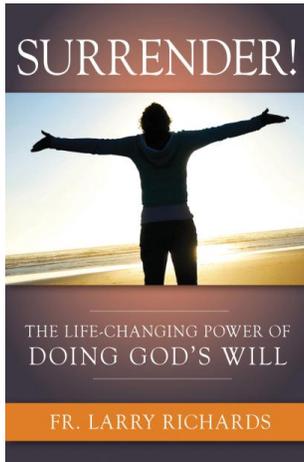


## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Best-selling priest-author helps disillusioned surrender to true purpose

HUNTINGTON, Indiana, October 24, 2011 – Amid global cynicism, betrayal, and despair, people are asking, ‘What am I supposed to be doing? Where am I going? What is my true purpose?’ When jobs fail, finances dissipate, status dwindles, and material comforts vanish, people are left with just ... *themselves*.

What then?

It is at this juncture that many realize, perhaps for the first time, God is their lifelong partner. It takes humility to face one’s failure and vulnerability, and to accept supreme oversight over personal autonomy.

“It’s only when we pursue God’s will for our lives that we’re at peace and secure,” says Fr. Larry Richards, the acclaimed speaker, preacher, retreat-master, and author of the newly released **Surrender! The Life-Changing Power of Doing God’s Will** (Our Sunday Visitor, 2011, softcover, 155 pp). “But people don’t often think about God’s will until their own has been frustrated. They need to take a free-fall of faith and let God catch them.”

The dynamic pastor of an inner-city parish in Erie, Pa. lays out steps in his new book that help people be sure they’re ‘in sync’ with God’s plan and His help with their undertakings. The steps include: learning to love God and others unconditionally; detaching from favorite vices; demonstrating who Christ is through one’s personal behavior; knowing how to discern God’s message and listening to it; and finally, unearthing God’s will – and following it.

“God has a very specific purpose for each person ... He doesn’t just sit back and say ‘Go for it. Do whatever you want’.” It’s true that people have free will and can do anything they want – or they can do what He wants,” says Fr. Richards. And that’s the choice, he says, which succeeds over time.

In the book, Fr. Richards warms his readers to beginning each day with God in mind – in prayer. “It’s a pivotal first step – because without this conversation with God, we cannot hear Him and we don’t approach our day properly.” Second, he shows how to banish unnecessary fear “... of wars around us, who the next president will be, when the world will end, what might happen at work, whatever ....”

“Fear keeps people inert – and from surrendering to God’s will,” says Fr. Richards. “Look at the strong prevalence of self-hatred today,” he says. “The more people try to clutch control of everything in their lives – out of fear that they don’t have enough of it, or they’ll lose it, the more miserable and dissatisfied they become.”

# Our Sunday Visitor



And holiness? It's not just the stuff of statues and centuries-old saints. "God not only calls every single person He created to holiness (which leads them to heaven), he gives each one of them – individually – the precise tools they need to achieve it!" says Fr. Richards. These could be the raw skills to develop a talent or skill, the resources to care for a special-needs child or elderly parent, the perseverance to stay in a difficult employment or personal situation, or the supreme willpower to overcome an addiction or toxic habit. "But we have to cooperate with God, let him help shape and work with us, and assess everyday whether we're obeying His will or our own." That's the *surrender* part.

Ah, and love. What an over-sensationalized, hugely misunderstood concept it still is, according to Fr. Richards. "Okay, most people aren't going to like this definition of love, but here it is: Love means doing what's best for *other* people – that's right, others – to help them get to heaven," he says. "Now when is the last time you've heard *that*?" Love entails 'dying' for the good of another person, putting them in front of oneself, really giving of one's life – or one's preferences, comforts, personal priorities, luxuries. This flies in the face of so much world-sanctioned selfishness, he says.

He points to Christ's example of true love ... and true surrender.

"When Jesus was confronted with the will of his Father ... did He smile and say, 'Oh, thank you, Father. I just want to suffer and die today for you' with a big smile on His face? No, He pleaded with His Father and begged, *Father, if it is your will, take this cup away from me; yet not my will but yours be done*. He tells his Father that He will do whatever He wants, even if it kills Him – and it does!"

Because people need to do whatever God asks of them, they need to know how to accept – or surrender – to His will. "It's as simple as that," says Fr. Richards. "Are we going to do God's will, even if we don't want to? That's the real question, isn't it? It goes beyond knowing what God wants us to do – to being willing to carry through and do it."

Getting input from others – ideally, from a solid Christian spiritual director – is helpful for more complex situations requiring objective discernment, says Fr. Richards. "Your spiritual director will clarify God's will for you, and to obey your spiritual director is to obey God."

"Being a follower of Christ is not about getting what we want ... or how we feel ... it's about doing what God wants, and really has *nothing* to do with our feelings. So do it anyway, even if you don't like it – that is how you carry out the reality of true love in your life, and how you will attain true peace – even when life can be difficult. When you are at true peace, you know you are living the will of God and His purpose for you."

