

Saint Gertrude's Confidence in God



Saint Gertrude is one of the greatest and most wonderful saints in the Church of God. Holy Church has distinguished her from all others of her gender by adding to her name the honorable title, "the Great." For hundreds and thousands of pious Christians, Saint Gertrude has become a guide in the spiritual life, a teacher of the most intimate spirit of prayer and familiar discourse with God.

Saint Gertrude's Unlimited Confidence

Great trust in God's mercy, unlimited confidence in His love, is one of the secrets to obtain sanctity. The Holy Fathers have always taught that the measure of our hope and confidence is the measure of the graces which we receive from Heaven. They have realized that, through our unreserved confidence, God is most honored and glorified. Nothing will be denied to an unlimited confidence. Our Lord revealed: "It is impossible that anyone should not receive all that he has believed and hoped to obtain. It gives Me real pleasure when men hope great things from Me and I will always grant them more than they expect."

Saint Gertrude understood that confidence is the key which opens the treasures of the infinite mercy of God. To her confidence alone she attributed all the gifts she received, and she invited all to place boundless confidence in our Savior in order to receive from Him immeasurable graces. "All that I have received," she affirmed, "I owe to my confidence in the gratuitous bounty of God." Yes, Gertrude knew that Jesus is an infinite Treasure placed by the Eternal Father at the disposition of all, and that it is His supreme delight, as Savior, to distribute His gifts to those who

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News from the Apostolate

Plans for the "Last Chance for World Peace" Conference, to be held in Spain and Portugal this coming October, are shaping up. Our announcements of and invitations to the Conference have gone out to priests and bishops around the world.

As a follow-up to the announcement, the Fatima Center has also sent a package of materials to remind clergy how to practice the Five First Saturdays, and to promote the devotion within their parish or diocese. They are also encouraged to consecrate their diocese, parish or apostolate to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart. This consecration and honor shown to Our Lady can only please Our Lord, and obtain graces not just for the consecrated, but also for the Holy Father, who is in constant need of our prayers. Please pray that these

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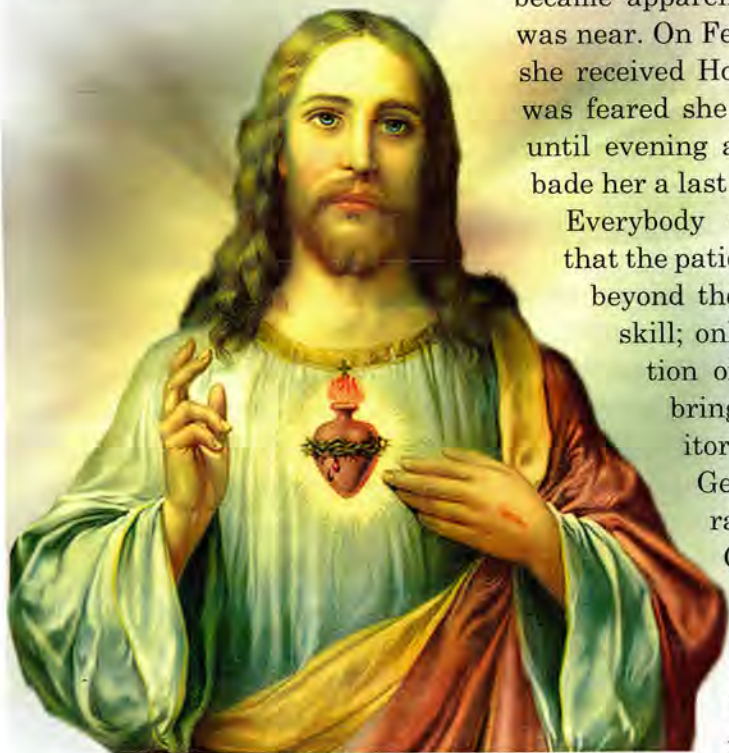
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Power of a Novena to the Sacred Heart

from an Approved Source

St. Gemma Galgani, a child of grace, died on Holy Saturday, April 11, 1903. She was born March 12, 1878, near Lucca, Italy, of thoroughly Catholic parents who had met with many misfortunes and reverses. When eight years old,



Gemma lost her excellent mother, and soon after the death of her father, in 1897, Gemma herself became seriously ill. She suffered from tuberculosis of the spine, alarming attacks of meningitis, total loss of hearing and paralysis of the limbs. Doctors employed all their skill on her behalf, but the malady grew daily worse.

