
Book 5
The Revelations of St. Gertrude
Compiled by the Religious of Her Monastery

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Chapter 1

When Dame Mechtilde, of happy memory, our chantress, who was full of good works, or rather full of God, was confined to bed in her last sickness, about a month before death, she began to think of her end, and to reflect on some works which she had written. But on Sunday, as a person prayed for her, asking that she might have the grace of a happy death, under the protection of the Divine Mercy, so that she might abandon herself to it with humble confidence when receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, she knew in spirit that God had drawn this soul to Himself entirely, and that He had only restored her for a brief space, that He might again abide in her. Then she said to the Lord: "Lord, why dost Thou wish her to continue on the earth?" He replied: *It is to perfect the work which My Divine dispensation has decreed; and she will contribute to this in three ways: by the repose of humility, the table of patience and the joy of virtue. For example in all that she sees or hears from others, let her always humble herself and consider herself the most unworthy of all. Thus will I rejoice in the repose of her heart and soul. Secondly: let her embrace patience joyfully, and suffer all her trials and sickness willingly for love of Me; thus she will prepare Me a table of sumptuous delights. Thirdly: she will offer Me a joyful spectacle if she exercises herself in every kind of virtue.*

On another occasion, when St. Mechtilde was ready to communicate, this person asked Our Lord what he was about to do in her. He answered: *I am going to repose with her in this couch.* By this she understood that the couch in which Our Lord reposed with her was her confidence, in all her afflictions, that God would order all that concerned her in the greatest love and mercy for the furtherance of her salvation; so that she offered continual thanksgivings to Him, trusting entirely in His Providence.

When she was near her end, one evening at Vesper time, she was suddenly seized with such excruciating pain in the heart, that the sisters who stood around her could not restrain their tears; but she consoled them saying "Do not weep for me, my beloved ones; for I am so touched by your grief, that were it the Will of my dearest Lord I would gladly bear this very pain all my life, if I could thereby obtain consolation for you".

On another occasion, when they urged her to take some medicine which they hoped would give her some relief, she yielded to their request; but immediately after her sufferings increased greatly. On the following day the person before mentioned besought Our Lord to reward her humble compliance. He replied: **From the suffering which My beloved endured on that occasion I have confected a most salutary remedy, which I have used to purify the souls of all sinners throughout the world.**

On the Sunday Si iniquitates, the Saint communicated for the last time before her death; and this person prayed that she might be inspired to prepare for Extreme Unction, and that Our Lord would keep her soul in His bosom, to preserve it from every stain, as an artist covers a newly painted picture lest it should contract dust. When she told this to St Mechtilde, who was always perfectly submissive to her superiors, she committed herself humbly to their good pleasure and to Divine Providence, which she hoped would never forsake her. However, her superior had such veneration for her, that she believed Our Lord would make known the hour of her death to her; and as she did not ask earnestly to receive this Sacrament, it was not administered that day.

But Our Lord soon verified the words of the Gospel, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away". (Matt. 24:35); and he failed not to accomplish what he had promised to His chosen one. For on Monday blessed Mechtilde became so ill, just before Matins, that we feared that she had fallen into her agony, so that the priests were immediately sent for and she received Extreme Unction. Thus, although the Sacrament was not administered on Sunday, it was administered the night of that day, as she received it before sunrise on Monday.

When her eyes were anointed by the priest, the religious who had prayed for her understood that our most loving Lord looked on her with Divine Mercy, and, with a Heart full of tenderness toward her, shed a ray of His Divine light into her soul, imparting to her at the same time a share in the merits which He had obtained when in earth by the glances of His most Holy Eyes; and then she beheld the glances of the Saint with confidence would feel abundant proof of the efficacy of her intercession; that she had merited this favor with God by her gentle loving conduct towards others. When the other members of her body were anointed, Our Lord applied the merits of those of His own most sacred Body to her also. When her lips were anointed, this zealous Lover of our souls honored with marks of the tenderest love, imparting to her the fruit of His most Holy Lips.

When the Litanies were said, at the words Omnes sancti Seraphim et Cherubim, orate pro ea, she beheld the hosts of Seraphim and Cherubim making way for her soul to pass through their ranks, as if to give precedence to one who had led so pure and virginal a life on earth; who, like the Cherubim, had drawn spiritual knowledge so copiously from the true Fount of all wisdom; and, like the Seraphim, had been enkindled by Him who is a consuming fire (cf Heb. 12:29).

As the Saints were named in the Litany, they offered their merits for her with great joy, under the form of gifts, which they presented to Our Lord, Who placed them in His bosom for His beloved. For two days after she had received Extreme Unction, she appeared to live only by union with her Lord, and to draw every grace from His Divine Heart. But the happy moment of her departure was at hand, and on Wednesday, which was the Vigil of St. Elizabeth, she fell into her agony, after None. The community, having assembled to assist their beloved sister in Christ by their fervent prayers for her happy passage to eternity, the person before mentioned beheld her soul under the form of a fair young girl, who applied her lips to the Wound of Our Lord's side, and drew thence streams of grace for the whole Church, and especially for those who were present. And she understood that she had prayed specially both for the living and the dead, and therefore Our Lord has bestowed such abundant favors on her.

When they recited the Salve Regina, at the words *Eia ergo*, St. Mechtilde prayed very earnestly to the Blessed Virgin for the beloved sisters whom she was about to leave, beseeching her to have a special care of them, as if she were to leave, beseeching her to have a special care of them, as if she, who during her life had been so devoted to her community, so tender and helpful and loving, desired to secure an advocate for them after her death in the person of the Mother of Mercy. And this blessed Queen took the hand of the dying religious, as if she was accepting the charge of the community from her. Then, as they read the prayer *Ave Jesu Christe*, at the words *via dulcis*, she beheld the Lord Jesus showing His beloved spouse the way by which He purposed to draw her sweetly to Himself.

The Saint continued all day in her agony, without saying any other words than these, "Jesu bone! Jesu bone! as if to show how He dwelt in her heart, since His sweet Name was so constantly on her lips in the agonies of death. Then, as each of the sisters commended themselves to her prayers, beseeching her to intercede with God for their necessities, she immediately replied, "Willingly," although scarcely able to speak, as if she would say with what love she would pray for those who were committed to her care. St Gertrude knew also that that the great sufferings which her sister had endured with such patience had contributed much to her sanctification; and she beheld a certain vapor coming forth from those parts of her body which had suffered most; and this touched her soul, purifying it from its stains, sanctifying it, and preparing it for eternal beatitude.

Now Gertrude knew all these things in spirit, but she feared to declare them, lest it should be suspected that she had received these revelations; but this was contrary to the Divine Will, whose glory it is to discover the truth (Tob. 12: 11), and who commanded His Apostles to preach on the house tops what they heard in the ear. (Matt 10:27). As they said the Vespers of St Elizabeth, St. Mechtilde's agony increased so evidently that they feared she was about to expire; the sisters were, therefore, summoned from the choir, that they might redouble their prayers by her bedside. As St Gertrude assisted with the rest of the community, she found herself unable to understand or attend to anything that was said: this occasioned her to see her fault in concealing what God had revealed to her. But when she had promised Our Lord to make known these favors for His honor and glory and the good of others, the use of her faculties was at once restored.

After Compline the dying nun entered her third and last agony; and St. Gertrude was rapt in spirit, and beheld her soul again under the form of a young girl, but with new ornaments, the fruit of renewed sufferings. She observed also that this soul approached Our Lord with intense love, and begun culling from His Wounds - as a bee from flowers - the sweet honey of the Divine delights. As they read this Response, amongst others, *Ave Sponsa*, the Blessed Virgin approached the soul of the

dying nun to prepare it for enjoying the delights of the Divinity. Then Our Lord Jesus - for the sake of His Blessed Mother, who alone merited to be called, and to be both a Virgin and a Mother - took a necklace of marvelous beauty, adorned with radiant gems, and placed it on the religious, granting her the special privilege of being also called a virgin and mother, on account of the fervor and devotion with which she had guided her spiritual children.

Chapter 2

The Matins of St. Elizabeth had already commenced, when it became apparent that St. Mechtilde was about to expire; the community were therefore summoned again from the choir to assist her happy death. Our Lord then appeared to the dying Saint as a Spouse radiant with beauty, crowned with honor and glory, and said to her tenderly: **Now My beloved, I will honor you before your neighbors - that is before this congregation, which is so dear to Me.** Then He saluted her soul in an ineffable manner by each of His Wounds, so that each saluted her in four different manners: namely, by a melodius harmony, by an efficacious vapor, by a fruitful dew and by a marvelous light.

Thus did Our Lord call His elect one to Himself: the exquisite harmony indicated all the loving words which she had addressed to God, or uttered for the benefit of others and these words were fructified exceedingly by passing through the Divine Heart. The vapor signified all her desires for the glory of God or the salvation of her neighbor; and these desires were marvelously increased by passing through the Wounds of Jesus. The dew which poured forth so abundantly represented the love which she had for God, or for any creature for His sake; and it was so greatly increased in sweetness by these sacred Wounds. The marvelous light signified all the sufferings which she had endured since her infancy, either in body or mind, which were ennobled beyond all human power of comprehension by union with the Passion of Christ; and that her soul was sanctified thereby, and impressed with the marks of Divinity charity.

The enjoyment of these heavenly consolations restored even the bodily strength of the dying religious, after she continued aspiring after the joys on which she was so soon to enter. Our Lord then poured forth an abundant benediction on all who were present saying: **Moved by the ardor of My love, I desire that each member of My beloved congregation should assist at this transfiguration, and that they should receive as much honor from the blessed in Paradise as My chosen ones, Peter, James and John, who assisted at My Transfiguration on the Mount, received from the Apostles.** Then the religious said: "Lord what benefit will they gain from these graces who do not perceive them by any interior sweetness?" He replied: **When a nobleman bestows an orchard on a friend, he does not at once taste the fruit, as he must wait until they ripen. Thus, when I pour forth precious gifts on a soul, she does not perceive their sweetness until they are fructified by the exercise of exterior virtues; but when the skin of earthly pleasures and consolations is removed, then she can taste the interior consolation.**

The community now returned to the choir to say Matins. At the twelfth Response, O lampas, this soul appeared standing before the Blessed Trinity, praying devoutly for the Church. Then God the

Father saluted her lovingly by these words: *Ave, electa mea* (Hail My elect one), who by the example of your life, may truly be called the lamp of the Church, abounding in oil - that is, your prayers for the whole world. Then the Son of God addressed her thus: *Gaude, sponsa mea* (Rejoice O My spouse), who may truly be called the medicament of grace, since by your prayers you have obtained the restoration of so many to My favor. The Holy Ghost added *Ave, immaculata mea* (Hail My spotless one,) who may be called the nurse of the faithful, since you have fed and nourished so many spiritually.

After this the Eternal Father conferred on her, by His omnipotence, the grace of assisting those who, through human frailty, distrusted the Divine mercy and of strengthening in them the gift of hope; the Holy Spirit conferred on her the privilege of enkindling fervor and love in cold and tepid hearts; lastly the Son of God gave her, through the merit of His most Precious Death and Passion, the grace of curing souls enfeebled by sin.

The celestial choirs then chanted, in a clear and sonorous voice, *Tu Dei saturitas olivaria fructifera, cujus lucet*, they honored the sweet repose which Our Lord had taken in her; at the words *et resplendet*, they praised the pure intention which had animated all her actions, in conclusion, all the Saints chanted the Antiphon *Deus palam omnibus*.

