



Saint Gerard

Mother's Day Issue • 2015

NEWSLETTER

Dear Friend of St. Gerard,

I am pleased to place before you this Mother's Day edition of the League of St. Gerard Newsletter. In it Fr. Don Willard reflects on the beauty, dignity and importance of a mother's vocation, beginning with Eve, the first mother. In the second article Fr. Willard shares a touching story about a couple who, with the miraculous help of St. Gerard, were able to overcome all obstacles and bring a healthy baby safely into the world. The third article provides a brief snapshot of the exciting things that are happening in this ministry of promoting devotion to St. Gerard. I hope these articles, together with the testimonials, will provide inspiration for all the Friends of St. Gerard.



I am also excited and proud to tell you about the new Mothers' Saint – St. Gerard Majella website. After months of work we recently launched the new website. It is much more user-friendly and compatible with cell phones and tablets, as well as traditional computers. I also take this opportunity to greet and bless all mothers for Mother's Day. May all mothers be especially blessed not only this day, but every day, so that they have all the graces they need to fulfill their wonderful vocation and mission in life.

Please encourage others to [join the League of St. Gerard](#), share this newsletter with family and friends and tell them about his [Website](#) and [Facebook](#) page dedicated to praying for and bringing hope to mothers and women who want to become mothers.

In Christ the Redeemer,
Fr. Allan Weinert, C.Ss.R
Redemptorists of the Denver Province

The First Mother's Day: Eve, Our Crown Jewel

By Fr. Don Willard, C.Ss.R.

As we celebrate Mother's Day in the United States, I am reminded of the first mother, Eve. In the Genesis creation story, we see a particular order. When God created Adam, he made Adam from the most precious material that existed. God took some earth and formed Adam. And then, God breathed life into Adam with God's own breath. However God's last creation, before He rested, was the creation of Eve.

Eve was the crown jewel of all of creation, because it was only with Eve

that other humans could exist. She alone could be a mother and help to bring another person into the world. Only with Eve could there be more people made in the image and likeness of God. Only through Eve could there be more people to give honor, glory, praise and thanksgiving to God.

Adam and Eve were given stewardship of the human family. They were responsible for the gift of human life. God commanded them to be fruitful and multiply. God entrusted them with



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I Saw St. Gerard's Intercession

By Fr. Don Willard, C.Ss.R.

It had only been a month since the wedding had taken place at a beautiful Catholic parish overlooking the ocean. It was a joyous celebration of the sacrament of marriage. Christy and Kyle had longed for this day, and this perfect day seemed like the start of a dream. Over the last few months, their dreams all seemed to be coming true. They bought a new home, business was booming and they grew every day in life and love with one another. But, they had one more dream. They wanted a child.

One afternoon, Kyle called me. He asked if Christy could come and talk to me. She was very upset and at home crying. Christy and Kyle had been trying to have a baby. Christy had visited her doctor that morning. The doctor told her that she was pregnant, but that there was a major complication. The baby did not appear to be implanting or connecting correctly. Therefore, the doctor had told her that she would probably have a miscarriage.

Christy was not alone in her moment of sorrow. Many women have had the same experience. Perhaps, this is one of the worst experiences a mother can have. One moment her life is full of expectations, hopes and dreams. The joy of knowing that she will bear the image and likeness of God into the world fills her heart. But, that dream can become a nightmare when she has

to face the possibility or the reality of a miscarriage.

I told Kyle to have Christy come and visit me immediately. About an hour later, Christy arrived at the parish office. Her face, once brilliant with the joy of her wedding day, was now pale and showed the streaks of her tears. We went into the parlor to talk. I began by thanking her for coming to see me. She told me what had happened at the doctor's office, how she felt and how she was so confused. We prayed together, and then I asked her to excuse me for a moment.

St. Gerard does his miraculous work

I went to my office to obtain a relic of St. Gerard, the novena prayers, and my copy of Pastoral Care of the Sick. Then, I went to the house chapel to obtain the Eucharist and the oil of the infirm. When I returned to the parlor, I proceeded to anoint her and she received the Eucharist. I explained to her the importance of the sacraments for healing and accepting God's will in our lives. We do not always get the healing we want. Sometimes, things do not always occur, as we would like. However, we always receive a healing. It might not be physical. Instead, it might be psychological or spiritual. But, in the sacraments we always receive grace. Sometimes, it may just be the grace to bear the difficulties and the pains of life and death with faith.

After administering the sacraments, I handed her the relic of St. Gerard and the novena prayers. I explained to her the story of St. Gerard, the patron saint of expectant mothers. I asked her to take the relic home with her. Then I showed her how to pray the novena prayers. I asked her to make the novena, asking for St. Gerard's assistance. Finally, I told her keep the relic and keep asking St. Gerard for assistance every day, until we knew the outcome of this situation.

Nine days later, Christy visited the doctor's office. After the examination, Christy stopped by the parish office. She had a big smile on her face. She handed me the relic of St. Gerard. She had prayed the novena, and the doctor told her the baby was fine and that all would be well. A few months later, Kyle and Christy gave their baby boy the middle name Gerard in thanksgiving for the answer to their prayers.