Confined to her bed of pain, Gemma could no longer move

her limbs, and was entirely dependent upon the charitable aid of others. In this painful condition she passed many weary months, with no other comfort than prayer and resignation to the will of God. Her disease continued unchecked, and it soon became apparent that the end was near. On February 2, 1899, she received Holy Viaticum. It was feared she would not live until evening and her friends bade her a last farewell.

Everybody was convinced that the patient sufferer was beyond the aid of human skill; only the intervention of Heaven could bring relief. One visitor

brought Gemma the biography of Blessed Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, of the order of Passionists, who had died in

the odor of sanctity in 1862. Leo XIII, who declared this youthful saint "Venerable", called him the "Aloysius of the 19th Century." (Gabriel was canonized by Pope Benedict XV, May 13, 1920.)

The biography of St. Gabriel at once inspired Gemma with confidence. She declared: "That same evening I began to read the life of Venerable Gabriel, and I did not weary of taking it up again and again and admiring his virtues and example. Thenceforth I felt a special devo-

tion to him. I felt his presence near me. In all my actions, the Venerable Gabriel was in my thoughts." Gabriel was in truth near Gemma, and called her "sister."

A religious then advised her to make a novena to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque for a complete cure or for the grace of entering Heaven immediately after death. To please the good Sister, she began the novena on February 23, 1899. Let us again hear Gemma's own words: "It was but a few minutes before midnight, when I heard the rustling of a rosary and felt a hand laid on my forehead. It was Venerable Gabriel. Then I heard a voice repeating nine times in succession the *Pater, Ave* and *Gloria*."

"Through sheer weakness I could scarcely answer. The voice then asked me, 'Wilt thou be healed? Pray with faith to the Sacred Heart of Jesus every evening. I will come daily as long as the novena lasts, and we will pray together to the Sacred Heart.' And he really came every evening, laying his hand on my forehead while we recited the prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, adding, by his desire, three times the *Gloria Patri* in honor of Blessed Margaret Mary. The novena ended on the first Friday of March."

The time had arrived when Gemma's great patience was to be rewarded. She was not to die; God intended to glorify her by the fulness of His most extraordinary gifts before taking her to Himself. But in order that she might be delivered from her frightful suffer-

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Green Scapular 'Report'

Thanks to those of you who have reported your 'Green Scapular' stories to us. One veteran nurse whose job brings her on home visits described how she 'plants' Green Scapulars in behalf of her patients. "If I go into their bedroom, I wedge one between the bed and the frame. If I only go in the living room, I sit on the sofa, or in a deep chair, and wedge it down beneath the cushions." This she does almost everywhere she goes. Another of Our Lady's 'Crusaders' carries a little purse of Green Scapulars and Miraculous Medals at all times. Another devotee of Our Lady pins an extra Miraculous Medal to her scapular, so she always has one to give out.

A mother of small children was reminded about the blessings obtained through the Green Scapular, so she began to scheme in behalf of a young man. Weeks before she knew she would see her 'target', she began to recite the daily prayer (including the intention of a successful 'plant'). "*Immaculate Heart of Mary, Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.*" In the meantime, she put several into her pocket to prepare for the day. When the opportunity finally ar-

rived, she had only seconds. Quickly she lifted a bunch of pens from a cup, dropped the Green Scapular into the cup, returned the pens to place and walked away.

Perhaps as a heavenly reward for the little act of faith, she was filled with glee. Another inspiration arose: The next day, she went to visit the Blessed Sacrament in a church that suffers some modern abuses. While sending her children to visit a little shrine in a side chapel, she scurried up the steps of the sanctuary and taped a Green Scapular to the underside of the altar. More glee. The next day: A friend drove to the house to ask prayers for a troubled child. She whipped out another Green Scapular and told the mother how to obtain the sacramental's graces. It was as if Our Lady was leading people to her. Within the next week, she had passed on several others to family, friends, and even a non-Catholic, who received it with delight. She always made sure to teach the prayer to each recipient, rejoicing to God at the graces she herself was receiving, and reporting each story to her family at the dinner table.

But her greatest joy was when her family was at the park one recent

evening after a 'rosary walk' together. One of her children was engaged with another mother in conversation about names. "We all have saints' names because we're Catholic," the child explained. "Oh, I used to go to Catholic school when I was young, but I never practiced," the woman responded. Just then, the child's parents called to leave, so she ran to her mother, whispering the conversation as they walked away — she wanted to do something.

Having run out of Green Scapulars, the mother smiled: "Why don't you give her your rosary?" she said. In a flash, the child was running, and reached the woman as she was getting into the car. The woman was astonished to receive the gift. First, she thanked the girl profusely, — Continued on page 4



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ings, a great miracle was required. This miracle Our Lord in His mercy and goodness was pleased to perform.