During the Preface of the High Mass, Our Lord appeared to St. Mechtilde, drawing her toward Him, and imparting new graces and favors to her soul, as if to prepare her for the enjoyment of eternal beatitude. At last the joyful moment came when she was to pass the eternal embraces of her Spouse; and the Lord of Glory, Who is so great in His majesty and so tender in His love, invited her to Him saying, *Come, blessed of My Father, possess the Kingdom prepared for you*. (Matt. 25:34). He reminded her also of the signal favor which He had conferred on her some years before, by giving her His Heart, as He said these words, to be her consolation and protection. Then He said: *And where is My gift?* In reply, she offered Him her heart, plunging it into His; and Our Lord touched her heart with His, absorbing her into Himself, and putting her into possession of eternal glory, where we hope she will obtain many favors for us by her intercession.

As the usual prayers were recited after her decease, Our Lord appeared, enthroned in Glory, and this soul reposed upon His bosom. As the words, *Subvenite sancti Dei, occurrere angeli*, were read, the Angels testified their reverence for her who had been thus honored by their King; and they appeared as if adorned by the prayers of this soul, whom they had assisted by their prayers when she received the last anointing. The Saints also acted in like manner.

Then the religious asked the deceased to pray for some persons in whom she had a special interest, that they might overcome their defects. She replied: "Now that I see all things in the light of truth, I know that all the affection which I entertained for anyone when in the world was but a drop in the ocean when compared to the love the Divine Heart for them; and it is by a salutary providence that God permits their defects, that they may be humbled on account of them. Thus they daily attain greater perfection; and since I know this to be the Will of God for them, I can desire and ask nothing else for them but what His wisdom ordains; and I continually adore this dispensation, and pray that it may be perfectly accomplished."

On the following day, at the Mass *Requiem aeternam*, St Mechtilde appeared to place little golden

tubes from the Heart of Jesus to those who had a special devotion to her, and thus obtained for them from the Heart of God whatever they desired. Each tube had a golden key, by which- that is, by the following or similar words - they could obtain whatever they desired: "O good Jesus, I beseech Thee to hear me, through the merits and prayers of St. Mechtilde and Thy other Saints, by the mercy which disposed Thee to pour forth on them, and on other elect souls, Thy favors and graces"; and we may be assured these words will incline the Divine Mercy to comply with our desires.

At the Elevation of the Host, this soul appeared to offer herself with It to God for His glory and the salvation of mankind; and the Son of God, who refuses nothing to His elect, drew her entirely into Himself, and offered Himself with her to His Father for all in Heaven, on earth and in Purgatory. The soul of the deceased now appeared in glory to this religious, who asked her what advantage she had obtained from the recital of the Antiphon *Et quo omnia* as many times as she had lived days on earth, and having had as many Masses of the Blessed Trinity said as she had lived years, in thanksgiving for all the favors that had been conferred on her. She replied: "Our Lord has adorned me with a flower for each repetition of the Antiphon, and by which I draw into me the sweetness of the Divine Heart; and for each Mass I have received a marvelous and inestimable delight, which affects all the senses of my soul."

On another occasion, when this religious kissed Our Lord's Five Wounds in spirit saying the Pater noster for the negligences which she might have committed toward Dame Mechtilde in her last illness, because she feared she had not attended her with sufficient care when living, nor prayed for her with sufficient fervor when dead, she beheld five beautiful flowers springing forth from Our Lord's Wounds; and by the virtue which these Wounds communicated to them, they produced and poured forth a sweet and salutary balsam. The religious then said to St Mechtilde: "O elect of my God, accept these flowers which the Divine Goodness has produced to supply for my deficiencies; and may they be for thy glory and serve to adorn thy triumph; but do not forget to pray for me, unworthy." She replied: "I prefer leaving these flowers where they are, that I may not be deprived of the honor of having them placed in the Wounds of my Lord; for I hope, whenever I touch them by my desires, that a healing stream will flow forth from them, for the salvation of sinners and the consolation of the just."

Chapter 3

Two ladies, more illustrious for their virtue than their distinguished birth - sisters in the flesh, but yet more closely united in the spirit by their equality in perfection - were called to the heavenly nuptials by their celestial Spouse, after having lived a most holy life from their very childhood. The first died on the glorious Feast of the Assumption, which was also the day of her profession; the other sister died thirty days after; but their deaths were so edifying and blessed, that we were about to relate some circumstances concerning them. As Gertrude prayed for the eldest, who died on the Assumption, she appeared to her, surrounded with glorious light and magnificently adorned, standing before the throne of Jesus Christ; but she seemed ashamed to lift up her eyes to Him, or to gaze upon His majestic countenance. When the Saint perceived this, she was moved to pity, and said to Our Lord: "Alas, most loving Lord! Why dost Thou permit her to stand before Thee as a stranger, without manifesting any tokens of affection for her? Our Lord then extended His hand to her, as if to

draw her to Himself, but she drew back from Him with reverent fear.

As Gertrude marveled much at this, she said to the soul; "Why do you thus fly from the embraces of your Spouse?" She replied: "Because I am not yet perfectly purified from my defects, and am not in a condition to receive His favors. Even if Divine Justice did not restrain me, I would deprive myself of these favors, of which I am not worthy." Gertrude then said: "How can this be when I now see you standing before God in such glory?" The soul answered: "Although all creatures are present to God, yet souls come near Him in proportion to their perfection in charity; but none are worthy of this blessedness who are not perfectly purified from all the stains which they have contracted during their mortal lives."

A month after, when the second sister was in her agony, St. Gertrude prayed for her very earnestly. After her death, she appeared to her, surrounded with light, as a young virgin, clothed in a purple robe, that she might be presented to her Spouse. She also saw Jesus Christ, Who stood near her, and Who caused a certain consolation to proceed from His Wounds, to refresh and strengthen her five senses, so that the soul was exceedingly consoled thereby. St Gertrude then said to Our Lord: "Since Thou art the God of all consolation, why dost Thou permit this soul to appear so sad, as if troubled by some secret grief?" He answered: "I now manifest to her My Humanity, which does not perfectly console her; for thus I reward the special love which she manifested for My Passion in the last moments of her life. But when she is perfectly freed from all her stains, I will manifest the joys of My Divinity to her, and then she shall have all she desires." "But, Lord," continued the Saint, "how is it that all her faults were not perfectly purified by the charity which she possessed at the last moment of her life, since Scripture teaches that man shall be judged according to the state in which he dies?" The Lord answered: when a man loses his strength, he has no longer the power to execute his good designs, while he may have the will to do so. When, of My gratuitous goodness, I inspire these desires, and give this will, I do not always efface thereby the stains of past negligence, which would no doubt be accomplished if the person recovered health and strength, and then began to reform his life thoroughly. She replied: "Alas. Lord, cannot Thy abundant mercy remit the sins of this soul, who has loved Thee so ardently from her very childhood?" He answered: I will indeed reward her love abundantly; but My justice must first be satisfied by the removal of her stains. Our Lord then turned lovingly to this soul, and said to her: My spouse will consent willingly to what My justice requires; and when she is purified, she will enjoy My glory and consolation. As she consented, Our Lord seemed to ascend into Heaven, and to leave her after Him where she was; but she appeared as if ardently desiring to follow Him. The solitude was to purify her from all the stains which she had contracted by conversing too freely with the other sex; and the effort she made to ascend upwards purified her from some faults of indolence.

On another occasion, as St Gertrude prayed for the same person at Mass, she said at the Elevation of the Host; "Holy Father, I offer this Host to Thee for this soul on the part of all in Heaven, on earth and in the deep;" and she beheld this soul in the air, surrounded by a multitude of persons, who held representations of the Host in their hands, which they offered up on bended knees. The soul appeared to receive great assistance and inestimable joy from this devotion. Then the soul said: "I now experience the truth of what is said in Scripture, that no good action, however trifling, will fail to be rewarded, and that no negligence, however trifling, will be unpunished; for this offering of the

Sacrament of the Altar procures the greatest consolation for me, on account of my former devotion in receiving It; and the ardent charity which I had for others greatly enhances the prayers which are made for me; while for both of these things I shall receive an eternal recompense."

The soul then appeared as if elevated higher and higher by the prayers of the Church; and when her purification was accomplished, the Saint beheld Our Lord coming for her to crown her queen, and to conduct her to eternal joys.

Chapter 4

As Gertrude recited five Pater nosters for Dame S---- the eldest of the community, who had received Extreme Unction, and at last ended her prayer in the Wound of Our Lord's Side - she besought Him to purify this soul with the water which flowed therefrom and to adorn it with the merits of His most Precious Blood. She then saw this soul, under the form of a young virgin, crowned with a golden circlet, and supported by Our Divine Lord, who imparted the graces she had asked to her soul. She understood by this that the sister must remain longer on earth to be purified from a disobedience of which she had been guilty, in conversing more than was right with a sick person: and this was accomplished. She suffered for five months in a manner which he sufficiently manifested the fault from which she was being purified. On the day on which she was taken ill, she appeared very joyful, as if Our Lord had granted her some great favor; and she attempted to related what had happened to her; as she had not the perfect use of her senses, she was unable to do so. But as she saw Gertrude standing by her, with some of the other religious, she called her by name and said "Do you speak for me, for you know all." St Gertrude began to relate what had been revealed to her, and the invalid was then able to continue the recital herself. When the others made any observations, declaring that Our Lord had forgiven her sins, and bestowed many favors on her.

On the day before her death, St Gertrude beheld Our Lord preparing a place for her in His Divine arms; but the soul appeared at His left, and separated from Him by a little cloud. She then said "Lord this place which Thou hast prepared will not be suitable for a soul covered with this cloud." He replied: **She will remain a little longer on earth, that she may become fit for it.** And it was even so; for the religious continued all that day and the following night in her agony. Next morning she beheld the Lord coming towards the dying nun with marks of the greatest tenderness; and she appeared to rise, as if to meet Him. Then St Gertrude said: "Art Thou not come now to take this desolate soul to Thyself, as a merciful Father?" And Our Lord indicated by a sign that He had this intention.

Soon after her decease, she saw this soul again, under the form a young virgin, adorned with roses, and advancing joyfully to her Spouse; but when she came near Him she fell at His feet as if almost deprived of life, until the words "Tibi supplication commendat Ecclesiae" (The supplication of the Church commends her to Thee) were repeated, when she arose, and cast herself into the Divine arms, where she is eternally replenished with treasures of beatitude.

Chapter 5

As Sister M., of happy memory, approached her end, St Gertrude prayed for her with others, and said to the Lord "Why dost Thou not hear our prayers for her, O most loving Lord?" He replied: **Her soul is in such a different state from the souls of others, that she cannot be consoled by you in a human manner.** She continued "Is this a judgment?" He answered **I have now My secret in her, as I had formerly had My secret with her.** Then, as Gertrude sought to understand these mysterious words, Our Lord said to her: **My majesty will enthrone itself in her.** "But" she continued "how will she die?" He answered: **She will be absorbed in My Divinity, as a sunbeam absorbs a drop of dew.** Then she inquired why the wandering of her exterior senses was permitted. her replied: **That you may know that I am working in her interiorly, not exteriorly.** She answered: "Our own hearts ought to teach us this." He replied: **And how can they receive this favor who rarely, if ever, enter into their interior, where grace alone is poured forth?**

After this Gertrude besought Our Lord to grant the grace of working miracles to Sister M, after her death, for the confirmation of the revelations which she received, and to silence the incredulous. Our Lord replied, holding a book in His Hands: **Can I not gain a victory without fighting? He added: When it is necessary I subdue kings and nations by signs and wonders; but now the experience of those who have tasted something of these celestial communications is sufficient to obtain credit for them. For the present I bear with those who contradict them; but I will at last silence their calumnies.** St. Gertrude learned from this that Our Lord is pleased with those who believe that He pours forth the effusion of His grace, not for their merit, but from the super abounding love of His Divine Heart.

