

OCTOBER 16

## *Saint Gerard Majella, Religious*

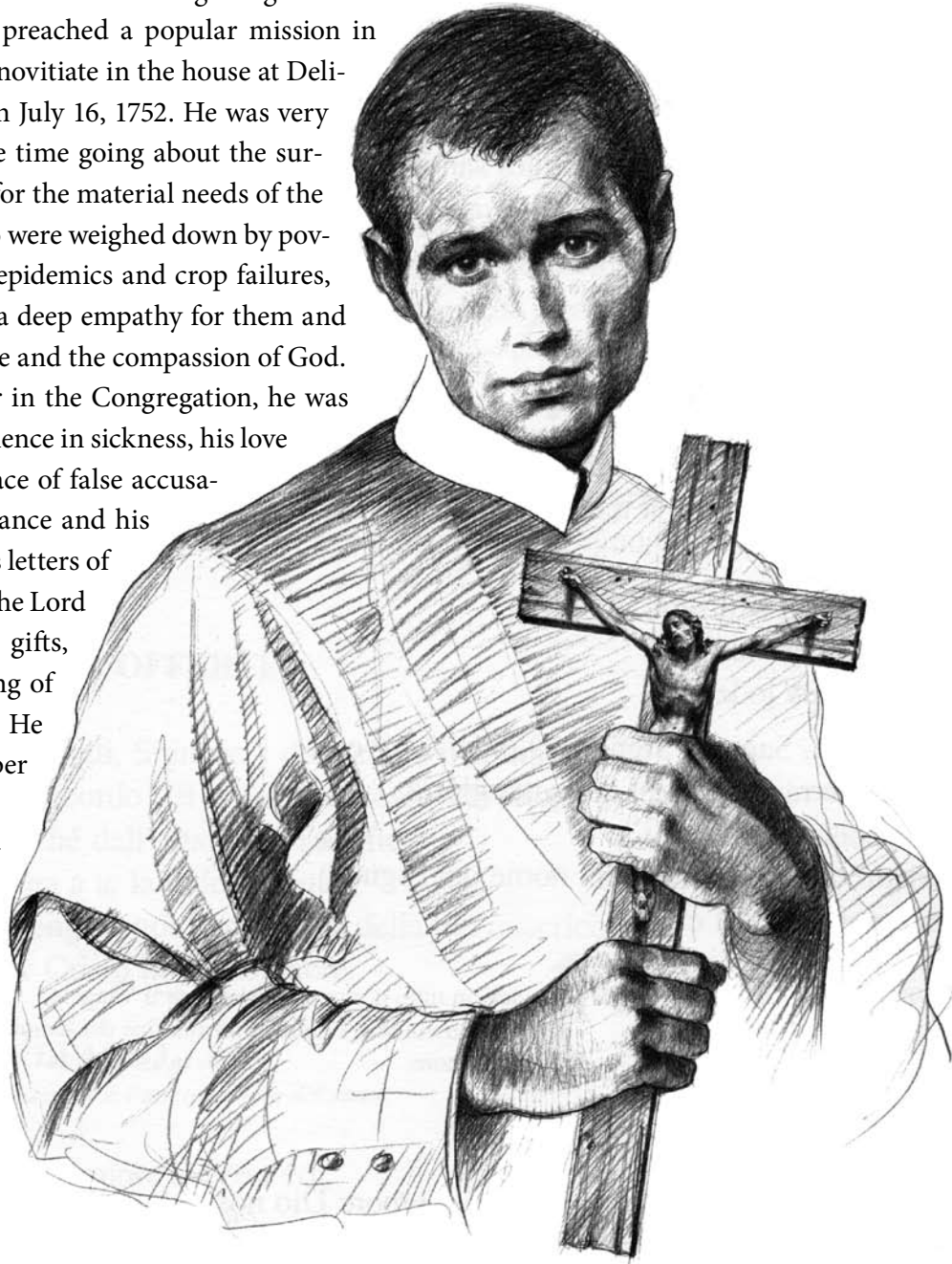
### **Memorial**

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 he 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 the compassion of God.

During his five years as a lay brother in the Congregation, he was remarkable for his apostolic zeal, his patience in sickness, his love for the poor, his deep humility in the face of false accusation, heroic obedience, his spirit of penance and his constancy in prayer. He wrote numerous letters of spiritual direction and a "Rule of Life." The Lord favored 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 time of pregnancy and for their infants.



**Entrance Antiphon** 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 (Gal 2:19–20).

## **OPENING PRAYER**

O God,  
you willed to draw Saint Gerard to yourself from his earliest years  
and to mold 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 regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.  
For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I  
may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from  
the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith.  
I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by  
becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it  
my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made  
it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies  
ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God 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

*Your peace will rest upon him.*

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said to them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

## **PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

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 also with you.

**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 to give him thanks and praise.

Father, all powerful and ever-living God,  
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

You are glorified in your saints,  
for their glory is the crowning of your gifts.  
In the life of Saint Gerard,  
you give us an example.  
In our communion with him,  
you give us his friendship.  
In his prayer for the church  
you give us strength and protection.  
His witness spurs us on to victory,  
to share the same crown of glory,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So, with the angels and archangels  
and the whole company of the saints  
we sing our unending hymn of praise:

**Communion Antiphon** 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 (1 Pet 4:13–14a).

## **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.