

Daily Parish Communication

November 16, 2022

Good Morning All,

~Adoration follows the morning Mass till 4:00 pm.

~Catholicism for Dummies class - 1:30-3:00 Parish Office

~Anderson Free Clinic is hosting a free Sneak Peek for the Festival of Trees from 10:00am to 7:00pm Today only for the Sneak Peek at The Bleckley Station 310 South Main Street [Festival Of Trees – Anderson Free Clinic](#)

1. Today's Readings: [Wednesday of the Thirty-third Week in Ordinary Time | USCCB](#)
2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: St. Gertrude lived a devout life as a Benedictine nun. In the monastery, she was given to the care of St. Mechtilde. Our Lord made known to Gertrude through visions and mystical revelations His love for His people. Her prayer for Souls in Purgatory is well known and used even to this day.

*Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen.*

3. Quote of the Day:

~"Let the soul who is desirous of advancing in perfection hasten to My Sacred Heart." *Jesus to St. Gertrude*

***St. Gertrude the Great, Pray for Us!***  
***St. Joseph, Pray for Us!***

--

Linda McCormick  
St. Joseph Catholic Church & School  
1200 Cornelia Road  
Anderson, SC 29621

Phone: (864) 225-5341, ext. 102

Fax: (864) 225-6432

## St. Gertrude the Great: Into the Heart of Christ Through Prayer



St. Gertrude is one of the most remarkable mystics of the Catholic Church. Her life, her writings, and her experiences of the Heart of Christ through prayer have had a significant impact on Catholic thought and spirituality. Through the prayers and writings of this holy saint, the Church came to know the incredible depths of God's love and the fire of His heart for souls.

St. Gertrude was born in Germany on the Feast of the Epiphany in 1256 and sent to the Benedictine monastery in Helfta at the tender age of five. She was a voracious learner and dedicated herself to the study of the arts and sciences while living the Rule of St. Benedict in community with the Sisters.

They received her into the order, and by her early twenties, she had distinguished herself as an exceptional student. Yet in spite of her renown, she felt a true emptiness. Gertrude recognized in this dissatisfaction the reality that intellectual brilliance was not the true goal of her monastic vocation. She experienced anxiety and a feeling of profound discouragement and wondered how she was supposed to use her gifts.

During this difficult time, Our Lord appeared to her in a vision, saying, "I have come to comfort you and bring you salvation." She said that she then saw clearly how she had "built a tower of vanity and curiosity" by extolling her intellect. She

had fallen short of her vocation; seeking after human wisdom, she had deprived herself of the Source of all Wisdom.

### **A Life Dedicated to God**

From this point on, she dedicated her life to loving God intimately, especially in prayer, so as to be in union with Him. St. Gertrude used her gifts in a new apostolate: to write the truth in a beautiful and profound way that others could readily understand. She wrote five books, as well as many prayers and other writings. Unfortunately, much of her work was lost in the destruction of her monastery during war in later years.

St. Gertrude had a great love for the Heart of Our Lord, and many of her visions, revelations and writings are about the Heart of Jesus and His divine love for us. Along with her teacher St. Mechtilde, she wrote a series of popular prayers that promoted devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Church is fortunate to have the gift of her three existing books: *The Herald of Divine Love, Life and Revelations*, and her *Spiritual Exercises*, which we can still read and reflect on today.

### **Special Graces Granted Through Prayer**

Gertrude even had the privilege of seeing Our Lord's Sacred Heart. During one vision, St. John the Beloved Apostle came to her on his feast day and brought her to rest on the heart of Jesus. She heard His Sacred Heart beating, pounding with love for souls. On another occasion, Jesus allowed her to see His Most Sacred Heart as graces flowed from it like a stream of the purest water imaginable. She watched these graces as they flowed into the hearts of those for whom she prayed, and out onto the whole world.

Once, Christ appeared and showed Gertrude a table of gold upon which lay many beautiful pearls, which he explained were prayers for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. He simultaneously showed her a vision during which many of the souls were freed and ascended to heaven like brilliant sparks.