As Sister M, was anointed, St Gertrude saw Our Lord touch her hand, saying **When this blessed soul is freed from the chains of the flesh, I will pour forth the abundance of My mercy on all who are present.** As she continued in her agony, and the religious prayed for her still more fervently, she knew that Our Lord would grant them three great favors: first by accomplishing all their good desires; second, by assisting them in overcoming their faults - and these two favors would be granted through her intercession; the third benefit was, that He extended His Hand, and imparted His benediction to all who were present.

As Gertrude occupied herself in fervent thanksgivings, she beheld Our Divine Lord, the King of Glory, whom the Angels adore, standing at the head of the dying nun, whose breath appeared of a golden color, and tended towards the Heart of her Spouse. The Saint continued to gaze on this vision with great joy while the Psalm *Deus, Deus meus, and Ad te levavi*, were recited, during which Our Lord manifested the tenderest affection for the religious. After this the Suffrages were read, with the Antiphon *Ut te simus*, during which she beheld the Blessed Virgin, clothed, in purple and adorned as a queen. As she stood beside her Divine Son, she placed the head of this sister so that her breath might come more directly to the Heart of Jesus. As they read the short prayer, *Ave Jesu - "Hail Jesus, my Savior, Word of the Father"* - Our Lord appeared encompassed with increased splendor, like that of the sun at midday. At first the Saint was overwhelmed by the magnificence of the vision; but as she recovered herself a little, she beheld the effulgent rose of Heaven, His Virgin Mother, who

appeared to congratulate Him on having obtained a new spouse.

By this she understood that this happy union was then consummated, and the soul forever immersed in the ocean of eternal beatitude.

Chapter 6

When M.B, of happy memory, was in her agony, Gertrude prayed for her most earnestly, and obtained a knowledge of what was passing around her in this last combat. For a whole hour she beheld nothing but the trouble which the soul endured for having sometimes taken undue pleasure in exterior things; such as for having had a coverlet of colored cloth on her bed, embroidered with gold. On the day of her decease, when Mass was celebrated, Gertrude offered the Host for her; although she did not see her, she knew that she was present and addressed Our Lord thus, as if seeking her saying: "O Lord, where is she?" He replied: **She will come to Me pure and white.** From this she understood that the prayers which were offered in charity had obtained great grace for her in her last moments and that some persons moved by holy zeal, had offered their good works for her, and charged themselves with the penalties due to her.

As Gertrude prayed for her again at the Mass which preceded her interment, she beheld her seated at a festal table beside Our Lord, where the prayers which had been offered were given to her under the form of different kinds of food. At the Elevation, as the Saint offered the chalice for her, Our Lord appeared to present it to her Himself. When she had tasted it, she immediately became penetrated with Divine sweetness, and rose up to word or act, rejoicing for the merit which they had obtained for her thereby. Then Gertrude inquired why she did not pray for her friends also; but she replied: "I pray for them more efficaciously by speaking heart to heart to my Beloved."

On another occasion, as she remarked that she had offered all her merits for the deceased, she said to Our Lord: "I hope O Lord that Thou would frequently cast the eyes of Thy mercy on my indulgence." He replied: **What can I do more for one who has thus deprived herself of all things through charity?** She answered: "Whatever Thou mayest do, I shall always appear before Thee destitute of all merit, for I have renounced all I have gained or may gain." He replied: **Do you know that a mother would allow a child who was well clothed to sit at her feet, but she would take one who was barely clad into her arms, and cover her with her own garment?** He added: **And now what advantage have you, who are seated on the shore of an ocean, over those who sit by a little rivulet?** That is to say, those who keep their good works for themselves have the rivulet; but those who renounce them in love and humility, possess God, who is an inexhaustible ocean of beatitude.

Chapter 7

As scripture testifies that 'By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is punished' (Wis 2:17

sic; cf 3:10), and, on the contrary, that he will be rewarded in the things in which he has suffered or done good, we give the following examples for the benefit of our readers.

We had two persons with us, who were both ill at the same time; one evidently suffered from a severe affection of the chest, and hence she was attended more carefully. The other, whose disease was not known, and who seemed more likely to live, did not receive so much care; but, as men are often deceived, the one for whom we feared the least died the first and the other survived a month longer. When the former approached her end, she had been strengthened in grace by great patience and devotion, which had purified her soul exceedingly; for the ardent love which Our Lord had for His spouse would not suffer Him to permit the least stain to remain on her. Nevertheless, she still needed some purification for having too easily omitted Confession; for sometimes when the priest came to her, she feigned to be sleeping, not having any grave fault to accuse herself of. As the hour approached when she was to be received to the eternal embraces of her Spouse, He purified her from this stain. For when she asked for a confessor, she lost the power of speech when he came, and then she feared exceedingly that she would suffer for her former negligence after death, and so was purified from her fault by this excessive fear.

Thus being entirely purified and freed from every stain, she was released from the prison of the flesh, and received into eternal glory. Many revelations concerning this was made to Gertrude. One of these was that when she was brought to Our Lord's throne of glory, he conferred this privilege on her of seeming to soothe her, as a mother would a child when she wished her to take some bitter medicine; and He did this to console her some little inattention which had been shown her, in consequence of the religious being so much occupied in attending to her companion, whom they believed to be dangerously ill.

Our Lord then said to her: **Tell Me, My daughter, what you would wish Me to do for the soul of your companion; and what consolation you desire Me to give her.** She replied: "Give her the same gifts Thou hast bestowed on me, my dearest Lord: for I cannot imagine any more consoling." And Our Lord promised to comply with her request.

The other religious died a month later. The day after her death she was seen marvelously adorned, as a reward for the exceeding innocence and simplicity of her life, and her exactness in observing all the austerities of her Order; but she had one stain from which she needed purification, and this was having received unnecessary consolations in her illness. She was purified in this manner: She stood at the gate of a palace, where Our Lord was seated on a throne of glory, with a countenance so full of sweetness and love, that no human intellect could describe His beauty. he appeared anxious to receive His spouse; but when she attempted to approach, she found herself with held by nails, which fastened her garments to the ground and these nails were the imperfections she had committed in her sickness. But Gertrude, who was touched with compassion, prayed for her, and Our Lord freed her from this impediment. Then the saint said to Our Lord: "Why was this soul freed by my prayers and not restored by the prayers of those who loved her so much, and who prayed for her with such fervor and affection?" He replied: **There prayers have been of great service to her; but they did not remove the impediment which I have revealed to you, and from which she has now been released by your prayers.** She continued: "How hast Thou fulfilled Thy promise to treat this person with the same goodness as Thou did manifest to her who died first? For she has lived longer in religion, and seemed to abound more in virtue, and yet the other appeared at once in

Thy presence, and in greater glory." He answered: *My justice is immutable, for I reward each according to her works. She who has labored least, cannot receive more than she who has labored most, unless she has worked with a purer intention, a more fervent charity or a more earnest strife; but my mercy rewards works of supererogation, such as the prayers of the faithful; and thus My rewards are not always proportioned to the persons actual merit.*

Hence we may learn how carefully we should avoid taking pleasure in anything earthly, since this blessed soul was thus detained from happiness for this imperfection. This was even more fully manifested to St Gertrude in another vision, in which she saw her before the throne of God, manifesting the same ardor as she had done at the gate; not indeed desiring to approach, but appearing as if unable to move - and this was the second obstacle to her happiness; and even when she was freed from this her happiness was not perfectly complete, until Our Lord placed a magnificent crown on her head, which He held in His hand, and which she received with exceeding joy.

As St. Gertrude beheld this, she said to Our Lord, "why hast this soul been tormented so painfully, where Thou art all powerful?" He replied: *She has not been tormented, but has waited with joy for the consummation of her happiness, even as a young girl would wait for a festival on which she was to be adorned with the ornaments which her mother had prepared for her.*

After this, the soul thanked the Saint for the prayers which she had offered for her; and Gertrude said to her: "Why did you receive willingly some admonition which I gave you during your sickness, although you always seemed so attached to me?" The soul replied: "It is for this reason that your prayers have now more power with God, since they are offered more purely out of charity."

Chapter 8

Another religious died with us who, from her childhood had shown the most entire aversion to the world and all its attractions. When her agony came she bade farewell to all who were around her with great affection, and promised to pray for them when she had attained eternal blessedness, and the inexhaustible Source of all good. In the agonies of her last moments, she said to God: "Lord, Thou knowest the secrets of my heart, and how i have desired to persevere in Thy service, even to old age, and to devote all my strength to Thee; but now, since it is Thy Will I come to Thee: and all my desires are changed into a fervent longing to possess Thee, so that death has even become sweet to me; yet, if it were pleasing to Thee that I should continue in my present state until the day of judgment, i would willingly do so, even were this the first day of the world's creation; but as I know that Thou wilt give me rest today, I beseech Thee, of Thy mercy, and for the glory of Thy name, that I may continue to suffer until I have paid the debts of those souls whom Thou desirest most to release. And in this O Lord, Thou knowest that I am not considering my merits, but purely Thy glory."

After this prayer and many others, the Infirmarian asked the religious to allow her to arrange her feet before she died. She replied: "I will offer this sacrifice myself to my crucified Lord; and as she spoke,

she extended her feet toward a crucifix, saying: "I offer Thee all the movements of my feet, in union with the ardent love with which Thou didst commend Thy spirit into the hands of Thy Father with a great cry". She then offered likewise the movement of her eyes, her lips, her hands and her heart, with great fervor and devotion. After this she asked to have the Passion read for her, showing them herself where she wished to commence.: Sublevitus Jesus- "Jesus lifted up His eyes to Heaven" (John 17:1); saying, if they commenced at the words, "Before the festival day" (John 13.1), they would not have time to finish before her death. At the words, "And bowing His head, he gave up the ghost" (John 19-30), she asked for the crucifix; then, kissing the Five Wounds with the tenderest devotion, she gave thanks to God with words of the most heavenly wisdom and devotion, most touching to all who were present; and then she lay back on her pallet, and slept sweetly in the Lord.

After her death, St. Gertrude saw her received by Our Lord with the tenderest caresses, and specially rewarded for having renounced the world so generously for His love. She also heard the angelic choirs chanting the Quae est ista, as they conducted her in triumphal procession to Heaven. When she was brought before the throne of God, Jesus, the Spouse of virgins, turned toward her with great love, and said, "**You are My glory**. Then He crowned her as a queen, and enthroned her near Himself.

As Gertrude prayed for her at her interment on the following day, she beheld her in a state of joy and glory which exceeds all human comprehension. Then she inquired what reward she had received for certain virtues; and the soul obtained for her the grace of receiving some little share of her recompense, and then inquired what reward she had received for certain virtues; and the soul obtained for her the grace of receiving some little share of her recompense, and then inquired: "What more do you require to know of what I have received? The heavenly ark, which contains the plenitude of Divine sweetness, even the Heart of Jesus Christ, my Beloved, with all its treasures, is opened to me; with one exception, which I am deprived of, because when in life, I reserved to myself the secrets of My Spouse, and did not communicate them to others; and this treasure is open only to those who giving freely, communicated to others all the gifts of God." "But," inquired Gertrude, "what reply shall I give to your friends and mine, when they ask me of your present state and reward, since no human words can express them?" The soul replied: "After you have smelt the perfume of many flowers, how can you make another person understand what you have experienced? would you not content yourself was saying that the odor was very delicious? Thus, after you have known in spirit how great is the felicity with which God has rewarded me, you can only say that I have been rewarded beyond my deserts for every good thought, word or act by my faithful and beloved Jesus."