At the close of the novena to the Sacred Heart, she sent for her confessor and made her confession. After Holy Communion, Jesus said to her, "Gemma, wilt thou be cured?" Overcome with emotion she answered only with her heart, "As Thou wilt, my Jesus."

Gemma was restored to health: her cure was as complete as it was instantaneous. Scarcely had two

hours passed when she arose. The relatives and members of the household wept with joy. She now received Holy Communion again daily, for she had a consuming desire for this heavenly Food. Three months after her cure, she received the sacred stigmata. During the four years that she still lived, wonderful mysteries were imparted to her, such as have been imparted only to the greatest saints. Since her death God has glorified her through miracles. She was canonized by Pope Pius XII on May 2, 1940. †

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I Thee implore, make me to love Thee more and more.

“mini-consecrations” may obtain the supernatural “en-couragement” the Pontiff needs to make the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart, as Our Lady requested nearly eighty years ago.

The response received from bishops so far has been encouraging. Although some do not have the resources to travel, we are trying to assist them in every way we can. We are confident that Our Lady will help us direct the resources to those in need.

Please pray for this cause. †

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trust in Him. He frequently complained to the beloved of His Heart of man's want of confidence.

To a religious who had long prayed in vain for a particular favor, Jesus revealed how pleased He was with Gertrude's boundless trust in His goodness. “Why dost thou not act like Gertrude, My chosen virgin?” Our Lord inquired of the nun. “She is so firmly established in My Providence that there is nothing which she does not hope for from the plenitude of My grace. Therefore, I will never refuse her anything.” Alas! We creatures have too little knowledge of God's kindness, love, and mercy! Our distrust arises because we compare God with ourselves. Oh, that all hearts would realize that Jesus is all love, all mercy. He has treasures of grace for all, but few come to bear them away by means of their confidence.

In all things, Gertrude had recourse to Jesus as a child has to its mother. Nothing, in her eyes, was too trivial to be recommended to Him. On one occasion, having lost a needle in a pile of straw, she besought Him to find it for her. “O dear Jesus,” she said, “vainly, indeed, would I search for this needle. It would be lost time. Please get it for me Thyself.” Extending one hand, and turning away her head, she immediately found the needle between her fingers. Again and again, Our Lord encouraged this confidence so dear to Him.

“O Jesus, what should I add to these prayers to make them yet more efficacious?” Gertrude once asked. Turning to her with a countenance full of sweetness, Our Savior replied, “Confidence alone easily obtains all things!..” Once when St. Gertrude

was troubled with temptations, she implored the Divine assistance. Our Lord, in His exceeding mercy, spoke thus to her: “Anyone suffering from human temptations, who flees to My protection with firm confidence, belongs to those of whom I can say: ‘One is My dove, My chosen one out of thousands, who has pierced My Heart with one glance of her eyes.’ And this confidence wounds My Heart so deeply that were I unable to relieve such a soul, it would cause My Heart a sadness which all the joys of Heaven could not assuage... The confidence that I truly have the power, the wisdom and the goodness to aid a soul faithfully in all her miseries, is the arrow which pierces My Heart, and does such violence to My love that I can never abandon her.” †

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then she went back to the parents, to reiterate her thanks. The child was happy all the rest of the night.

The mother observed several lessons from these seemingly random moments. First, Heaven requires of us acts of faith as well as prayer. The spiritual reward she received from the first Green Scapular ‘plant’ included the greatest joy and consolation. Clearly, Our Lady was pleased! Then, Our Lady directed souls to the mother, who became Our Queen's instrument. Joy, again! But the graces poured out to the family were the most astonishing. Not only was the mother filled with a certain sense of heavenly purpose that revived her own soul, but also was a good example set for her children, whose good work also obtained graces for souls.

The mother suggests two final observations: first, *don't run out of Green Scapulars!* Always carry something you can pass to another; second, if you are feeling down in the dumps, why not plant a Green Scapular or two for others.

If you like these lessons, please call our office for your free Green Scapulars (1-800-263-8160). †

We'd Like to Hear From YOU!

Crusaders of Mary
Newsletter

In U.S.A. — 17000 State Route 30, Constable, NY 12926

In CANADA — 452 Kraft Road, Fort Erie, ON. L2A 4M7

Call us toll free at: 1-800-263-8160 • Fax: (905) 871-3646

www.fatima.org • E-mail: info@fatima.org