He told her how much He longed for someone to ask Him to free the souls in Purgatory and explained the importance of prayer for this cause:

*“I accept with highest pleasure what is offered to Me for the poor souls, for I long inexpressibly to have near Me those for whom I paid so great a price. By the prayers of thy loving soul, I am induced to free a prisoner from purgatory as often as thou dost move thy tongue to utter a word of prayer.”*

Jesus then gave her the beloved prayer which Our Lord told her would release 1,000 souls from Purgatory each time she prayed it with love and devotion:

*“Eternal Father, I offer you the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus Christ, in union with all the masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, those in the Universal Church, those in my own home, and within my family.”*

Our Lord appeared to St. Gertrude many times, consoling, instructing, admonishing, and loving her intimately in a friendship that became a “spiritual marriage.” He took her to Himself in divine union during Advent one year, while she was praying at Mass:

*“After I had received the Sacrament of Life I saw a ray of light, like an arrow, dart forth from the Sacred Wound in Thy right side on the crucifix. It advanced toward me and pierced my heart. Then Thou didst say to me, ‘May the full tide of thy affection rise to Me, so that all thy pleasure, thy hope, thy joy, thy grief, thy fear and every other feeling may be sustained by My love.’ ”*

In these ways and others, Jesus taught St. Gertrude to understand His love for each and every soul as deep, intimate, and personal. He showed her how He longs for each of us to come to Him in prayer. He wanted her to know His heart and to make it known.

*"Behold, I manifest to the gaze of thy soul My deified Heart, the harmonious instrument whose sweet tones ravish the Most Adorable Trinity. I give It to thee, and like a faithful, zealous servant, this Heart will be ready, at any moment, to repair thy defects and negligence . . . Make use of It and thy works will charm the eye and ear of the Divinity."*

—Words of Christ to St. Gertrude

**The Gifts of a Devoted Prayer Life**

The life of St. Gertrude the Great reminds us that at the heart of our Faith is a **relationship**. A deeply personal one: lived out, nourished, and enriched by everyday prayer, uniting us to Christ Jesus. God ardently desires to communicate the love of His heart to each of ours.

All of these beautiful insights came to St. Gertrude the Great through prayer, in which she fully united herself with the heart of Christ. St. Gertrude's experiences of the Divine Love of Christ were profound and private, but she revealed them to us in writing because Jesus told her that they were not meant for her alone.

Here are a few of the many themes from the prayer of St. Gertrude that we can reflect on:

- **Our God Is Good:** She experienced through contemplative prayer the goodness of God, and she longed for others to know His incredible love and generosity.
- **We Have A Place in God's Family:** Gertrude saw herself as the Bride of Christ, and presented Him to others as a gentle and tender Father and an adoring Bridegroom.
- **Divine Mercy Covers the Penitent Sinner:** In prayer, Gertrude came to know her own faults and limitations, but she also saw the reality of Divine Love and the depths of Divine Mercy.
- **True Contemplation Activates Our Faith:** Her prayer fueled her apostolate, just as our prayer is meant to nurture us in our vocations. Prayer is not meant to be an isolated part of our lives; instead, it should be the foundation for all our actions.

### **An Intimate Sharing Between Friends**

St. Teresa of Avila once said that prayer was nothing more than "an intimate sharing between friends." The most intimate form of union we can experience here on earth is to unite our hearts with the heart of our Beloved, just as St. Gertrude did.

St. Gertrude's prayer was mystical and extraordinary, and ours may seem very ordinary. That should not discourage us. *When we make the effort, God will meet us there.* In fact, He is there even if we do not feel Him. It is in those times that our perseverance bears the most fruit.

No matter what situation we find ourselves in now, God calls us to prioritize quiet time in prayer. Even if we start with just ten minutes a day, we must strive to set aside some time to speak with and love the God Who So Loves Us.

He waits for you in prayer. Go to Him there.

*Source: catholiccompany.com*