Chapter 9

When Brother Seq (sic) was in his agony, Gertrude, being engrossed in some occupation, omitted to pray for him until she heard he was dead, and then began to reproach herself for her neglect of one who had always served the Community so faithfully and affectionately as a lay brother; she therefore besought Our Lord to reward his services abundantly, according to the multitude of His mercies. The Lord vouchsafed to reply thus to her: **I have rewarded him for his fidelity in three ways, in answer to the prayers of the congregation. From his natural benevolence, he took the**

greatest pleasure in conferring favors on others; and I have renewed in him all this pleasure for each act of kindness which he performed. I have also accumulated in his soul all the gratification and joy which he obtained for others by these acts of benevolence - such as giving a child a toy, a poor person a penny, a sick person some fruit, or any other relief; and lastly, I have made him rejoice exceedingly, on account of the approbation which I have manifested for these actions; and I will soon supply all that he needs to attain perfect felicity.

Chapter 10

As Gertrude prayed for the repose of the soul of Brother Hermann, a lay brother lately deceased, she inquired what his state was; and Our Lord replied: **He is now present, and I have granted him this favor in return for earnest prayers which have been made for him - I have invited him to assist at this feast.** Then she saw Our Lord, as the father of a family, seated at a table, on which were placed all the prayers, oblations, desires, ect., which had been offered for this brother. The soul stood sad and dejected at one end of the table, for he was not yet sufficiently purified to behold the loving countenance of Our Lord; but he soon appeared exceedingly refreshed and comforted by what he beheld before him.

The saint observed with some surprise that the effect of these offerings came to him directly from the offerings themselves, and not as usual from Our Lord, who generally appeared to her to present the souls with the offerings made for them with great joy; but Our Lord sometimes, of His own goodness and in consideration of the merits of those who prayed for him, gave him some consolation Himself, which imparted great satisfaction to the soul.

The Blessed Virgin sat as queen beside her Divine Son, and appeared also to place some gifts on the table, as a reward for the particular devotion which this soul had for her when on earth. The Saints to whom he had been devout also made offerings for him; and by these things, and the earnest love with which they were presented before God, the countenance of the brother became hourly more serene and joyful, and he slowly raised his eyes to gaze upon that blessed Light, which when It is once beheld, imparts eternal joy, and causes all former sorrow to be forgotten.

As Gertrude observed that the soul still continued in the same position, she said to him: "For what fault have you suffered most?" He replied: "For self will and self opinionatedness; for when I did any kindness for others I would not do as they wished, but as I wished myself; and so much do I suffer for this, that if the mental agonies of all mankind were united in one person, he would not endure more more than I do at present." She replied: "And what remedy will be most efficacious for you?" He answered: "To perform acts of the contrary virtue, and to avoid committing the same fault." "But in the meantime, inquired Gertrude ", what will afford you the greatest relief?" He replied: "The fidelity which I practiced toward others when on earth consoles me most. The prayers which are offered continually for me by my friends solace me as good news would solace a person in affliction. each tone of the chant at Mass, or in the vigils which are said for me, seem to me as a most delicious reflection. All that is done for me by others, with a pure intention for God's glory, such as working,

and even sleeping or eating, affords me great relief and shortens my sufferings, on account of fidelity with which I labored for others."

"But", she continued, "what advantage do you gain from our desire to give you the merit of all the good works which God enables us to perform?" He answered "They are of great utility to me, for they adorn my soul." St Gertrude replied: "But if any person deferred the prayer which they proposed to offer for you on account of sickness, would you suffer from it?" The soul answered: "Delays, which are the result of prudence, do not harm us unless they are caused by negligence." She continued: "Were you not injured by our prayers during your sickness, as we asked more earnestly for your recovery than for the grace of a happy death? The soul replied: "This did not harm me, for I discovered therein the immense goodness of God, whose tender mercies are over all His works (Ps 144:9), as He was moved to do me even more good from beholding your affection for me". "But will tears shed for you through human affection do you harm?" he answered: "These tears are to me as the kindness of a friend who consoles his friend when in affliction. And when I am in enjoyment of perfect happiness, it will give me as much joy as the congratulations by my faithfulness in your service, which has gained your affection for me."

On another occasion, when St. Gertrude recited the Pater noster for the same soul, she observed, to her extreme surprise, that his sufferings appeared greatly increased when she repeated the words: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us". As she inquired the reason of this suffering, he replied: "When I was in the world, I offended God frequently by my unwillingness to forgive those who injured me in any way; and even when I had forgiven them I showed my resentment by a grave manner when I met them; and I suffer for this when ever these words are repeated for me." "And how long will you suffer thus?" inquired the Saint, The soul replied: "I shall suffer until I am entirely purified; but henceforth, by the mercy of God, whenever you say this prayer for me, I shall retain great relief thereby."

When Mass was offered for this soul, he appeared radiant with light and transported with joy. Then Gertrude said to Our Lord; "Is this soul now entirely freed from its sufferings?" Our Lord answered: *He is already freed from much suffering, and no human being can form an idea of his glory; but he is not yet so perfectly purified as to be worthy to enjoy My presence, though He is approaching nearer and nearer to this purity by the prayers which are offered for him and he is more consoled and relieved. He added: His obstinacy in following his own will, and his disinclination to submit to the will of others, have prevented him from obtaining relief from your prayers as speedily as he would otherwise have done.*

Chapter 11

As it is but just that souls should be purified from their stains before they receive the reward of their good works, yet it sometimes appears that Mercy triumphs over Justice, as in the case of Brother John the Procurator, who worked so faithfully and laboriously for the convent. His good works appeared in the form of steps, by which his soul ascended, after its separation from the body, satisfying for its imperfections by the pain which this exertion cost him; but the higher he ascended, the less difficulty

he experienced. However, as it is difficult to avoid all imperfections in this life, and the justice of God punishes even the least negligence, when he came to certain steps he was seized with a sudden fear, which stupefied him, as if he expected that the next step would give way beneath him.

From this Gertrude understood that some of his good works had been tainted by some infidelity, from which he was purified by this fear. When other members of the congregation prayed for him either mentally or vocally, she perceived that he was assisted in his ascent, as if they had extended their hands to help him upwards, and thus afforded him great consolation.

It was also revealed to her, that those who had served her community, when they expiated their faults after their death, were relieved in consideration of the services which they had rendered to them, and that this privilege would be continued as long as the religious continued in the same state of fervor.

Chapter 12

When the Brother The: (sic), lay brother died, who had labored faithfully for the monastery for many years, St Gertrude began to pray for him as soon as she heard of his decease. As she was thus occupied, she beheld him in spirit, and his soul appeared black and deformed, as if suffering intense anguish from some remorse of conscience. As she was exceedingly moved to compassion, she commenced reciting five Pater noster, in honor of Our Lord's Five Wounds, which she embraced very tenderly. At the fifth Pater noster, as she approached the Wound of Our Lord's Side, Our Lord emitted blood and water from it, in the form of a vapor; and she perceived that the soul was exceedingly refreshed thereby interiorly, but that he suffered as if from exterior wounds, which caused him intense pain. By the virtue of this blood and water the soul was then transported into a garden of herbs, each of which signified some good work which he had performed when in the world; and on these Our Lord conferred such virtue, in answer to the prayers of the community, that each of these plants became medicinal, and healed the wounds when applied to them; and she understood that if the community persevered earnestly in their prayers, he would soon be entirely cured. she knew also that there were some herbs, which represented his imperfect actions; and when he touched them, his sufferings were fearfully increased.

After the interment, as they chanted the words, Sancte Deus, sancte fortis, sancte et immortalis, when the religious prostrated on the ground, the soul elevated itself towards Heaven with exceeding gratitude, appearing to prostrate with the community, thanking God for having had the privilege of living in so holy a convent, where his labors had been specially blessed and accepted on account of the merits of those whom he served. He declared also, where ever he had lived before he had entered that house, he had been obliged to earn his bread by the labor of his hands, but that he had never gained thereby from all his exertions as much advantage as he had obtained in the monastery for his soul.

Chapter 13

As Gertrude prayed for a lay brother lately deceased, she saw his soul under a hideous form, as if consuming by a devouring fire. There appeared to be something under one of his arms which caused him excessive anguish, and he was bent down by an overpowering weight, so that he could not keep himself upright. She learned that he appeared in this horrible form because although he wore a religious habit when on earth, he had failed to elevate himself to heavenly things. He was also suffering by fire for many other faults. The agony which he endured by what was concealed under his arm was a punishment for laboring to acquire temporal goods without the permission of his superior, and even concealing what he thus acquired. The weight which oppressed him so heavily was his disobedience to his superior.

On another occasion, as she read the Psalms and kept vigil, she asked Our Lord what remedy could be applied to this soul. He replied: **Although the soul of the departed are much benefited by these vigils and other prayers, nevertheless a few words, said with affection and devotion, are far more value to them.** And this may easier be explained by a familiar comparison; for it is much easier to wash away the stains of mud or dirt from the hands by rubbing them quickly in a little water, than by pouring a quantity of water on them without using any friction; thus, a single word, said with fervor and devotion, for the souls of the departed, is far more efficacy than many vigils and prayers offered coldly and performed negligently.

Chapter 14

Once when a person was told that a relative had died, of whose state she had great fear, Gertrude was so moved by her affliction that she offered to pray for the soul of the deceased. Our Lord taught her that the information had been given in her presence by a special arrangement of His Providence. She replied: "Lord couldst not Thou had given me the comparison without this?" He answered: **I take particular pleasure in prayers for the dead, when they are addressed to Me from a natural compassion, united to a good will; thus a good work becomes perfected.**

When Gertrude had prayed for this soul a long time, he appeared to her under a horrible form, as if blackened by fire, and contorted with pain. She saw no one near him; but his sins, which he had not fully expiated, were his executioners, and each member suffered for the sins to which it had been accessory. Then St. Gertrude, desiring to intercede with her Spouse for hum, said lovingly: "My Lord, wilt Thou not relieve this soul, for my sake? He replied: **Not only would I deliver this soul, but thousands of souls for your love! How do you wish Me to show him mercy? shall I release him at once from all his pains?** Perhaps, Lord," she continued, "this would be contrary to the decrees of Thy justice" He answered: **It would not be contrary t it if you asked Me with faith; for as I foresee the future, I prepared him for this when in His agony.** She replied: "I beseech of Thee, salvation of my soul, to perfect this work according to Thy mercy, in which I have the most perfect confidence."

When she had said this, the soul appeared under a human form and in great joy, but still bearing

some marks of his former sins; however the Saint knew that he must be purified further, and made as white as snow, before he would be fit to enter into the Divine Presence; and to effect this, it was necessary for him to suffer as if from the blows of an iron hammer, further more he had continued so long in sin that the process of cleansing his soul was much prolonged, and he also suffered as if exposed for a year to the rays of the scorching sun. As the saint marveled at this, she was instructed that those who have committed many and grievous sins are not assisted by the ordinary suffrages of the Church until they were partly purified by Divine Justice; and that they cannot avail themselves of the prayers of the faithful, who are constantly descending on the souls in Purgatory like a gentle and refreshing dew, or like a sweet and soothing ointment.

