

## A Prayer Over Worries and Concerns During Pregnancy

God of all life,  
sometimes I worry  
about this pregnancy,  
about whether this child  
is developing normally,  
whether there will be any  
complications at birth  
or any genetic conditions  
or other health problems  
after this child is born.

In the midst of these and  
other concerns,  
help me to know that you  
are holding this little one  
close to you and that you  
will give me all the  
strength to handle  
whatever the future holds  
for this child.

Jesus, you told  
the father of a boy  
who was possessed that  
everything is possible to  
one who trusts.

Help me to trust that you,  
the source of this new  
little life that is  
growing right now,  
will bring this child to the  
end for which you intend.

Amen

From *Welcome! Prayers for New and Pregnant Parents* by Kathleen Finley,  
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## The Heart of the Matter

### From the Internet

Please put my sister's first grandchild on your prayer list. She was born with a tumor on her face and she is facing surgery very soon to remove the tumor. We need prayers to St. Gerard to intercede for her surgery that all will go well and she will grow up to be a normal, happy, and healthy girl. Also pray for her parents that they will have strength throughout this ordeal.

### From Nebraska

In thanksgiving for a healthy, beautiful baby boy! We had a difficult pregnancy with bed rest from the twelfth week until I reached thirty-six weeks. I made it to full term and the baby was able to decide when he wanted to come. After all the worry and precautions, he was born two days before his due date and joins his older brothers and sister. Thank you for all your prayers. Thank you to St. Gerard for his intercession. Our little boy is a blessing to our family.

### From New Jersey

My husband and I tried for three years to have a baby. Unfortunately we suffered a few miscarriages. We didn't let anyone know the troubles we were having. All along we were praying to St. Gerard together. Last year we were able to get pregnant and we told everyone so that they could also pray for the baby.

Our baby, who is now four months old, is crying for me in her crib right now to come and get her. I want to thank St. Gerard and all of the other people whose prayers brought her to us. We have been truly blessed. Thank you.

### From the Internet

Please pray to St. Gerard that my husband and I will conceive and bring a healthy child of God into the world. The medical experts are not giving us much hope because of my age, but if we pray hard enough it will happen.

Please send your prayer requests and thanksgiving letters to the address on page one or to [miss-spon@liguori.org](mailto:miss-spon@liguori.org). These addresses may also be used to report an address change, to request missed issues, or to remove someone from or add someone to our mailing list.



League of

# ST. GERARD

FALL 2005

Newsletter

The Redemptorists  
One Liguori Drive • Liguori, MO 63057-9999 • [www.liguori.org](http://www.liguori.org)

Year of  
St. Gerard  
Majella

October 2004-  
October 2005



100 Years  
a Saint

Canonized by  
Pope St. Pius X  
December 11, 1904



250 Years  
With God

St. Gerard died  
October 16, 1755

## Concluding the Year of St. Gerard

DAVID WERTHMANN

With this issue we conclude the special year dedicated to St. Gerard Majella. Brother Gerard died two hundred fifty years ago on October 15, 1755, from a combination of tuberculosis and emphysema. He was twenty-nine years old and had been a Redemptorist Brother for only three years. Yet think of the impact his life has had on the world!

### The Will of God

Conforming to the will of God was Gerard's passion all his life and even in death. In fact, on his deathbed he confessed to his superior, "I imagine that this bed is the will of God, and I am nailed to this bed as if to the will of God. Even more, I imagine that the will of God and I have become the same thing."

On the door of his room he posted a sign all in capital letters that read: *Here the will of God is being done.* As we grow closer and closer to God, our will becomes the same as God's will. Spiritual guides call that characteristic "uniformity with the will of God." It is clear that by the time he died, Brother Gerard's own will was in complete harmony with God's will. All his biographers agree on that point.

### Confidence in God

When Gerard made his "yes" to God, it was joyful and confident and it grew as he matured. Gerard trusted God because he realized that God's will for us is to live life fully and to live in happiness.

It is not surprising, then, that writing about a mortally ill nun to a member of her community, he said, "I don't want her to die. Tell my dear God that I want her to become more holy and to die very old so that she may rejoice in spending many years in the service of God. Have courage in dealing with the

divine power. And this time may God let things happen as we wish." To us, this statement sounds rather arrogant. But Gerard could write these things because he already knew it was God's will that the nun should not die yet.

