

Priest Back From the Dead  
By Father Cedric Pisegna, C.P.

*What happens when we die?* I found out at the age of 19 when I had two near-death experiences. I was perfectly healthy at the time. I went through a tunnel and was embraced by the light. What God told me changed my life. I was selfish and needed to change. I was shown what happens when we die. God told me we must all prepare for our death.

My near-death experiences in 1977 radically altered my life and ultimately led me to becoming a Catholic priest. I was transformed from a nominal believer to an “on-fire filled with the Holy Spirit” priest. Now, I share the Good News on TV as well as through preaching and writing to tell people the meaning of life and to inspire them to be the best they can be. In my bestselling book, *Death: The Final Surrender*, I share my story of coming back from the dead and the death experience itself.

For Christians, the journey of our life on earth is a pilgrimage toward heaven. It begins with selfishness and we have to journey to selflessness. A spirit of selflessness is achieved through a spirit of surrender. Surrender is the yielding and abandonment of selfishness and pride to God.

The spirituality of surrender must happen every day by making a conscious effort to surrender to God. You can surrender your life to God now by giving your time to God in prayer and reading the scriptures. You can surrender your life by getting involved with people, taking someone to church or teaching children the basic doctrines of their faith. You can surrender to God through time, giving and looking at your habits. Or simply, through a prayer of abandonment – “Lord, I surrender to you.”

Death is the final surrender. It is the passageway to a new and glorious life. I believe we will die as we have lived. We all have choices in life and there are eternal consequences to every choice we make. If you fight life, continually grasp for control and live independently of God, you will struggle in death. If you surrender to God and to life, trust in God, your death will be the final surrender among many previous ones in your life. Our suffering, no matter what form they take, are meant to teach us that we are not in control and to surrender to the one who has control.

If we surrender ourselves well now, we will embrace death trustingly later.

*Father Cedric is a Catholic priest and a member of the Passionist Religious Community. To purchase a copy of his book, Death: The Final Surrender visit <http://www.frcedric.org>. Fr. Cedric devotes his life to preaching, writing and producing television programs including “Live With Passion!” that is nationally syndicated and airs on The Church Channel. He is the author of 15 books, travels and preaches across the U.S.*