Gertrude then returned thanks for this favor, and said to the Lord: "O my most loving Lord, tell me, I beseech Thee, what work or prayers will most easily obtain mercy from Thee for those sinners who have died in a state of grace, so that they may be delivered from this terrible impediment which prevents them from obtaining the benefit of the Church's prayers. For this soul appears to me now, when relieved from this burden, as if it had ascended from Hell to Heaven". Our Lord replied: **The only way to obtain such a favor is Divine Love; neither prayers nor any other labors will avail without this, and it must be such a love as you no wave for Me; and as none can have this grace unless I bestow it, so also none can obtain these advantages after death unless I have prepared them for it by some special grace during life. Know however, that the prayers and labors of the faithful relieve the soul gradually from this heavy burden, and that they are delivered sooner or later, according to the fervor and pure intentions of those who thus serve them, and according to the merit which they have acquired for themselves when in this life.**

Then the soul besought Our Lord, by the love which had brought Him down from Heaven to die upon the Cross, that He would apply these remedies to his soul, and reward those who prayed for him abundantly; and Our Lord appeared to take a piece of gold from him, and lay it by to recompense those who had assisted him by their prayers.

Chapter 15

On the Sunday on which the community prayed for the souls of deceased parents, as St Gertrude offered the Host after she received Holy Communion for the repose for their souls, she beheld an immense number coming forth from a place of darkness like sparks of fire; some in the form of stars, and others in other shapes. Then she inquired if this great multitude could be all composed of the souls of the deceased parents; and Our Lord replied: **I am your nearest Relation, your Father, your Brother, your Spouse; therefore, My special friends are also yours, and I could not exclude them from the commemoration of your parents; therefore, you behold them all united together.** From henceforth the Saint prayed constantly for those who were especially beloved by Our Lord. On the following day at Mass, after the Elevation she heard Our Lord saying: **We have eaten with those who could not come to the feast.** Another year, when the bell tolled for the Office of the Dead. she beheld a snow white lamb, such as the paschal lamb is usually painted:

and from the wounds of its heart, a stream of blood flowed into a chalice, while it said: **I will now be propitiation for those souls for whom a feast is prepared here today.**

Chapter 16

As the community recited the Great Psalter for the souls of the faithful departed, which is believed to be of great efficacy for them, St. Gertrude prepared for herself for Holy Communion, and prayed for these souls with great fervor. she then inquired of Our Lord why this Psalter was so acceptable to Him, and why it obtained such great relief for the souls, since the immense number of Psalms which were recited, and the long prayers after each, caused more weariness than devotion. The Lord replied: **The desire which I have for the deliverance of the souls makes it acceptable to me; even as a prince who had been obliged to imprison one of his nobles to whom he was much attached, and was compelled by his justice to refuse him pardon, would most thankfully avail himself of the intercessions and satisfactions of others to release his friend. Thus do I act towards those whom I have redeemed by death and Precious Blood, rejoicing in the opportunity of releasing them from their pains, and bring them to eternal joys.**

"But" continued the Saint, "is the labor of those who recite this Psalter acceptable to Thee?" He replied: **My love renders it most agreeable to Me; and if a soul is released thereby, I accept it as if I had been Myself delivered from captivity, and I will assuredly reward it at a fitting time, according to the abundance of My mercy.** Then she inquired: "How many souls are released by these prayers?" He answered: **The number is proportioned to the zeal and fervor of those who pray for them. He added: My love urges Me to release a great number of souls for the prayers of each religious; and at each verse of the Psalm I release many.**

As the devotion of the Saint was marvelously excited by this revelation, she immediately commenced the recital of the Psalter, though in a state of extreme weakness. When she had repeated one verse, she asked Our Lord how many souls He had released; and He replied: **I am so touched with the fervor of your love, that I have released a soul for each movement of your tongue.** For which may sweet Jesus be praised and blessed for endless ages!

Chapter 17

On another occasion, when Gertrude prayed for the faithful departed, she saw the soul of a certain soldier, who, as I believe, had been dead forty years, and who appeared in a fearful state of suffering. He suffered as if exposed to the very fire of Hell, and was unable to obtain the least assistance from the prayers of the Church. As the Saint marveled at this horrible apparition, she was instructed that the soul had sinned exceedingly when in the world by pride and haughtiness. The effects of his sin

were represented by horns, which covered his body; and a slight support, which appeared to prevent him from falling into Hell, indicated some little compunction he had manifested for his crimes, which by the Divine Mercy, had led eventually to his repentance and salvation.

As Gertrude felt great compassion for him, she began to recite the Great Psalter, offering it for his soul's repose; and she had the satisfaction of knowing that her prayers were answered. The soul appeared to her freed from the horrible shape in which he had been tormented, and in the form of a young child, still bearing some marks of suffering, but as joyful as if he had been delivered from Hell and taken up into Heaven. He was not placed with many other souls, who seemed in the same condition. She learned also, that in this place he could benefit by the suffrages of the Church, of which he has been deprived, until Gertrude obtained this deliverance. The souls received him with the tenderest affection, and appeared to prepare a place for him amongst themselves. This induced the Saint to pray very earnestly for them; and she perceived that Our Lord removed them to a place of greater refreshment, whereby they were much consoled.

Then she said to the Lord: "What advantage will our community gain from reciting the Great Psalter?" Our Lord replied: **They will gain the advantage which the prophet has declared in these words: "My prayer shall be turned into my bosom (ps.34:13) My liberality and bounty will also grant them the favor of participating in the merit of this Psalter, whenever it is said throughout the world.**

On another occasion she said to Our Lord: "O Father of Mercies! If anyone desires to recite this Psalter who cannot give the usual alms, nor obtain the celebration of the Masses which should accompany it, what offering can be substituted for them?" He replied: **He should communicate as often as Mass should have been said, and for each alm say a Pater noster, with the prayer Deus, cui proprium est, for the conversion of sinners, doing an act of kindness also for the same intention.** Then the saint continued thus: "My God, let me speak once more to Thee, and allow me to ask if there is any shorter prayer which thou wouldst be pleased to receive as a substitution for the Great Psalter?" Our Lord replied; **The Psalter may be said by commencing with a prayer for pardon in these words 'In unione illius super coelestis laudis', and by adding the words, Ave Jesu Christ spender, after each verse. The words of this prayer should be said in honor of the love by which I became Man to ransom men; then they should kneel in honor of My Passion, when repeating the words which refer to it, in union with the love with which I, the Creator of all things, submitted to be judged and to suffer by men; then they should stand when repeating the words which commemorate My resurrection and Ascension, in union with that omnipotent power by which conquered, rose victoriously, and ascended into Heaven, to exalt human nature at the right hand of My Father. After this they should recite the Antiphon Salvator mundi, in union with the thanksgivings with which all the Saints rejoiced in My Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection. Lastly, they should receive the Sacrament of My Body for each Mass, and recite the Pastor noster and the Collect |Deus cui for each alms, adding an act of charity towards others. And I will accept this for the Great Psalter.**

Chapter 18

As the great psalter has not been explained in the preceding pages, we subjoin an explanation of it for the benefit of those who may read this work taken from the Exercises of St. Gertrude.

First we must kneel to ask pardon of our sins, saying "O most sweet Lord Jesus, in union with the celestial praises which the Ever-Blessed Trinity renders to Itself as alone worthy of praise, and which It imparts to Thy blessed Humanity, Thy glorious Mother, Thy Angels and Saints, and then returns to the abyss of Thy Divinity, from whence it had flowed forth, I offer Thee this Psalter to Thy praise and glory. I adore Thee, praise Thee, bless Thee, and give Thee thanks, for the love of Thy Incarnation, Thy Birth, the hunger, thirst, labors and griefs of Thy three-and-thirty years on earth, and for Thy love in giving Thyself to us in the Sacraments of the Altar; and I beseech Thee to unite the recital of this Psalter to the merit of Thy most holy life and conversation, which I offer for the living and the dead, for the souls of N,; and of N,: and I pray Thee to supply for and repair all that they have neglected or omitted in praise, in thanksgiving, in prayer, in devotion, in good works, which by Thy grace they might have accomplished, and in which they have failed by their negligence."

Secondly, having again implored pardon, repeat this prayer: "O most sweet Lord Jesus Christ, I adore Thee and bless Thee, giving thanks to Thee for Thy love in redeeming us by Thy cruel sufferings, and because Thou, the Creator of the universe, wert taken prisoner, bound, betrayed, defamed, cast upon the ground, scourged, crowned with thorns, condemned, crucified, slain cruelly and transfixed with a lance, for love of us. I offer Thee my petitions in union with the love with which Thou didst bear these outrages and indignities; beseeching Thee, by the merit of Thy most Holy Passion and Death, to pardon the sins of those for whom I pray, whether they have offended against Thee by thought, word or deed; and I implore Thee to offer to God the Father all Thy pains and griefs of the body and soul, and the merit of each pain, for those who are still indebted to Thy justice".

Thirdly, repeat the following prayer standing up: "I adore Thee, praise Thee, and bless Thee, O most sweet Lord Jesus Christ, giving Thee thanks for the victorious love by which Thou didst elevate our nature to the right hand of God the Father, after raising it up victoriously from the tomb; and I beseech Thee to grant the souls for whom I pray a participation in Thy victory and triumphs."

Fourthly, after imploring the mercy of God, say: "Savior of the world, save us all: Mary, holy Mother of God and ever Virgin, pray for us. We beseech Thee, by the intercession of all the holy apostles, martyrs, confessors and holy virgins, to keep us from evil, and to lead us to the perfection of all good. O most sweet Lord Jesus, I adore Thee and bless Thee for all the favors Thou hast conferred on Thy blessed Mother and on Thy elect, in union with that gratitude with which Thy Saints rejoice in Thy blessed Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection, beseeching Thee, by the prayers of Thy glorious Virgin Mother and all the Saints, to supply the needs of these souls".

Fifthly, recite the hundred and fifty Psalms of the Psalter devoutly and consecutively, saying, after each verse: "Hail Jesus Christ, Splendor of the Father, Prince of peace, Gate of Heaven, Bread of life, Son of a Virgin, Vessel of the Divinity!" At the conclusion of each Psalm, repeat the following words kneeling: "Eternal rest give to them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them." Then say a

hundred and fifty Masses, or have them said or offer as many Communion, or at least fifty or thirty. Give alms also a hundred and fifty times, or, if this is impossible, say the Pater Noster and the Colect Deus cui, performing the same number of acts of charity. In these acts of charity may be included the least kindness done to another for love of God - such as a kind word, or a kind act, or even a fervent prayer.

We also consider it right to say something of the Seven Masses which according to our tradition, were divinely revealed to St. Gregory, as we believe that they will contribute greatly to the relief of the holy souls, through the merit and efficacy of the intercession of Christ. If possible seven lights should be burned at each Mass, in honor of the Passion of Our Lord, and each day fifteen Pater nosters and Ave Marias should be recited, and seven alms given. The Office of the Dead must also be said.

The first Mass is the Domine ne longe, with the entire Passion, as on Palm Sunday; and we should beseech Our Lord, by the contempts which He freely suffered when bound and betrayed in the hands of sinners, that He would deliver those captive souls who, of their own free will, enslaved themselves.

The Second Mass should be Nos autem gloriari, as on the third feria after Palm Sunday (Tuesday in Holy Week), in which we must beseech Our Lord, by His unjust condemnation to death, to deliver the souls justly condemned to punishment by their own act.

The third Mass should be In nomine Domine, as on the fourth feria after Palm Sunday; and by this we must implore Our Lord, by His guiltless suffering when attached to the Cross, to deliver these souls from the punishment which they have deserved by attaching themselves to unworthy pleasures.

