness that our days are numbered, we turn and run the other way . . . screaming and crying. In effect we say: “I take back what I said in the psalms . . . those prayers I so love. I am **not** pining and thirsting for you like I said in the psalms: in my prayers. **No**. I take that all back. I am not longing for you like the deer for the running waters.”

17.

Yes. When the doctor says we have a fatal illness, we go to every length imaginable **to avoid dying**. We spend all kinds of money on specialists and hospitals and medicine, and tubes and wires and machines. We travel thousands of miles to **shrines** — hoping and praying for a miracle . . . trying to stave off death . . . TRYING TO AVOID GOING TO HEAVEN **It's ridiculous! It doesn't make sense!**

If I don't want to die, my position is as nonsensical as the following: Suppose I am sick. I am suffering from many aches and pains, and in great misery. A doctor tells me he will make me well in short order. But I say: **"No. I don't want to get well. I want to stay sick. I want to keep these aches and pains and suffering. I want to stay miserable."**

18.

If I don't want to die, I am taking a position exactly like that. And that doesn't make sense.

All of us want to feel secure. At least I do. I want to be free from fear: from worry. Only then, can I be truly at rest, completely at ease.

But as long as I am in this world, there is the fear, the worry, that I might not make it to heaven. And the only way I can get rid of that fear, that worry, is by going to heaven. And the only way I can go to heaven is by dying. There is no other way. So I must die. It's the only thing that makes sense.

St. Paul speaks of this very thing in his letter to the Philippians 2:12. It amounts to this: In simple terms we just **can't relax**. We **can't be at peace**. We can't be at rest **as long as we are down here**. Here are his words: **"Work out your salvation with fear and trembling."**

19.

But how can we relax? How can we be at peace? How can we be at rest, when we are in "fear and trembling"? Yet in fear and trembling we must be. Those are the words of God, given us in St. Paul's letter to the Philippians.

One last thought: When I have a job to do, I am not completely at peace. I'm not completely at rest until I get the job done; get it finished: get it over with, and out of the way. I don't like something hanging fire: unfinished: incomplete. It interferes with relaxing: with resting.

But God gave me the job of getting myself to heaven. Of course along the path laid out for me in my vocation in life and the duties involved. But whatever is involved, let us get the job done and over with. Let's get to heaven. **Then** my job is done. **Then** I have achieved the end for which I was created.

20.

Then — and only then — can I relax, rest, and enjoy the complete happiness that God made me for. The happiness that my soul: my very nature hungers for, thirsts for, longs for. And **must have** in order for God's will for me: God's plan for me, to be accomplished.

Therefore, the day of my death is going to be — (besides the **Most Important**) — the **most exciting**, the **most thrilling** day of my life.

Therefore, it can't come too soon.

So please Lord, let it come at the earliest possible moment your Holy Will in my regard will permit. Because truly, dear Lord,

“As the deer longs for the running waters, so my soul longs for You, O God. Athirst is my soul for God, the living God. When shall I go and behold the face of God?”

21.

After 70 years in the world and 40 years in the priesthood, the foregoing was put together by a priest of the Altoona-Johnstown diocese.

New address: My Ticket to Heaven
R. D. 2, Box 51 H, Patton, PA 16668
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22.

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23.

“MY TICKET TO HEAVEN is excellent! It is a straight-forward presentation of the cardinal mysteries of the Christian Faith . . . I sincerely hope that this booklet will receive the wide circulation it deserves.” -- **Father John A. Hardon, S.J.**, World renowned Catholic theologians, professor, lecturer, and author of 20 books, among them, “The

Modern Catholic Dictionary”, “The Catholic Catechism”, “The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism.”

24.

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25.

A New Book by Father John A. Hardon, S.J. 2002.

History and Theology of Grace the Catholic Teaching on Divine Grace
Veritas Press of Ave Maria College 300 West Forest Avenue Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Imprimatur: Bishop Raymond L. Burke Bishop of LaCrosse September 4, 2001

The Imprimatur is an official declaration that a book or pamphlet is free of doctrinal or moral error...

Fr. Hardon reminds all Catholics of the integral role grace plays in our daily lives and how a clear grasp of the basic principles of grace is useful, and may at times be indispensable, for directing oneself and others on the road to salvation.

About the Author

John A. Hardon, S.J. received a master’s degree in philosophy from Loyola University and doctorate in theology from the Gregorian University in Rome. He taught at the Jesuit School of Theology at Loyola University in Chicago and the Institute for Advanced Studies in Catholic Doctrine at St. John’s University in New York. He organized the Marian Catechists, whose purpose is to promote the solid teaching of the Roman Catholic faith to the laity. He wrote and published more than 50 books, including *Catholic Catechism, Modern Catholic Dictionary, Catholic Lifetime Reading Plan, and With Us Today, on the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.*

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"All the sins of your life seem to be rising up against you.
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Presented by: Gary Westgerdes www.thekeysofheaven.com
To accurately present the Catholic Gospel in their own writings