

THE LEAGUE OF Saint Gerard



PRAYERS • DEVOTIONS • MEMBERSHIP • GIFTS • RESOURCES • FALL 2009

Saint Gerard was a man of deep passion for the Lord and immense compassion for his neighbors.

The word *compassion* means “to suffer with.” Saint Gerard felt compassion so deeply for other people that it’s been said he had the gift of “reading hearts.” This great gift from God allowed Saint Gerard to bring healing to wounded souls. Saint Gerard would often alleviate a person’s sufferings by taking them on himself. He wanted so much to be like our Savior—he would rather suffer himself than see someone else suffer.

Sometimes Saint Gerard would use his gift of reading hearts to be in solidarity with those in need of mercy and love. One example is the story of Alessandro and Caposele, a couple who shared with Saint Gerard their desire for a child. Saint Gerard said, “Your wife should be happy and of good heart. After all you’ve suffered, she is forty days pregnant. It will be a boy.” The couple named their baby Gerard even before he was born, and “the bachelor Gerard slipped into a reputation for knowing about pregnant mothers. And their unborn children. And their anxious husbands” (pages 214-215, *Saint Alphonsus and His Brothers: A Study of the Lives and Works of Seven Redemptorists* by Hamish F. G. Swanston, Liguori Publications, 2000).

October 16 is the memorial of Saint Gerard. At Mass on the Sunday following the feast day in 2008, my fellow Redemptorists



BY DONALD WILLARD, C.Ss.R.

and I called forward women in attendance who were pregnant or who wanted to become pregnant in the next year. We blessed them with a first-class relic of Saint Gerard and prayed for his intercession.

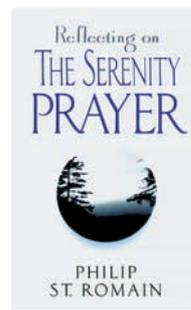
Over the last year, I’ve heard some of the stories of those women. Some were relieved of expected complications in giving birth, many experienced great peace throughout their pregnancies, one child who wasn’t expected to live is now a healthy baby boy and, just last week, a young woman informed me she and her husband are overjoyed that they are finally pregnant for the first time.

Saint Gerard continues to live up to his reputation. He contin-

ues to intercede for expectant mothers and their unborn children.

A Friend in Need

The time of pregnancy can be a very uncertain time in a woman’s life. Not only is she worried about her own health, she may also be anxious about the baby’s health, she may be concerned about the future of the family, and she may be uneasy about the countless questions stirring in her mind and heart.



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Novena to Saint Gerard 2009

The contemplative order of Redemptoristine nuns of Liguori, Missouri, are offering a novena October 8 through 16 in preparation for the feast day of Saint Gerard Majella. They are happy to remember your needs in their prayers.

Dear Sisters,

Please include the following petitions in your prayers:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



To send your request for specific intentions or general prayers, clip this coupon, place it in an envelope, and mail to

**St. Gerard Novena
c/o Liguori Publications**

One Liguori Drive
Liguori, MO 63057

It's at these times that we need the intercession of someone filled with the fire of a loving passion for Christ and an enormous compassion for us. We need someone who can read our hearts and enter into our sufferings and fears with us. We need someone who is willing to bear our sufferings *with* us—and Saint Gerard is always willing to assist us if we're willing to accept his aid.

A Friend Indeed

Saint Gerard didn't limit his help to expectant mothers and their children.

Prayer

O Saint Gerard, you were filled with a burning desire to imitate our Redeemer by having a great passion for God and a great compassion for your neighbors.

Help us know our hearts as we call upon you today. Come to us, encourage us when we are afraid, be with us in sufferings, and lead us to the source of all wholeness, Jesus Christ. As we celebrate your feast day, help us to have truly grateful hearts. Pray that we always seek your assistance in all our needs. Saint Gerard, please, pray for us. Amen.

Saint Gerard has supported people in all circumstances all over the world. At the shrine where Saint Gerard is laid to rest in Materdomini, Italy, thousands of testimonies to Saint Gerard's intercessory prayers have been given: medals from people who have had physical healings, photos from people reunited with lost family members, letters from people who have had all sorts of prayers answered.

Saint Gerard can offer us the encouragement and support we need to turn our hearts toward the only one who truly heals our hearts: Jesus.

Jesus wants all of us to be healthy, happy, and holy, but sometimes fear and anxiety can keep us from experiencing the mercy and love God offers that can truly bring wholeness to our lives. Saint Gerard takes great delight in helping people experience the compassion of Christ. Anyone in need of compassion and mercy—not just women who are pregnant or hoping to become pregnant—may call upon Saint Gerard.

And so, this October 16, let's take a few moments to

thank Saint Gerard on his feast day. Perhaps you've experienced the compassion of this great saint. One way to thank him is to send us a letter describing your experience. Saint Gerard will be most pleased if the articles in his newsletter are inspired by our readers' experiences,

Please send your letters to League of Saint Gerard, One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057-9999, or e-mail us at newsletters@liguori.org (type "Saint Gerard" in the subject line). Sharing your stories will inspire more people to seek Saint Gerard's assistance and allow him to keep helping others.

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Enroll me in the League of Saint Gerard.
(English: G0101; Spanish: G0107)

NAME _____
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 CITY _____
 STATE _____ ZIP _____
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Check this box if you cannot afford the enrollment fee; you may still participate as a member. Saint Gerard has been good to us.

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PRAYER REQUESTS

Please remember the following intentions in the weekly Mass offered in honor of Saint Gerard:

MASSES

Please offer the following Mass(es) for my intention(s) as indicated.
(Masses cannot be offered on specific dates.)

The suggested stipend for a Mass is \$5.00.

I have enclosed \$ _____ for this purpose.

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The Heart of the Matter



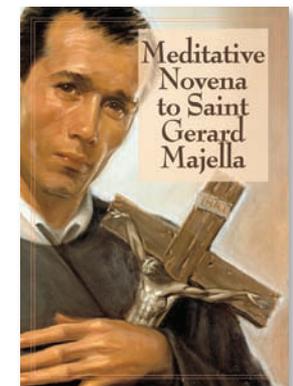
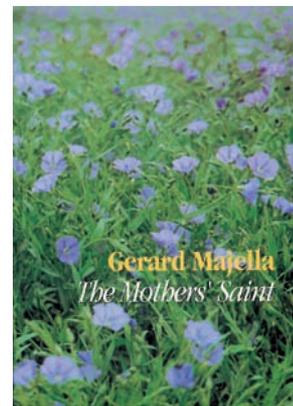
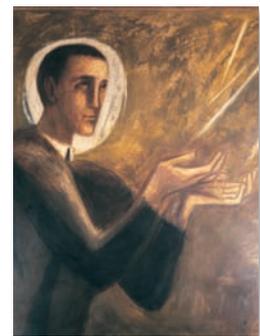
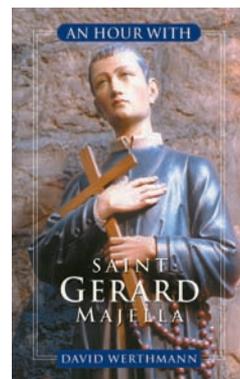
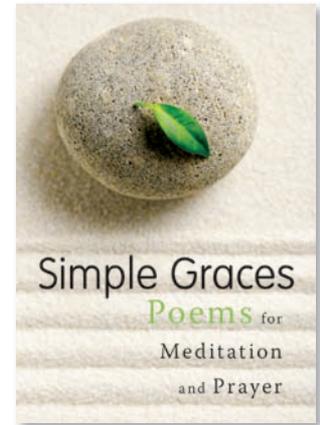
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