The fourth Mass will be Nos autem gloriari with the Passion Egressus est Jesus, as on Good Friday, when we must beseech Our Lord, by His most bitter death and the piercing of His Heart, to heal these souls from the wounds of punishments of sin.

The fifth Mass is the Requiem, at which we must pray Our Lord, by His holy burial, and by the tomb in which He, the Lord of Heaven and earth, was enclosed to deliver these souls from the fate to which they have condemned themselves by their sins.

At the sixth Mass, Resurrexi, we must pray that the souls may be freed from every stain, and made worthy to participate in His glory by the merits of His joyful Resurrection.

At the seventh Mass, Gaudiamus, as on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, let us beseech Our Lord and His most holy Mother, by the joy which she felt on the day of Her Assumption, that by her merits and meditation these souls may be freed from every restraint, and associated forever to the company of their heavenly Spouse.

If you act thus towards others, be assured that your prayer will return into your own bosom, with abundant fruit, at the hour of your death. But, it will be far more advantageous for you to perform this devotion for yourself while you are able, than to trust others after your decease; and God, who is faithful to His promises, will keep it for you, and return it to you in good time, through the bowels of

His mercy, who as visited us as the Orient from on high. (Luke 1:78).

Chapter 19

On one occasion, while Mass was celebrating for a poor woman who had died lately, St Gertrude recited five Pater nosters, in honor of Our Lord's Five Wounds for the repose of her soul; and, moved by Divine inspiration, she offered all her good works for the increase of the beatitude of this person. When she had made this offering, she immediately beheld the soul in Heaven, in the place destined for her; and the throne prepared for her was elevated as far above the place where she had been, as the highest throne of the Seraphim is above that of the lowest Angel. The Saint then asked Our Lord how this soul had been worthy to obtain such advantage from her prayers, and He replied: **She has merited this grace in three ways; first, because she always had a sincere will and perfect desire of serving Me in religion, if it had been possible; secondly, because she especially loved all religious and all good people; thirdly, because she was always ready to honor me by performing any service she could for them. He added: You may judge, by the sublime rank to which she is elevated, how agreeable these practices are to Me.**

A certain religious died who had always been accustomed to pray very fervently for the souls of the faithful departed; but she had failed in the perfection of obedience, preferring her own will to that of her superior in her fasts and vigils. After her decease she appeared adorned with rich ornaments, but so weighed down by a heavy burden, which she was obliged to carry, that she could not approach to God, though many persons were endeavoring to lead her to Him.

As Gertrude marveled at this vision, she was taught that the persons who endeavored to conduct the soul to God were those whom she had released by her prayers; but this heavy burden indicated the faults she had committed against obedience. Then Our Lord said: **Behold how those grateful souls endeavor to free her from the requirements of My justice, and show these ornaments; nevertheless, she must suffer for her faults of disobedience and self will.** The Saint replied: "But Lord, did she not repent when admonished of these faults before her death? Did she not perform penance for them? And does not Scripture say, 'When man confesses, God pardons?'" Our Lord answered: **If she had not acted thus, the burden of her faults would have been so heavy, that she could not scarcely ever have come to Me.**

The the Saint beheld her ornament, which appeared like a vessel of boiling water containing hard stone, which must be completely dissolved therein before she could obtain relief from this torment; but in these sufferings she was much consoled and assisted by these souls, and by the prayers of the faithful. After this Our Lord showed St. Gertrude the path by which the souls ascend to Heaven. It resembled a straight plank, a little inclined, so that those who ascended did so with difficulty. They were assisted and supported by hands on either side, which indicated the prayers offered for them. Those who were assisted by the Angels had a great advantage, as they repelled the dragons who flew round it, endeavoring to prevent their prayers. The religious who have lived under obedience were assisted by a kind of railing, placed at each side of this plank, so that they were both supported and protected from falling.

In some places these railings were removed, as a punishment to those superiors who had failed to govern their subjects by the rules of obedience. But all the souls who had been truly obedient were assisted and supported by Angels, who removed every impediment from their path.

A religious, who had listened to murmurs and detractions, appeared to the Saint also under a human form, and was punished by having her ears closed with a hard substance, which she could only remove with great difficulty and by slow degrees; her mouth was also covered with a kind of bridle, for having uttered some detractions, so that she could not taste the Divine sweetness. It was revealed to St Gertrude that this person had sinned through inadvertence and ignorance, and had repented for her fault; but that those who persisted habitually in this sin would be punished far more severely, and their sufferings would be so intense and horrible as to make them objects of aversion to the citizens of Heaven.

"Alas, Lord!" exclaimed the Saint with tears; "formerly Thou did show me the merits of the Saints, and now I only see the punishments of these souls." He replied: **Men were then more easily won by gifts of grace; now they must be terrified by threats and judgments.**

We will now relay how the Divine Mercy prepared Gertrude for her last end.

Chapter 20

On the Feast of Blessed Martin, at the Response *Beatus Martinus*, the Saint cried out to the Lord with burning desire: "O Lord, when will Thou show me a like favor?" He replied: **I will soon take you to Myself.** These words excited an exceeding desire in her soul to be dissolved and to be with Christ, although she had never felt the same desire before. On the fourth feria (Wednesday) after Easter Sunday, when she had received Communion, she heard Our Lord saying to her: **Come My chosen one, that I may enthrone Myself in thee.** And she knew that the hour was approaching of which Our Lord had already spoken to her on St Martin's Day, saying 'I will soon take you to Myself'. Our Lord then added: **Do not live for yourself during the short time which remains for you, but employ yourself entirely in promoting My glory, according to your own desires.** The time of her death was deferred that she might have a longer preparation for it, according to this instruction. For as Scripture tells us that delay increases our desires, so also does it increase our merit.

Once when Gertrude was occupied with these thoughts, on a Sunday, Our Lord said to her: **If I granted you at the moment of your death the accomplishment of all the holy desires which you have entertained, it would be little in comparison with the grace I am about to confer on you. Choose, He continued: whether you will die now, or suffer a long sickness first, that you may know something of the infirmities of a protracted illness.** The Saint replied: "Lord, do Thou Thy holy will." He answered: **You do right to submit to My decision; and if you consent, for My love, to remain longer in the body, I will establish My abode in your heart, as a dove in its nest; and at the same time I will hide you in My Heart, from**

whence I will lead you forth to eternal joys.

From this moment her desire of departing this life was moderated, and she heard these words continually whispered in her soul: 'My dove, in the clefts of the rock' (Cant 2:14). But her desire returned after a time, and Our Lord said to her: **What bride would complain of the time, spent adorning herself for her bridegroom, or regret occasions of increasing his love? For after death the soul cannot merit, neither can it suffer anything for God.**

Chapter 21

Once, as Gertrude received Holy Communion, she found herself so weak that she inquired of the Lord if her end was near. He replied: **When a bride hears that there are many messages from her betrothed, treating of the conclusion of their alliance, she begins to prepare herself for it. In like manner when you feel inward suffering and illness, you should begin to prepare for death.** "But how shall I know when that desirable hour shall come which will release me from the prison of the flesh?" Our Lord answered: **Two of the noblest Angels of the celestial court shall whisper in your ears, through golden trumpets, this melodious song: 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye forth to meet him.** She replied: "And my Lord, in what chariot shall I be taken to behold Thy blessed Face?" He said: **My Love will pour itself forth on you and bring you to My Kingdom.** "And where shall I repose in this chariot?" Our Lord answered: **Your seat will be in confidence in My mercy, from which you must expect every good.** "Shall I have reigns to guide this chariot?" she inquired. He replied: **Your fervent love will supply this need.** The Saint continued: "As I know what will be necessary for the journey, I will not inquire further; but I ardently desire to travel on this road." Our Lord answered: **Your joys will exceed all you can hope or desire; for whatever may be imagined by My elect as to their future blessedness, will be far exceeded by the reality.**

Chapter 22

The Saint heard a brother who preached in the chapel saying, among other things, that love was a golden arrow which obtained all that it touched; and that he was a fool who used this arrow to hunt after earthly pleasures, when he might use it to obtain eternal joys. Then Gertrude exclaimed, in an ardor of love; "Oh, how happy I should be if I possessed this golden arrow, for I would transfix Thee with it, my Beloved, that I might possess Thee eternally!" As she said these words, she beheld Our Lord holding a golden arrow in His Hand, and He said to her: **You desire to wound Me; but I will pierce you, so that your wound may never be healed.** As He said this, the arrow appeared bent in three places. By this she understood that the arrow of Divine Love wounds in three ways: first, by rendering all earthly pleasures distasteful, so that nothing in this world can afford the

soul pleasure or consolation; secondly, by exciting an ardent desire in the soul to be united to God, finding that it cannot breathe or live apart from Him; thirdly, the soul is so transfixed as to be almost separate from the body, and overwhelmed with the torrent of Divine delights.

After this revelation St. Gertrude desired, with a merely human desire to die then in the church where this favor had been vouchsafed to her, as if the holiness of the place where the body ceased to live would have profited the soul. And as she repeatedly asked to obtain this grace, Our Lord said to her: *When your soul goes forth from your body, I will hide you under My paternal care, as a mother would cover and caress her beloved child when terrified by fear of shipwreck. And as the mother would rejoice in the joy of her child when they had reached land in safety, so will I rejoice in your joy when you are safe in Paradise.*

The Saint gave thanks to God for all His love, and renounced her former desires, confiding herself entirely to His Divine Providence.

Chapter 23

Once, as the Saint implored Our Lord to show her mercy at the hour of death, He replied: *How can I fail to accomplish what I have already commenced?* She replied: "If Thou hadst taken me out of the world when I thought, by Thy Divine communications, that my end was near, I should have supposed that I was better prepared to die; but now I think that my negligences have rendered me less worthy." Our Lord answered: *All things are ordered by the wisdom of My Providence; whatever you have once done is always Me, and whatever you may add thereto will not be lost.*

From this she understood that preparation for death may be long before the event; as a prince prepares for a long time when about to celebrate his nuptials. In the preceding harvest the grain and the grape are stored up in his cellars, so that there may be an abundant supply when they are needed for use; then the event may not be spoken of again until the time approaches although the preparations are made. Thus God incites His elect to prepare for death, though He may not take them out of the world for sometime.

Chapter 24

The following instructions were written by St. Gertrude as a yearly preparation for death: The first day should be employed in considering our state in our last sickness; the second day, in preparation for our last Confession; the third, in meditating on Extreme Unction; the fourth, in preparing for the Holy Viaticum; the fifth, in reflections on death.

This preparation for death, which the Saint taught others, was used also by herself; and she

communicated on the preceding Sunday, to obtain graces to perform this exercise devoutly, singing the 41st Psalm, *Quemad-modum*, for this intention, with the hymn *Jesu nostra redemption*, that her soul might be perfectly united to Our Lord. Then Our Lord said to her: **Unite yourself to Me, as the prophet Eliseus united himself to the child whom he raised to life.** "But, Lord how shall I accomplish this?" inquired the Saint. Our Lord replied: **Join your hands to Mine; that is, recommend to Me all the works of your hands: place your eyes on Mine; that is unite the movements of your body to the movements of Mine. Thus your members will become one with Mine, and will participate in their innocence and sanctity, so that henceforth they move only for My glory.** And this alliance, which the Saint formed with Our Lord, was like a golden zone, which united her soul indissolubly to her Beloved.