God's will for us  
is to live life fully  
and to live  
in happiness.

Earlier he had written to the same nun, "What else does God want from us except that his divine will always be done perfectly, as he wishes, where he wishes, and when he wishes, with us always ready to welcome even his slightest suggestion?"

### Joy Amid Suffering

When we say "yes" to God, there are still going to be crosses to bear. Even when those crosses came into Brother Gerard's life, he still maintained his trust in God with generosity and joy. Gerard knew that any suffering we must face contributes to the whole process of salvation because enduring suffering—and joining it with Christ's suffering—is another way we can imitate Jesus. Thus, people stated that Gerard always seemed joyful even in his most painful illnesses.

It was common in those days for religious Sisters and Brothers to practice severe forms of penance. Gerard tried to perform even more penance than was prescribed in the Rule, and yet through them all he kept his normal demeanor of tenderness and affection toward others. That is because Gerard's "yes" was a "yes" to both the death and the resurrection of the Lord. Like St. Paul, Brother Gerard could proclaim, "I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church" (Colossians 1:24).



Adapted from "Gerard's Spirituality" by Sabatino Majorano, C.Ss.R., in *Saint Gerard Majella: His Writings and Spirituality*, Noel Londoño, C.Ss.R., editor. © 2002, Liguori Publications.

**O God,**  
*You willed to draw blessed Gerard to yourself from his earliest years  
 and to mold him to the image of your crucified Son.  
 Grant, we beseech you, that by following his example  
 we may be transformed into the same image.*

Opening prayer from the Liturgy for the feast of St. Gerard Majella, October 16



### Novena to St. Gerard

Every year the contemplative nuns at Liguori, Missouri, offer a novena on October 8-16 in preparation for the feast day of St. Gerard Majella. They are always most happy to remember your needs in their prayers.

Dear Sisters,  
 Please include the following petitions in your prayers:

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

To send your request for specific intentions or for prayers in general, clip this coupon, place it in an envelope, and mail to  
 St. Gerard Novena • Redemptoristine Nuns • 200 Liguori Drive • Liguori, MO 63057

### Personal Letter

The following letter was written just one month before St. Gerard died. It is the last of his letters that survives today in its complete form. It is sort of like his final testament to us.

Adapted from a letter to Isabella Salvadore:

September 1755

*My dearest sister in Jesus Christ:*

*God knows how ill I find myself. Nevertheless, my Lord permits me to write you on my own. You can understand, then, how much God loves you. But how much more will he love you if you do all that I have recommended to you.*

*My dear daughter, you cannot imagine how I love you in God and how much I desire your salvation, because our blessed God wishes me to give special attention to you. But be assured, blessed daughter, that my affection is purified of any worldly passion. It is an affection made divine in God. I repeat then, that I love you in God and not apart from God.*

*And as I love you, I love all creatures who love God. If I knew that a person loved me apart from God, I would curse her on behalf of my Lord because our affection has to be purified by loving everything in God and not apart from him.*

*My daughter, it is enough to love God alone and nothing else. Therefore, I beg you to rid yourself of all passions and worldly attachments and embrace everything in God, uniting yourself to him.*

*Have courage, blessed daughter, and take the final step so as to be all God's. How beautiful it is to belong totally to God. Those who have loved like that know this well. Try it yourself and afterward you will ask: what good is it to love the world, except to constantly encounter tribulations and bitterness?*

*So go on! Don't seek anything else. From now on your heart has to be all God's. He must not find anyone else dwelling in it. And when you realize that anything that is not God wishes to enter, say to yourself: "My heart is committed; God, my beloved, has taken over as my master. For this reason, there isn't room for others who are not my God. So evaporate, disappear all of you who are not my God, my divine spouse."*

*For the bride must be jealous of her divine bridegroom. She has to guard her heart, which must be the temple of God. That is the name given to hearts consecrated to our dear God.*

*Most unworthy servant and brother in Christ,  
 Gerard Majella of the Most Holy Redeemer*