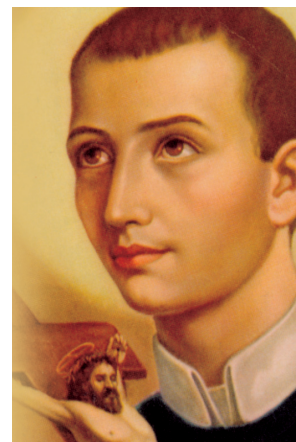


# THE LEAGUE OF Saint Gerard



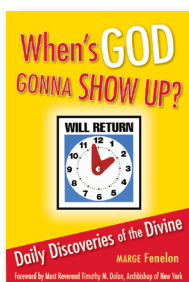
PRAYERS • DEVOTIONS • MEMBERSHIP • GIFTS • RESOURCES • WINTER 2010

## Let His Story Cast Light on Your Story

FR. DONALD B. WILLARD, C.Ss.R.

Storytelling is an important part of the human experience. Our lives are full of stories—plays, books, movies, family anecdotes, and even conversations with friends. In fact, most of our communication consists of stories we relate to each other through means as elaborate as writing a novel or as simple as telling a friend about an encounter we had that day.

But storytelling is more than an exchange of information; it's an intimate sharing that expresses our deepest selves to one another.



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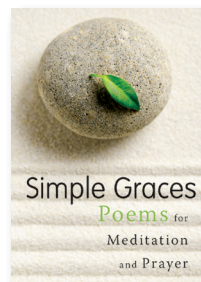
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### Gerard lived the story

SAINT GERARD understood the power of stories. From a very early age, he loved to reenact stories, tell jokes, and hear other people's stories. During his teenage years, he reenacted the story of the Passion of Jesus Christ. He'd take the role of Jesus and make his way through the Stations of the Cross. His friends played the other people who figured into the crucifixion story.

By engaging the story at a personal level, Saint Gerard was able to relate to it in a new way. The megastory of our redemption began to form and shape the story of his own life. Thus, faced with his own suffering through illness, Saint Gerard saw his bed, from which he could not move, as the cross of Jesus Christ. His pain became the nails that pierced Jesus' hands and feet, and his acceptance of his death became an act of will of the kind with which Jesus embraced his cross.

Saint Gerard's illness wasn't merely suffering for the sake of suffering. Instead, it became a suffering that brought hope and healing to others. Because he saw his own illness and suffering through the lens of the megastory of our redemption, Saint Gerard was able to turn his own death into a sign of God's redeeming love. In his own suffering, Saint Gerard perfected the sufferings of Christ through participation in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

### We live the story

OUR PARTICIPATION in the redeeming value of the cross is a mystery, but that doesn't make it less real. The story of re-

demption can be reenacted in our lives if we realize that our ministories are really part of the megastory continuously bringing the world to perfection through salvation and redemption. And if our stories are part of a larger story of redemption, then our stories always have the hope of resurrection.

And so, as we begin a new year, as we reflect on the stories of our lives, we're faced with a question: "How does *my* life reflect the megastory of redemption and salvation?" Only by asking this question, as Saint Gerard did, can we experience the hope of resurrection.

Our lives are full of stories of the last year. Many of our stories haven't ended, and others are only beginning. God continues to be with us in every event of our lives. Thus, every story is really just another chapter in the story of our salvation history as presented in the Bible. God's story is always one of hope, freedom, and love. God's story is always a comedy that brings resurrection.

Where in our own stories can we see the possibility of hope, freedom, and love? Where in the midst of our stories is the hope of resurrection? Sometimes the answer is obvious, but often it's not so clear.

### We are Jesus' coauthors

IN MOMENTS OF darkness and despair, we can do what Saint Gerard did. We can turn to Scripture and find a story that relates to ours. Who are we in the story? Once we have a personal role in the Bible story, we can begin to see the hope at the end of the story. We can begin to have an

exchange of persons between Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and ourselves. We can have an intimate sharing, we can have the hope of resurrection, and we can have a new life that is ready to dawn.

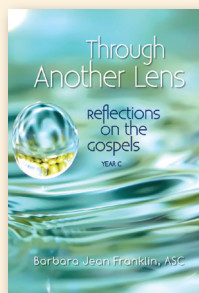
This is the Good News: Redemption has already been won for us at the cross, our resurrection is at hand, and we've been set free to be the children of God. Therefore, if our stories show us no hope, if our stories show us only fear, if our stories show us only despair, then perhaps it's helpful to realize that this is only one chapter in the story of our lives.

Who will write the next chapter? Will we work with Jesus to write it? How can we write that chapter with Jesus in a way that changes the situation and brings the resurrection and new life back into the story of our lives? The changes may be hard, but when we look to Jesus and his story, we can personally claim the hope of resurrection.



## Prayer

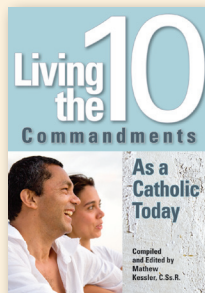
**A**lmighty God, you are the author of life. Help us write the stories of our lives so we may experience the power of the resurrection. Help us move from fear to freedom, from discord to love, and from despair to hope. Help us be like Saint Gerard in recognizing that we are your witnesses and that you are always with us. Help us remember that the difficulties of life are only chapters in a larger story and that in the next chapter are opportunities for grace, reconciliation, healing, life, and love. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ who is Lord forever and ever. Amen.



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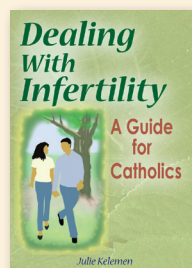
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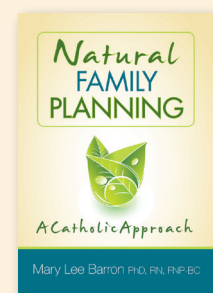
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Each enrollment is \$10.00 and includes a certificate, an aluminum Saint Gerard medal, a wallet-size picture of Saint Gerard, a prayer leaflet, and the booklet *Gerard Majella: The Mothers' Saint*.

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

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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.

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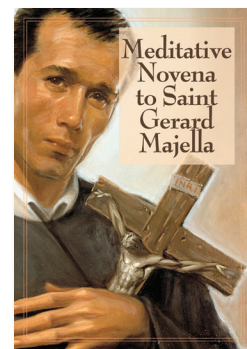
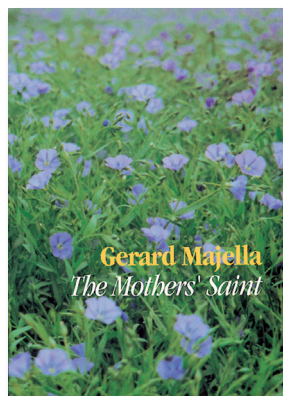
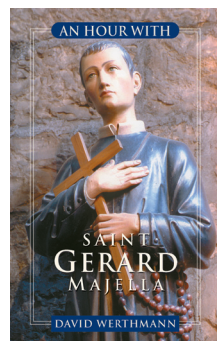
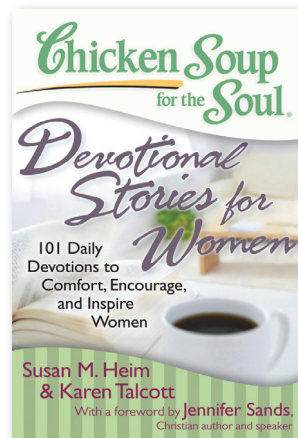
## The Heart of the Matter



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