When Gertrude approached the Holy Communion, she remembered that she had not been able to Confess on the preceding day, though she had ardently desired to do so; and she besought Our Lord to pardon her sins and negligences. And as she prayed thus, she beheld Our Lord uniting her to Himself with chains of gold, so that her soul appeared, as it were, enclosed in His Divinity, as a precious stone would be in a golden casket.

The next day, as she her illness increasing, she read the Psalm *Quemadmodum* twice, with the hymn *Jesu nostra redemption*, in honor of the union of the Divinity and Humanity in the person of Christ for our salvation. At the same time, these chains appeared to unite her still more closely to her Lord. The third feria she repeated these devotions three times, in honor of the union of Christ Jesus with the Ever Blessed Trinity, by which human nature is so glorified. On the fourth feria, the day appointed in her exercises for meditation on death - she beheld her soul fastened to the crucifix, like a jewel incased in gold; and she perceived that golden vine-leaves came forth from the cross, the beauty of which was reflected on the gold. From this she understood how pleasing the Passion of Christ, in union with which she had offered her sufferings to Our Lord, had rendered her soul to the Blessed Trinity. On the fifth feria, as she confessed her sins to her Spouse in the bitterness of her heart, she knew that He pardoned them, for she beheld a number of precious stones in the golden vines leaves. On the sixth feria (Friday), as she mediated on the Extreme Unction, Our Lord appeared to her, and anointed her eyes, ears and lips with a liquor which came from His inmost Heart; and this precious liquor also communicated to the different members of her body the merits of the deified Body of Christ.

On Saturday, as she prepared in anticipation for the Holy Viaticum, at the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass, she saw four angelic princes surrounding the throne of the Divine Majesty. Two of these Angels placed themselves at each side of Our Divine Lord, and the other two came to the Saint and conducted her to her Spouse. Our Lord received her with the greatest tenderness, and then united her to Himself by the life giving Sacrament of the Altar. The Saint occupied herself on Sunday by repeating the prayers which she had composed as a preparation for death, offering Our Lord each member of her body as dead to the world, and desiring henceforth to exist only for His eternal praise and love. After this He blessed her with His own Hand, and marked the Sign of the Cross upon each member of her body, which appeared to glorify them marvelously, and to free them from every stain.

At the Elevation of the Host she offered her heart to Our Lord, that He might make it die to the world; beseeching Him, by the innocence of His most holy life, to free it from every stain of sin, and, by the incomprehensible love which united God to Man in the Divine Person, that He would prepare

her to receive His gifts. Our Lord then appeared to her, and opened His Heart with both hands, from which so ardent a fire poured forth that the soul of the Saint was completely dissolved thereby. from this union of her heart with the Heart of her Spouse, a tree sprang forth, adorned with gold and silver leaves; and Our Lord said to her: **This tree proceeds from My union with you; My Divinity is figured by the golden leaves, and your soul by the silver leaves, which are enclosed therein.** As the Saint prayed for those who were committed to her care, she saw the tree producing ripe and beautiful fruit; and the branches hung down in such a manner, that these persons could gather this fruit as they pleased.

After this, feeling much exhausted, she lay back on her pallet, saying "I offer this rest to Thee as if it were given to Thy sacred Humanity". He replied: **And I will supply by My Mercy for all your sins of human frailty.**

Then she inquired if her present weakness would be the means of bringing her to eternal rest; and Our Lord replied: **I am leading you nearer to Me by this infirmity.** For when a king is about to espouse a princess who lives in a distant land, he sends his officers and courtiers to conduct her to him with all possible pomp and magnificence; and they are charged to spare neither pains nor expense to render the journey easy and agreeable to her. When she arrived at her destination, he places her in one of his royal palaces, and gives her a ring as a pledge of espousals. Here she remains, attended with all honor, until the nuptial day, when the king comes for her himself, and conducts her to his imperial throne.

Now I, your Lord and your God, am the true and faithful lover of your soul; and I share in all the pains of body or soul with which you are afflicted, and send My Saints to attend you and congratulate you on this royal road which leads you to Me. The instruments of music and rejoicing are your sufferings, which resound in My ears as an harmonious concert, moving Me to compassionate you, and inclining My Heart more and more toward you. Then, when you arrive at your journey's end, I will meet you and espouse you before all My Saints with a holy embrace, in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. The sooner you receive this Sacrament, the greater will be your happiness; for then I will approach you nearer and nearer, so that your whole being will be enraptured with the blessedness of My embrace; and I will convey you Myself across the dark river Death, immersing you in the ocean of My Divinity, where you will become one spirit with Me, and reign with Me for endless ages. Then you will be consoled for all the trials and sufferings you have borne when on earth, with the same harmonious music and the same delights as those which now enrapture My defiled Humanity.

Our Lord then continued thus: If anyone desires a similar visit in his last moments, let him endeavor daily to clothe himself with My perfect life, and to imitate it continually; let him learn to subdue his flesh and to renounce his own will entirely into My hands; let him live by the Spirit, and believe that I will seek his good in all things by My paternal Providence. Let him offer Me every adversity and contradiction, and for each I will reward him with rich jewels and precious gifts. If, through human frailty, he seeks himself in anything, let

him immediately do penance, and once more resign himself to My Will, and I will receive him with the right hand of My mercy, and led him with ineffable honor and glory to the kingdom of eternal Light.

On the following Sunday, as Gertrude solemnized the feast of her eternal joy, and the happy moment when she should appear before the Ever-Blessed Trinity released from exile, she was ravished in ecstasy, and beheld all the merits and joys of each choir of the Angels and of the different Saints; and as her heart overflowed with joy in considering their blessedness, she returned the most fervent thanks to God for it. She also thanked Him for all the graces, gifts and glory which He had bestowed on the Blessed Virgin His Mother; beseeching her, for the love of Her Son, to offer her virtues for her to the King of virtues.

Then the Queen of Heaven, moved by her prayers, offered her virginal purity for her, as a white garment; her peaceful humility, as a green tunic; and her unfading charity, as a purple mantle. When Our Lord had clothed her in these robes, the Saints, rejoicing in her beauty, prayed that she might be adorned with their graces and virtues also. And He placed a necklace on her, adorned with precious stones, each of which seemed to attract the different graces which had been asked for her. But it must not be understood from this that anyone can receive from others what they have failed to obtain for themselves; nevertheless, some souls may receive for their gratitude what others fail to obtain.

Chapter 25

As Gertrude reflected on death, she exclaimed to our Lord: "How happy and how honored are they who merit to be consoled and strengthened by Thy Saints in their last moments! I am unworthy of this consolation, for I have never honored Thy Saints worthily; therefore I cannot expect consolation from any Saint, save from Thee alone, the Sanctifier of all the Saints". Our Lord replied: **You will not be deprived of this consolation because you expect all from Me; on the contrary, My Saints will love and minister to you all the more for it, and at the moment when men usually feel most fear and anxiety, I will send My Saints to assist you, and I will come to you Myself in all the glory and beauty of My Divinity and Humanity.** She replied: "And when wilt Thou accomplish Thy promise and bring me from this land of exile to the land of rest?" Our Lord answered: **Will a royal bride complain of the applause of the populace if it only increases the love of her bridegroom for her?** "But, Lord", continued the Saint, "how can this apply to me, who am the vilest of Thy creatures?" He replied: **Know that I communicate Myself to you entirely in the Sacrament of the Altar, which after this life cannot be; and in this union there is more blessedness and delight than in any human love, for that is often vile and transitory; but the sweetness of this union ennobles and dignifies the soul.**

Our Lord had often incited the Saint to desire her deliverance from the flesh; and now she became seriously ill, so that the physicians had no hope of her recovery. This intelligence filled her with joy, and she said to Our Lord: "Although I desire above all things, to be delivered from the prison of the flesh, and united to Thee, nevertheless, if it pleases Thee, I would willingly remain on earth and

endure the severest suffering, even until the day of judgment". Our Lord replied: *Your good will so moves My Divine benignity, that I accept it as if you had accomplished what you offer.* As He said this, a marvelous joy appeared in His Divine countenance, which imparted a new and ineffable gladness and consolation to all the Saints. Then He continued: *In that hour when I draw you entirely to Myself, the mountains - that is, the Saints-shall drop sweetness; the heavens shall pour honey on the earth, from the abundance of your beatitude; the hills shall flow with milk and honey-that is, I will attract carnal and earthly souls by My grace, for your sake.*

Then she began to make fervent thanksgiving for these favors and to excite her gratitude further by reflecting on many graces which Our Divine Lord had promised her. And these favors were: first, a promise that she should die of Divine love, and that her death shall be caused thereby, even as love caused the Death of the Son of God on the Cross; second, that in the adorable counsels of the Ever-Blessed Trinity the Holy Spirit had prepared to preside at her death, and order all that passed within her; third, that all who assisted her in her last illness, or even desired to do so, should themselves be assisted and protected by Divine love in their last moments; fourth, that Our Lord would bestow as many graces on them as it was possible for men to receive; fifth, that in the hour of her happy departure an immense number of sinners should be converted to true penance by infinite and gratuitous mercy of God; sixth, that an infinite number of souls should be delivered from suffering, and obtain an increase of merit and beatitude, and enter with her into the celestial kingdom; seventh, that whoever besought Our Lord to bestow any grace on her should be rewarded by receiving the same grace themselves; eighth, that whoever returned thanks to God for the graces bestowed on her should receive, sooner or later, according to the decrees of His Providence, all they desired for their salvation, if they observed the following conditions-1) to praise the eternal love of God, who chose her from all eternity; 2) to thank Him for having drawn her so sweetly to Himself; 3) for having united her to Himself so intimately and familiarly; 4) for having blessedly consummated His work in her, and for having granted all her petitions; ninth, that Our Lord had sworn to Gertrude by the truth of His Passion, and confirmed His promise by the seal of His Death, that whoever prayed for her during her life, at her death, or after her death, should receive the most abundant graces and favors, if they had also the intention of including in this prayer all for whom God wished them to pray, if they commenced their petition by offering it through the merit of the infinite love which drew Him down from Heaven to earth to accomplish the work of our salvation and concluded it by offering it in union with His Death, and the glory and triumph with which He presented His adorable Humanity to the Father on the day of His glorious Ascension. Further, He promised that those who prayed thus for her should receive all the graces which they had asked for her, as if they had made themselves worthy of obtaining them.

Chapter 26

Some time after this Our Lord appeared to her; and seemed as if He was preparing couch on which she might repose; but instead of a soft bed of feathers, He displayed before her, as it were, all the sufferings which He had endured on the Cross for the salvation of men, that its salutary fruit might prepare her soul for eternal life. The pillow which He offered to support her head was the dolors of

His most sweet Heart when He hung upon the Cross, and remembered how unavailing all His sufferings would be for so many souls. As a mattress for this couch, He offered her His abandonment and contempt in His Passion, the infidelity of His friends towards One who of all friends the most faithful, His cruel binding, mocking and contempt. Lastly, He offered her the merits of His Most Precious Death as a coverlet, that she might be sanctified thereby, according to the good pleasure of His Divine Mercy.

As Gertrude reposed therein sweetly, the Heart of Our Lord, in which all treasure are hidden, appeared to her as a mystical garden of exceeding beauty, in which all the desires of His Holy Humanity were represented under the figure of an exquisite verdure, and all His thoughts as violets and lilies. The virtues of Our Divine Lord were figured by a fruitful vine, like that of Engaddi, whose grapes were of so delicious a sweetness. This vine extended its branches and leaves round the Saint, affording her the most agreeable shade and refreshment; and Our Lord gave her fruit, that is, His virtues, from the different branches of this tree, causing her also to drink the delicious wine which it produced.

