

THE LEAGUE OF Saint Gerard



PRAYERS • DEVOTIONS • MEMBERSHIP • GIFTS • RESOURCES • SUMMER 2009

Recognized, Restored, Redeemed



BY DONALD WILLARD, C.Ss.R.

The feast day of Saint Alphonsus de Liguori, the founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, is August 1. He founded the Redemptorist order in the eighteenth century to preach Jesus Christ's plentiful redemption to the poor and the most abandoned.

rather than allowing ourselves to be free to live the life of grace offered to us by God. Sin is a failure to respond to God's love in a spirit of loving gratitude, and therefore it always harms our relationship with God.

We owe God all our love and gratitude, but we can't readily show it because we're bound to our sins—caught in a process that won't allow us to act in charity and love. Thus we need someone to break the cycle, to

Spread the News

Redemption through the cross, the resurrection, and the sacraments was the foundation of Gerard's spirituality. When Gerard was twelve years old, his father died. Gerard took a job in a tailor shop to support his family. He was often treated in a very demeaning manner, so he knew what it meant to be held in bondage.

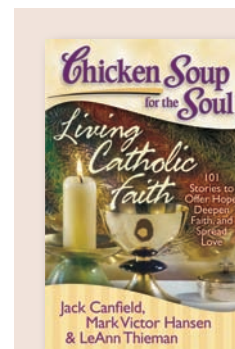
Saint Gerard knew his personal need for a redeemer. He knew his need to have his human dignity recognized, restored, and redeemed. It's little wonder that when he joined the Redemptorists he took a job in

One type of redemption found in the Old Testament involves buying a person out of slavery or bondage. A relative or friend could pay a price to "redeem" a loved one who had been sold into slavery to pay a debt.

Saint Alphonsus, the Doctor of Confessors and the Doctor of Moral Theology, realized that people are also held in bondage or slavery to their sins. We get caught in a cycle of letting our selfish desires control us

"pay" our redemption. We need someone to free us so we can be restored to our promised relationship with God.

Therefore, redemption is really about restoring our human dignity as sons and daughters of God so we may live again in right relationship with one another and with God. This redemption, accomplished through the self-sacrificing love of Jesus, continues through the sacraments and in our lives in the Spirit.



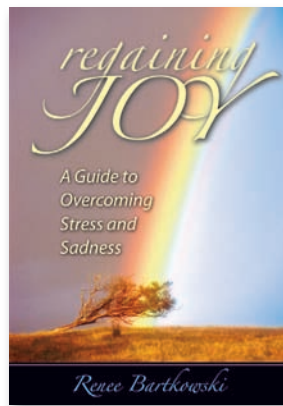
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the sacristy so he could be in the presence of his Redeemer as often as possible. He passed days in prayer and meditation and burned with loving adoration of his beloved Redeemer present in the Eucharist. However, his absolute gratitude and love to God for his own redemption couldn't be confined to the chapel. He felt a deep desire to share God's love with the world.

Saint Gerard expressed his gratitude to God by his own selfless service to others in need. He worked to repair people's relationships, striving to restore their dignity and love for God. The miracles attributed to Saint Gerard were actually God's grace at work.

Spread the Love

Love begets love. The great love Jesus displayed through his cross and resurrection continues in time as we recall his passion and resurrection in the sacrifice of the holy Eucharist. The holy Eucharist invites us to be filled with the love of God, not just



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for ourselves, but so we can share it with everyone. By recalling Christ's own passion, Saint Gerard was informed, reformed, and transformed into a living icon of God's love and grace.

Saint Gerard recognized the suffering of his wounded Savior in the wounded dignity of people in need. God's love and grace poured forth to everyone who approached Saint Gerard. He applied the healing balm of love to a wounded world so

each person's dignity could be restored and redeemed to the image and likeness of God.

Saint Paul said, "You have been purchased at a price" (1 Cor 6:20 and 7:23). Moved to deep gratitude by the depth of God's love in the sacrifice of Jesus, we "pay forward" selfless sacrifice to our sisters and brothers in humanity.