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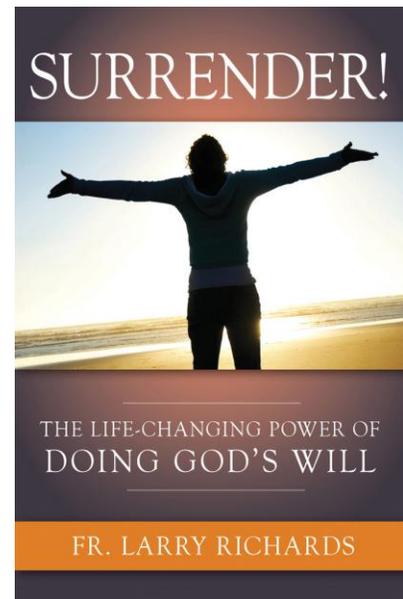
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## Product Fact Sheet

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## Surrender! The Life-Changing Power of Doing God's Will

**Publisher:** Our Sunday Visitor  
**Author:** Fr. Larry Richards  
**Release Date:** Fall 2011  
**Length:** 155 pages, paperback  
**Price:** \$ 14.95  
**ISBN:** 978-1-59276-759-5  
**Order:** [www.osv.com](http://www.osv.com)  
1-800-348-2440



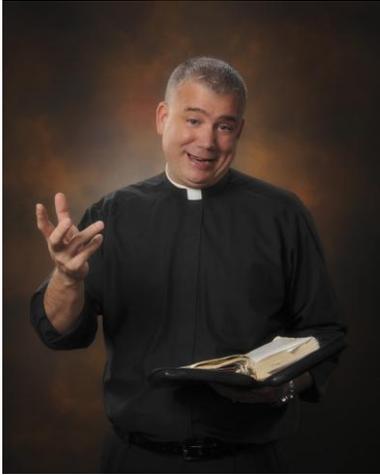
### Description:

The internationally acclaimed, dynamic speaker, preacher and author, Fr. Larry Richards, once again tells it like it is in helping people to identify and accept the will of God – and His perfect purpose – for their lives.

In this book, Fr. Richards challenges readers to let go of attachments, personal preferences, assumptions, and 'comfort zones' that they hold on to so tightly that they cannot realize everything God wants to give them. By freeing themselves to hear and follow God, they ultimately realize His plan for their lives, and will be most satisfied.

The first step is for someone to converse with God, daily, and ask Him what He wants. Once someone realizes God's will, he needs to plunge in and follow the plan. This might entail removing fears, assumptions, self-will, and other attachments (obstacles), and might likewise involve help from a spiritual director. Finally, living God's will should bring unprecedented peace in one's soul.

## Interview Questions



Fr. Larry Richards

## **Surrender! The Life-Changing Power of Doing God's Will**

1. What are you aiming to accomplish with this book, and how is it different from other popular titles on life-purpose?
2. What would you say are the greatest obstacles to people knowing God's will for them?
3. What keeps people from succumbing to God's will ... and conversely, what seems to catalyze their 'bottoming out' and surrendering to God?
4. How do you convince people today that they should strive for sainthood? Most would just laugh it off.
5. What is it about the concept of love that modern-day people just don't get? How has love been pedestrianized and warped in today's society?
6. What is the best way for people to get started in their quest to discern God's will for their lives?
7. How can someone today remain focused, pure-of-heart, and undistracted in their effort to live well ... and ultimately fulfill God's purpose for them?

## About The Author

### Fr. Larry Richards



A gifted and captivating speaker, preacher, retreat master and author, Father Larry Richards holds the answer to some of life's most profound questions. He speaks from experience as a pastor of an inner city parish, a high school chaplain, a counselor and evangelist. Fr. Larry Richards has directed hundreds of retreats, parish missions and conferences for young and old alike. His inspirational talks and presentations, always authentic and enthusiastic, have changed the hearts, minds, and lives of millions of listeners worldwide. He continues to accept invitations for speaking engagements all over the United States and in Canada and has recently traveled abroad to continue his mission of evangelization.

As founder and president of the Reason for Our Hope Foundation (based in Erie, PA), which is dedicated to educating others about Jesus Christ and the Catholic faith, Fr. Larry is also the author of the recent best-seller on male spirituality, **Be A Man!** He can be heard regularly on Relevant Radio on the topic of authentic manhood and other pertinent topics which inspire audiences to discover God's plan for their lives.

Father Larry Richards was born on March 26, 1960, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He entered St. Mark High School Seminary, Erie, Pennsylvania, at the age of 17. After high school, Father Larry attended the college Seminary at Gannon University and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling in 1983. Continuing his studies at the Major Seminary at St. Vincent in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, Father Larry Richards received his Masters of Divinity degree in 1987. He will soon conclude his studies and be awarded a Master of Arts degree in Liturgy from the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana.

Ordained to the priesthood on April 21, 1989 for the Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania, Father Larry Richards has served as Pastor of St. Joseph Church/Bread of Life Community, also in Erie, since July 1, 2002. In addition, Father is the spiritual director of the TEC (To Encounter Christ) Retreat Program for the Diocese of Erie.

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