

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT NEWSLETTER

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FROM BISHOP DOLAN

My dear Friends,

If you know St. Gertrude the Great (I wish more did) you know she is all about prayers and promises. There is however, one prayer, which, with its attached promise, is problematic. It comes up each year in the month of the Poor Souls, and bears her name. This year, I thought I'd write something about it.

But first, let me say that we had a grand and glorious feast of St. Gertrude the Great and month of November, praying to her and for the Poor Souls throughout. Thank you for your generosity for them, and for your help for us, too. You help us, then, to help many souls. It is a blessing all around.

The prayer I'm thinking of promises release from Purgatory for 1,000 poor souls every time it is recited. The trouble is that it is a modern prayer, and is not from the pen of our holy patroness. Furthermore, there is no record of such a promise in her writings.

If you've ever read or said a St. Gertrude prayer, you know that her style is quite different. The promises Our Lord made to His Spouse are indeed abundantly generous, but not phrased numerically. Consider the following prayer to Our Lady, which we recite each Friday in our Perpetual Novena to the Sacred Heart:

The Golden Salutation to the Blessed Virgin

"Hail, white lily of the ever-peaceful and glorious Trinity! Hail, effulgent rose, the delight of heaven, of whom the King of heaven was born, and by whose milk He was nourished! Do Thou feed our souls by the effusions of Thy Divine Influence."

The Blessed Virgin revealed to St. Gertrude that she rejoiced to show to those who thus saluted her the inestimable treasures of her loving compassion. And at the hour of his departure, she added, "I will appear to him clothed with radiant beauty, and will pour into his soul heavenly sweetness and consolation."

Having said this, may I also say that if you are attached to that modern poor souls prayer, you may certainly go ahead and continue to use it. Just keep in mind that we leave "the results" to God's mercy. The saints say one "Eternal Rest," prayed devoutly, could be of immense value. But this prayer which is entitled "Prayer of St. Gertrude the Great Dictated by Our Lord," is not. "Sinners in the universal church" has a very JPII ring to it, at least to me, and betrays its recent composition.

It is the style of some today to attack and attempt to debunk cherished devotions. I would never want to be of that number.



On the Feast of Christ the King, Bishop Dolan visited Father Francis Miller's chapel in Lafayette, Alabama, to administer the sacrament of confirmation to some twenty souls. The visit afforded the faithful the opportunity to meet with His Excellency and enjoy some time socializing.

Too much has been torn down, destroyed, too many souls have been hurt, scandalized. Let us respect our traditions, and the pious practices of others, even as we continue our own cherished devotions, but just out of love. No need for us to try to bind God when we pray. His infinite love forces Him to do so much for us as it is. Let us trust Him to see to the results. Rather than to hold the Almighty to a man made contract, let us simply show confidence, always more trusting confidence.

"Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in Thee." (300 days)
This is a good Advent prayer to prepare His place in your heart. By your continued prayers for the poor souls, you are certainly preparing an excellent Christmas gift for the New Born Jesus, as well as for the suffering souls who await your charity.

Blessed Christmas!

– **Most Rev. Daniel L. Dolan**

P.S. Be sure to purchase our beautiful Blessed Mother Calendar, and to participate in our Christmas Octave Novena of Masses. Send us your intentions.



Our Father Nkamuke's work in his native Nigeria is flowering as evidenced by the enthusiasm and growth of his congregation, as well as his establishment of a house of studies for future priests. Father also serves several small missions and is kept quite busy!

Each year in November our school children visit a cemetery and pray the rosary as they process. This year, as a part of their art class they learned some of the basics of flower arranging, which allowed them to make small bouquets to be placed on the graves of the departed.



Our intrepid missionary of the northern states, Father McKenna, provided these pictures of Powers Lake, North Dakota where he is now is able to offer Mass for the remnant of the faithful at Our Lady of the Prairie Shrine. On that trip Father McKenna, along with some hearty souls, braved early November near zero degree temperatures and snow, to visit the grave of Father Frederic Nelson who is buried in St. James Cemetery. Father Nelson established the once flourishing church and school in resistance to the changes following Vatican II.