

# Rock Star: My Triumph over Guillian Barre Syndrome

by Fr. Dave Barrett

I was a middle-aged Catholic Priest wondering if I made a difference in the lives of those around me. My health was in pretty good shape except for the extra weight I was carrying around. Life was basically uneventful as I went about my daily life as a priest.

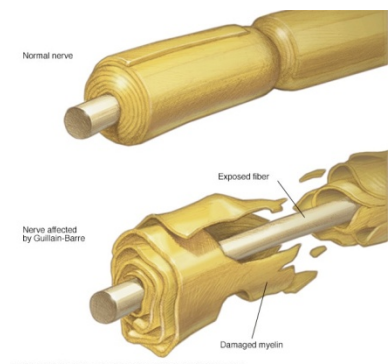
The summer had a slower pace and I was able to take a car trip to Nashville to attend a conference and retreat. I came back very tired, but little did I know I was about to be tested physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

The illness would have wide ranging effects on my family, friends, and the people I served. I encountered so many people in this hospital odyssey of three months. Find out about the journey I took on my road to recovery. Please read my account of the struggle.

## Book Signing at St. Patrick, Shieldsville

Fr. Dave will be at St. Patrick on Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. and Sunday August 12<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. to speak about his experiences. His book will be available for purchase and Fr. Dave will personally sign it for you. Cost of book is \$14.99. Refreshments available.

Guillain-Barre Syndrome (gee-YAH-buh-RAY) is rare; typically about 2 in 10,000 a year. The disease is named after the two French doctors who were able to document a trying condition that often fools many medical professionals. The condition destroys the protective covering of the peripheral nerves (myelin sheath), preventing the nerves from transmitting signals to the brain. This is a rare disorder in which your body's immune system attacks your nerves. Weakness and tingling in your extremities are usually the first symptoms. These sensations can quickly spread, eventually paralyzing your whole body. In its most severe form Guillain-Barre syndrome is a medical emergency. Most people with the condition must be hospitalized to receive treatment. The exact cause of Guillain-Barre syndrome is unknown. But it is often preceded by an infectious illness such as a respiratory infection or the stomach flu. There's no known cure for Guillain-Barre syndrome, but several treatments can ease symptoms and reduce the duration of the illness. Most people recover from Guillain-Barre syndrome, though some may experience lingering effects from it, such as weakness, numbness or fatigue.



*Nerve and damaged myelin sheath*