Not every woman will have a happy ending to her story like Christy did. But, St. Gerard Majella is a powerful intercessor for all mothers. He stands as reminder that we do not have to go through the trials and difficulties of this world alone. We have a community of believers to help us in times of joy and in times of sadness. We are never alone. The Church has been given stewardship by Christ, to be a mother to all the faithful, just as every mother is given stewardship to be a mother for the children of God.

The First Mother *continued*

his children. Children do not come into existence merely because their parents will them into existence. God is always part of the creative act. God entrusts mothers and fathers with the responsibility of providing the greatest care for God's children.

However, some women and some

couples have the greatest desire to participate in the stewardship of motherhood or parenthood, but may find it difficult to bring a child into the world. It is at these times that St. Gerard Majella, C.Ss.R. reminds us that stewardship always exists in the context of a community.

We need a community to properly exercise and fulfill the ministry that

God has entrusted to us. We need the prayers, the encouragement and the support of other people, especially the great cloud of witnesses that exist in the presence of God for all eternity. We need the help of the Church and the saints so we can discover the will of God in our lives.



Will you also be a friend and prayer angel of St. Gerard? Please pray with the community for all the intentions.

Promoting Devotion to Saint Gerard

By Fr. Joseph Dorcey, C.Ss.R.

Devotion to Saint Gerard Majella as the Mothers' Saint has been growing by leaps and bounds, especially the past two years. As the number of women and men who learn about and are helped by St. Gerard grows, the Redemptorists of the Denver Province are increasing their efforts to further this great work. Here is a brief snapshot of exciting things that are happening in this ministry:

The Website has a totally new and improved look, with more features and easier navigation. You might say it is a new website! It also appears nicely and conveniently in different platforms: smart phones, tablets and PCs. Everyone will hopefully find going to St. Gerard's new website an enjoyable experience.

On the site you can read about St. Gerard and the Redemptorists, join the League of St. Gerard, discover the St. Gerard Facebook prayer community, light a prayer candle for some special intention, read the current or past editions of the League of St. Gerard Newsletter and powerful testimonials, find the Novena and Prayer Booklet and helpful resources about prayer, marriage, family planning, motherhood, family, adoption, etc., and a page where you may make a donation to support this ministry.

Take a look, and encourage others to visit. Come back often.

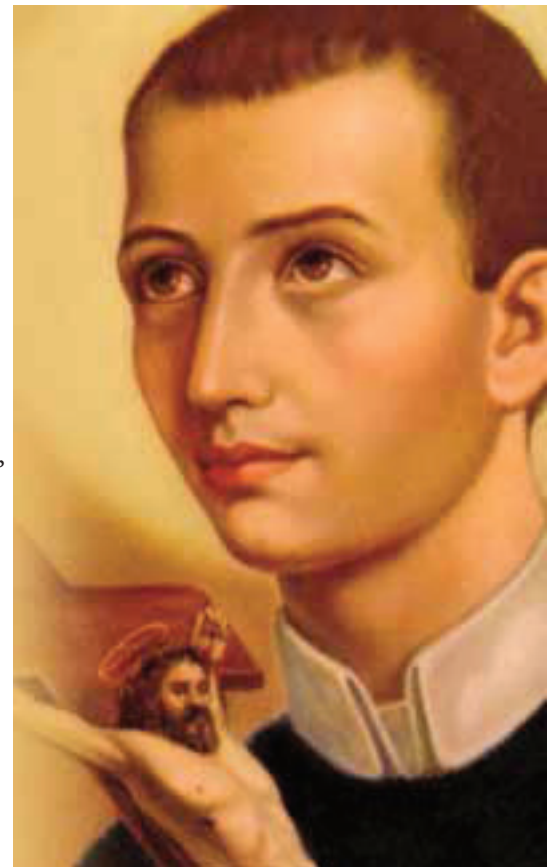
The Facebook prayer community continues to grow, now with over 33,000 friends of St. Gerard. Many in this community are prayer angels who pray daily for hundreds of intentions that are sent to St. Gerard's Website and Facebook page. The posts each day are crafted to be attractive, engaging, thought-provoking and prayer-inspiring.

The League of St. Gerard now has a new home and all the work the Redemptorist Province of Denver does to promote devotion to St. Gerard is under one roof. Liguori Publications enrolled 13,643 members seeking St. Gerard's care over the past decade. Now the League is based in Denver, and hundreds more have been enrolled, with many more expected through the new website.

New enrollees receive a newly-designed certificate of membership, a cover letter explaining what the League is, why it exists and its ideals and purposes, a St. Gerard/Mother of Perpetual Help medal, a prayer card and the Novena and Prayers to St. Gerard Majella booklet.

A shrine to St. Gerard has been added to the chapel in the Redemptorists' Denver office, including a statue of St. Gerard Majella and new enrollment book. Mass is offered every Wednesday for the members of the League and their intentions.