Then she beheld three pure fountains springing forth in the Divine Heart, which emptied themselves miraculously into each other; and Our Lord said to her: **You will drink from these rivulets so efficaciously at the hour of your death, that your soul will attain such perfect health and such consummate perfection as to be unable to remain longer in the body; in the meantime, let this delightful vision serve for your spiritual adornment.** Then she besought the Eternal Father to look upon her for the sake of the holy Humanity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to purify her from all sin, and to adorn her with His Divine Virtues; and she knew that her prayers were heard. After this she prayed thus: "O most loving Father, give me Thy most loving benediction:" and the Lord extended His omnipotent Hand, and blessed her with the Sign of the Cross. Then this benediction appeared like a golden tent, which covered the couch already mentioned; and she saw also many instruments of music placed therein, which signified the joys she obtained through the Passion of Jesus Christ.

These heavenly delights changed her sufferings into joy, and as she now occupied herself entirely with her own perfection, she began to compose some short and fervent prayers, to supply for her negligence in reciting the Canonical Hours, the Office of the Blessed Virgin and the Office of the Dead. She also had desired to supply for her deficiencies in certain virtues, such as the love of God and her neighbor, humility, chastity, obedience, consideration for others, thanksgiving, rejoicing or grieving with others, ect. Then she endeavored to supply for the negligence of which she believed herself guilty in the Divine praises, in thanksgiving, in prayers and in reparation, not only for herself, but also for the whole Church.

Nor was she satisfied with this reparation; for she desired for each fault, and for each member of her body, to recite twenty-five short prayers, adding at the end of every petition the Pater noster and Ave Maria, for which she had a special devotion; and these prayers not only moved the heart of man, but even touched the very King of Glory, who rejoiced thereat exceedingly; and although the Saint had a most perfect confidence in the promises related above, which our Divine Lord had made to her, nevertheless her humility urged her to labor for their fulfillment, by her own earnest cooperation with Divine grace. She also perused her holy Rule with extreme diligence, seeking to supply for her omissions in its observance by her prayers, sighs, and tears; so that she not only satisfied for any fault

she might have committed therein, but obtained also new ornaments and graces from God. Then she applied all the powers of her soul and body to higher things, praying with exceeding fervor, ardently desiring a perfect and eternal union with her God, uniting her devotion to the mutual love and ineffable granulations (i.e., congratulations) of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, and repeating the verse, "When wilt Thou come? my soul thirsteth for Thee," with the words "o most loving Father" (The last words she had learned in a marvelous manner, and she knew that they were most acceptable to God).

She repeated these prayers continually, unless her bodily weakness was so great as to prevent it; and she offered the reparation also, if her soul was not attracted to a more sublime prayer. The consolations vouchsafed to her were so abundant, that they were imparted even to those who attended her, so that many sought to be near her to obtain her instructions, and to learn these prayers from her. Hence, most fervent prayer was made for her recovery, or even that her death might be retarded; and God, who hears the desires of the humble, granted this favor and spared her a little longer to those who loved her so tenderly, affording her also an opportunity of increasing her merit.

The verse above mentioned is here subjoined -

"Amongst a thousand still desired, When wilt Thou come, O Jesus mine? When wilt Thou fill my soul with Thee, Which knows no joy on earth but Thine?"

"Oh come! Oh, come! Most mighty King; Father of boundless power and praise: Thy joy is light, Thy light is joy. Oh hasten, Lord, life's passing days.

"Thou thinkest thoughts of tenderest love, Sparing our sins, and giving place To mercy; sweetest, dearest Lord. O come; I long to see Thy Face."

Chapter 27

As the Saint occupied herself in making these reparations, she grieved exceedingly for her omissions in devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and she besought Our Lord to offer her prayers Himself to His Blessed Mother. Then the King of Glory, arose and offered her His defiled Heart, saying: *Behold, My beloved Mother, I present You My Heart, which abounds in all beatitude, and I offer You all the Divine affections by which I predestinated, created and sanctified you from all eternity to be My Mother; with the love and tenderness which I manifested to You on earth, when You carried Me in your bosom and nourished Me with your milk, and the fidelity with which I subjected Myself to You as a Son to a Mother, and especially My tenderness towards You in the hour of death, when I provided you with a faithful guardian, forgetting My own sorrows. I offer You the glory and honor to which I elevated you on the day of your Assumption into Heaven, where You were exalted above all the choirs of Saints and Angels, and proclaimed Queen and mistress of Heaven and earth. I*

offer You once more all these tokens of My love, as if I presented them to You anew, in favor of My spouse, that You may over look her negligences in your regard, and assist her at the hour of her death with all the tenderness of a Mother.

Then the Blessed Virgin accepted this charge with the greatest of pleasure saying: *Grant, my beloved Son, when I receive Thy chosen spouse, according to Thy Divine good pleasure, that she may receive some of the over-flowing delights which I enjoy.* The goodness of the Lord towards her moved Gertrude deeply, and she exclaimed: "Alas, my most loving Lord! I am grieved that I have not satisfied for my negligences in reciting the Canonical Hours in like manner, since Thy inconceivable goodness receives so graciously my poorest efforts." Our Lord replied: *Do not be grieved, My beloved; for I have renewed all your desires, in union with that love which prompted My Divine Heart to infuse into you these noble and loving aspirations; and I have united to this the most devout and pure intention which any human heart could offer Me, presenting it to My Father in satisfaction for all your negligences, so that His paternal goodness inclines towards you with the tenderest affection.*

Chapter 28

Every Friday, at the hour of None, St Gertrude retired apart from all creatures, in order to devote herself to preparation for death, and especially to recite the prayers for the agonizing. After she had practiced this devotion for some time, Our Lord rewarded her by a special grace. On one of these occasions she was rapt in ecstasy, and Our Lord manifested to her the manner of her death. She beheld herself reposing in the arms of Our Lord, under the form of a fair young maiden, in her agony; and at the same time she saw an immense number of Saints and Angels surrounding her, with censers in their hands, in which they offered the prayers of the Church with great joy to the King of Glory. When they invoked the Blessed Virgin by the Antiphon *Salve Maria*, Our Lord made a sign to His Blessed Mother to console His elect; and the Queen of Virgins appeared in marvelous radiance, and supported the head of the dying person. Her guardian Angel also appeared under the figure of an illustrious prince who came to congratulate her on her happiness.

As she invoked the Archangel St. Michael, she beheld the glorious chief of the angelic hosts, with a multitude of Angels, all prepared to assist her and to combat the demons, whom she also saw under hideous forms, but so weak and powerless that they could not do her the slightest injury; and this afforded her the greatest consolation. A column of light appeared to proceed from the lips of the dying person to the very throne of God; and this had such virtue, that it was apparent even the angelic guard was not needed to defend her against the demons, for it caused them such terror that they endeavored to fly and conceal themselves.

As each of the Saints was invoked in the Litany of the Dying, he appeared ready to assist her. The Patriarchs had branches in their hands, from which their good works were suspended in place of fruit; and these they placed round her. The Prophets bore golden mirrors, on which were depicted the sublime revelations which God has imparted to them; and these they also offered for her

assistance, placing them opposite to her. The beloved disciple St. John came next and presented her with two golden rings; each Apostle who followed presented one also, and these rings represented the fidelity which the soul had towards Our Divine Lord.

The Martyrs followed, holding golden palms in their hands, which shone radiantly with all their sufferings. The Confessors had golden flowers, which represented their virtues: and these they also presented to her. The Virgins offered her roses, the stalks of which had little crooks of gold, which signified the close union with the Lord which they enjoyed on account of their purity; and the Lord Jesus, a King and Spouse of virgins, was adorned with a robe covered with the same number of roses as there were virgins, who appeared to communicate in His merits by these golden crooks, which fastened the flowers to His robe; these crooks also represented the particular virtue of each virgin.

Then the Lord, seeing that Gertrude was adorned with the flowers of each virgin, inclined toward her, to bestow on her as many graces as there were ties which attached her to Him; and thus she experienced something of the happiness of these blessed souls. The Widows and the other Saints then brought their offerings in the form golden caskets; and all the merits which had been offered for her, by an admirable communication, became her own, so that her soul shone resplendently before God.

The holy Innocents also had their share in this festival, to honor the Lord who had purchased them with His Precious Blood, and made them heirs of His Kingdom. They seemed however, to have less merit of their own, but their souls were marvelously adorned by the union of their innocence with the innocence of Jesus Christ. Then the Son of God inclined towards Gertrude and embraced her lovingly, absorbing her into Himself as the sun, in its meridian splendor, absorbs a dewdrop, so that her soul was as it were, received into the Heart of her Spouse with all the virtues and merits which had been conferred on her, and she was surrounded and penetrated by Him as fire inflames.

Chapter 29

After this work was finished, Our Lord Jesus appeared to her who had completed it, holding it in His hand; and pressing it to His Heart, He said to her: *I have placed this book thus upon My Heart, that every word contained therein may be penetrated with Divine Sweetness even as honey penetrates bread. Therefore, whoever reads this book devoutly will receive great profit for his salvation.* Then she besought Our Lord to preserve this book from all error for His own glory, and He extended His adorable Hand, signing it with the Sign of the Cross, saying: *I consecrate by My benediction all that is written in this book, that it may promote the salvation of those who read it with a humble devotion. He added: The labor of those who have written this book is also most agreeable to Me, particularly in three things: first, I taste therein the sweetness of My Divine love, by which all this is related therein has been effected; second, I am exceedingly pleased with the good will of those who wrote it; third, I contemplate with singular pleasure My gratuitous mercy, which appears in all that is written in this book. I desire, therefore, that this work should be fructified by My most holy Life and My Five Wounds; and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost shall be the seven*

seals of Divine Mercy with which it had been sealed, so that none may be able to take it out of My Hand.

On another occasion, when the compiler of this book communicated, she had it hidden in the sleeve of her habit, under her mantle, to offer it to Our Lord for His eternal praise and glory. As she prostrated before receiving the Body of the Lord, one of the religious saw Our Lord approaching her with great manifestations of joy and tenderness; and He addressed her thus: *I will penetrate with My Divine sweetness and fertilize every word of this book which you have offered Me, and which you have written by the direction of My Spirit; and I will manifest to whoever reads this book with humble love what will be most useful for him, and will take him into My bosom, breathing into his soul life and truth. But if anyone reads it through vain curiosity, and a desire to pry into My secrets to censure and mock them, I will assuredly humble and cast him down shamefully.*

Chapter 30

I offer Thee this work, O Lord Jesus Christ, Fount of eternal light, in union with that inessable charity which moved Thee, the Only-begotten of the Father, in the plenitude of the Divinity, to take upon Thee our nature, and to become Man. I offer it to Thee on the part of all creatures, because it is Thine ineffable tenderness for mankind which caused Thee to pour forth those sweet and efficacious graces on the heart of Thy chosen spouse, to fructify them, to draw her to Thyself, and to unite her to Thee eternally.

I beseech Thee to take this work into Thy Divine keeping, that it may glorify the omnipotence of the Father, the wisdom of the Son and the love of the Holy Ghost. I offer it to Thee in fervent thanksgiving for all the graces which Thou hast communicated or wilt communicate through this work, even to the end of time. And as I am an utterly vile and unworthy creature, I offer Thee, in satisfaction for all my deficiencies and omissions, my blindness and ignorance, Thy own sweetest Heart, ever full of Divine thanksgiving and eternal beatitude. Amen.

Deo Gratis.
