

Memorial OCTOBER 16

SAINT GERARD MAJELLA, Religious

GERARD MAJELLA WAS BORN IN MURO LUCANO (Potenza) in southern Italy on April 6, 1726, in a family of humble circumstances. From his parents, Gerard learned the love of prayer and sacrifice. When his father died, Gerard, being the only boy, had to provide for his family by working as a tailor. At the age of fourteen he sought to enter the Capuchin friary but was rejected because of his delicate health. After a short time as the domestic servant of the bishop of Lacedonia, he returned to tailoring, but with minimal income.

In April of 1749, with utter tenacity, he succeeded in getting himself accepted by the Redemptorists who had preached a popular mission in Muro. After a trial period and a year of novitiate in the house at Deliceto, he made his religious profession on July 16, 1752. He was very observant of the rule while at the same time going about the surrounding countryside to collect money for the material needs of the community. His presence to

people, who were weighed down by poverty and illiteracy and at the mercy of epidemics and crop failures, was seen as a sign of hope. Gerard had a deep empathy for them and gave to all a testimony to trust in the love and compassion of God. During his five years as a lay brother in the Congregation, he was remarkable for his apostolic zeal, patience in sickness, love for the poor, deep humility in the face of false accusation, heroic obedience, spirit of penance and constancy in prayer. He wrote numerous letters of spiritual direction and a “Rule of Life”. The Lord favoured him with numerous spiritual gifts, among which were prophecy, the reading of people’s hearts, and the gift of miracles. He died at Materdomini (Avellino) on October 16, 1755.

He was beatified by Leo XIII on January 29, 1893, and canonized by Pius X on December 11, 1904. Remembered among the people for his love for them, he is especially invoked as patron for mothers, particularly in times of pregnancy and for their infants.



Entrance Antiphon

Gal 2:19-20

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

COLLECT

O God, you willed to draw Saint Gerard to yourself from his earliest years and to mould him to the image of your crucified Son. Grant, we pray, that following the example of his life, we may be transformed in the same image. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FIRST READING

Philippians 3:8-14

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians.

I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For him I have accepted the loss of everything, and I look on everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ and be given a place in him. I am no longer trying for perfection by my own efforts, the perfection that comes from the Law, but I want only the perfection that comes through faith in Christ, and is from God and based on faith. All I want is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and to share his suffering by producing the pattern of his death. That is the way I can hope to take my place in the resurrection of the dead. Not that I have become perfect yet: I have not yet won, but I am still running, trying to capture the prize for which Christ Jesus captured me. I can assure you, my brothers and sisters, I am far from thinking that I have already won. All I can say is that I forget the past and I strain ahead for what is still to come; I am racing for the finish, for the prize to which God calls us upwards to receive in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 16: 1-2, 5, 7-11

R. You are my God, my only good.

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.
I say to the Lord, "You are my God."
O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup.
it is you yourself who are my prize. **R.**

I will bless you, Lord, you give me counsel.
and even at night direct my heart.
I keep you, Lord, ever in my sight;
since you, are at my right hand, I shall stand
firm. **R.**

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 12:26

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Whoever serves me must follow me,
and where I am, there will my servant be also.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 12:23-32

If a wheat grain dies, it yields a rich harvest.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. If man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him.

Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it is for this very reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name!'

A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.'

Jesus answered, 'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours. Now sentence is passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all to myself.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Presider :

St. Gerard Majella, the Patron Saint of Motherhood, had a deep love and obedience for God in the Blessed Sacrament. May his humble devotion and service inspire us to be conscious in sharing our many gifts and blessings. Let us lift our prayers to God, through the intercession of St. Gerard.

Response : *Lord, give us strength.*

1. For the Redemptorists, that like St. Gerard they may render humble service to His people through obedience to God's will. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

2. For all mothers, that through the prayers of St. Gerard, they may be a loving source of grace and strength to their children. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

3. For those contemplating abortion, that the intercession of St. Gerard may open their hearts to accept the blessing of motherhood. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

4. For those lacking the basic necessities of daily living, that God's providential care will bring them hope and comfort. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

5. For all of us, that through generous love and service we may contribute to the growth of our Church and community. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

Presider :

Almighty Father, thank you for St. Gerard's inspiring life and ministry. Bless us with your grace that we may radiate your light as we bring the knowledge of your love to those who need you, yet do not know you. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son.

Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord, you accepted the oblation of your servant, Gerard, as he offered himself daily with Christ. Accept the sacrifice of our will together with the gifts we present at your altar. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PREFACE

Priest : The Lord be with you.

People : And with your spirit.

Priest : Lift up your hearts.

People : We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest : Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People : It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in the Saints who consecrated themselves to Christ for the sake of the Kingdom of

Heaven, it is right to celebrate the wonders of your providence, by which you call human nature back to its original holiness and bring it to experience on this earth the gifts you promise in the new world to come.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim:

Communion Antiphon 1 Pet 4:13-14a
But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O Lord, may the sacrament we have received stir up in us the desire to please you always, so that, like Saint Gerard, we may ever strive to do your will. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.