We're reminded by Saint Gerard's life to do the same. When the redeeming power of God's love heals our wounds of sin and division, we're filled with hope and grati-

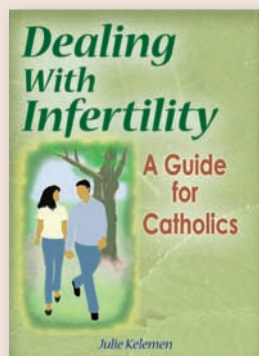
tude. We are in a sense "bought back"—brought back—into our relationships with one another and with God. We're given the freedom to live as the children of God.

Called into communion with one another, we experience God's healing presence in the sacraments as a community of faith bound by love. Together we experience God's presence in our lives.

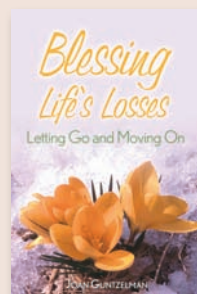
Spread the Word

Recognized, restored, and redeemed, we take God's love into the world. Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist is the foundation of our lives. We are transformed to continue Christ's mission to the world, to make the reign of God more present to the world, and to offer charity and love to the world so all may know their dignity as people made in the image and likeness of God, beloved daughters and sons of God.

Saint Gerard stands as a compelling example of how prayer and love unite us to God and to one another. Let us continue to live our communion in mission with Saint Gerard to carry forth the work of redemption God so wants to share with the world. Let us proclaim with Saint Gerard, "With Christ there is plentiful redemption."



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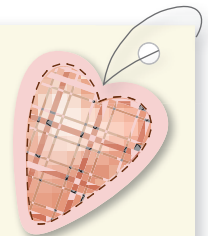
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Prayer



- O Saint Gerard, you are an example of the redeeming power of God's love. Help us experience the love of God in our lives, being ever mindful of the self-sacrificing love of Jesus and offering ourselves as a gift in gratitude.
- Through your intercession, may we grow in love of God, love of the Church, and love of one another so that the dignity of every human being is recognized, restored, and redeemed in a community of faith.
- We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Enrollment in the League of Saint Gerard

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*.

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(English: G0101; Spanish: G0107)

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The Heart of the Matter



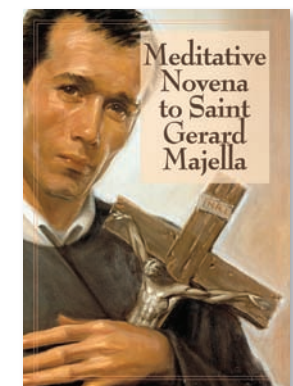
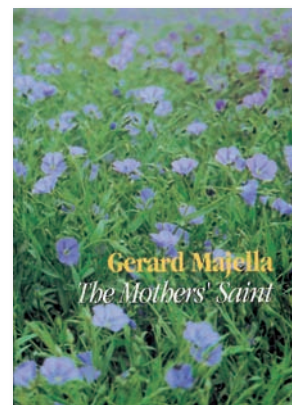
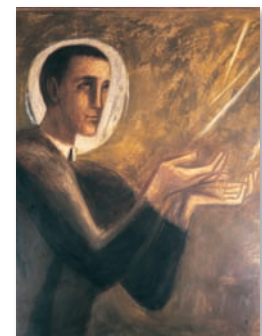
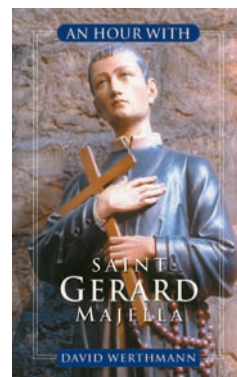
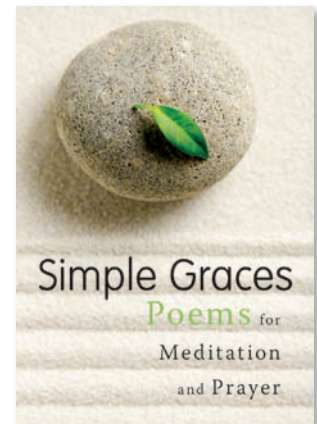
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