The formation of a group of women who will serve as a "think tank," to evaluate and help with the ongoing creation of the Website, Facebook page, Newsletter and other initiatives has begun. The vast majority of members of the League and those who frequent St. Gerard's Website and Facebook page are women. It is vitally important that women's – especially mother's –



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Promoting Devotion *continued*

perspectives be represented in deciding the future actions and activities of this ministry. Would you like to be part of this group? Contact us.

Materials for spreading devotion are being prepared (flyers, posters, parish announcements), which will be available on the website for use in churches, schools, hospitals, maternity wards, clinics, etc. Packets of materials will also be sent, first to the parishes staffed by Redemptorists, and then to other parishes, depending upon the interest generated.

Donations have increased. This is important because these allow materials (enrollment certificates, medals, prayer cards and novena booklets, etc.) to be sent all over the world, especially to mothers in Asia, South America and Africa who do not have the means to send a free will offering when joining the League of Saint Gerard. There is still much to do. The work is never done. But it is extremely gratifying because there is so much evidence of grace at work in the lives of people who place their faith, hope and trust in the miraculous and powerful intercessory prayers of St. Gerard and his friends.

Will you also be a friend and prayer angel of St. Gerard? Please pray with the community for all the intentions. Encourage others to join the League of St. Gerard. Do all you can, wherever you are, to promote devotion to the holy, simple, wonder-working Redemptorist brother, Gerard Majella, the Mother's Saint. The Catholic Catechism (nos. 2634-2635) also speaks to us and teaches us something about this important form of prayer:

Testimonials



Almost every day we get messages from people giving witness to St. Gerard Majella's powerful intercession: overcoming infertility, receiving the gift of motherhood, getting through a difficult pregnancy, a safe delivery, a healthy baby, a relationship restored, healing and health recovered, to name a few. We want to share a sample of these messages here because they inspire three things we all desperately need: faith, hope and love.

MARIAH McBRIDE PENDERGAST

I want to thank everyone for their prayers. Our beautiful little girl made her appearance at 6:30 p.m. Weighing 6 lbs. 4 oz. and 17¾ in. long, she is perfect in every way. Besides having some eating issues, due to being born at 36 weeks, she is doing amazingly well. God has blessed us with more than we deserve, with a beautiful little girl and two twin boys who will be three in June. But we will take them with open arms and treasure them and be forever grateful.

CAROLINE SIMOES

My daughter was married for four years and still had no child. I had just heard about the powerful intercession of St. Gerard through a friend. I started praying regularly for my daughter and within a month she became pregnant. Last week she gave birth to a healthy and beautiful baby girl. Praise God and thanks to St. Gerard and St. Anne's intercession. Our prayers have been answered. All glory to God.

GERARD DOWNES

I must share my story. I was born on July 8, 1956. I was not aware of how I was named until my dad told me on my twenty-first birthday. My mom and I both had complications during her pregnancy, and I had to be born by Cesarean Section. The doctor told my dad that he didn't think that my mom or I would live. Distraught, Dad went

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Testimonials *continued*

to the chapel in the hospital where a group of nuns were praying. Noticing that my dad was distraught, they prayed with him for my mom and me. When I was born, I was Ok, but Mom lingered near death for quite a while – three months or so. The Redemptorists from St. Patrick's parish in Toronto placed a relic of St. Gerard under my mom's pillow and kept a prayer vigil for her, until finally her health was restored. She lived into her mid-eighties. I was to be named after by maternal grandfather. However, due to the circumstances of my birth and my mom's troubles, I was given the name Gerard. By the way, as Dad was suffering through his last days, Mom gave him the very relic that was placed under her pillow. And now I carry it with me daily. Thank you for allowing me to share my story.

ENZA SILVA TANICO

After two consecutive miscarriages, numerous tests and months and months of trying to have a baby, we were blessed with a beautiful and healthy baby girl. I prayed daily, wore St. Gerard around my neck and never lost faith, even on my toughest days. Every Sunday we were in church and our priests continued to pray for us as well. Almost three years later, I also gave birth to beautiful, healthy twins – a boy and a girl. God's plan is always better! It will all happen when the time is right. As difficult as it may be, just be patient and believe!

TYLER ROWLEY

After a long wait (two years) my wife is pregnant with our first child. We turned to St. Gerard Majella and he interceded for us, along with our Lady, of course. We found out the good news on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, after praying a Novena to St. Gerard and a Rosary every day for 54 straight days. We are having a son and his name is Gerard (a promise I made to our Saint). He will be Gerard James Rowley, eta 8/11/15.



Prayer to St. Gerard

Dear St. Gerard, on this Mother's Day we seek a special blessing for all women who have given birth, or who give their lives to give life to children.

What a special calling, what a tremendous mission: to generate life, to care for it, to nurture, comfort, console and challenge, to be attentive and concerned, to protect and to educate.

May all mothers have the strength, wisdom and courage to be truly life-giving people.
Amen.

