

just left the room when he heard a knock and was told that a stranger wished to speak to him. As soon as the man was before the priest, he fell to his knees weeping and said, "Father, I want to make my confession." The priest was stunned to realize that it was Gemma's sinner who she was praying for.

Gemma often saw her guardian angel, with whom she was on familiar terms. Sometimes the angel protected and consoled her, sometimes he counseled her, and occasionally he scolded her very severely for her faults. He would say, "I am ashamed of you." At times Gemma was heard arguing with her guardian angel, so that her spiritual director, Father Germano, had to remind her that she was speaking with a blessed spirit of heaven and should be very respectful. The angel is mentioned on almost every single page of Gemma's diary. In one entry, Gemma wrote that the devil had been reigning down blows on her shoulder for nearly half an hour. "Then my guardian angel came and asked me what was the matter; I begged him to stay with me all night, and he said: 'But I must sleep.' 'No,' I replied, 'The angels of Jesus do not sleep!' 'Nevertheless,' he rejoined, smiling, 'I ought to rest. Where shall you put me?' I begged him to remain near me. I went to bed; after that he seemed to spread his wings and come over my head. In the morning he was still there." One of the most extraordinary things is the fact that Gemma often sent her guardian angel on errands, usually to deliver a letter or oral message to Father Germano in Rome. Often the reply was delivered by the priest's guardian angel. Realizing how unusual this was, Father Germano asked Heaven for a sign that it was in accord to God's Will. After Gemma's death, he wrote: "To how many tests didn't I submit this singular phenomenon in order to convince myself that it took place through a supernatural intervention! And yet none of my tests ever failed; and thus I was convinced again and again that in this, like in many other extraordinary things in her life, Heaven was delighted in amusing itself, as it were, with this innocent and dear maiden."

In spite of everything that had happened to her, Gemma understood the true joy of her way of life. She said, "There is neither cross nor sorrow, when we are tightly united to Jesus." In January of 1903, Gemma was diagnosed as having tuberculosis. For four months Gemma suffered uncomplaining from the disease. She died quietly, in the company of the parish priest, on April 11. In his testimony he said, "I have been present at many deathbeds, but never have I seen anyone die like Gemma, without even a precursor sign, nor a tear, nor a panting breath. She died with a smile which remained upon her lips, so that I could not convince myself that she was really dead."

The Church authorities began to study Gemma's life in 1917, and she was beatified in 1933. The decree approving the miracles for canonization was read on March 26, 1939-Passion Sunday (as Saint Gabriel Possenti had stated in his vision to her when she desired to enter a convent, he told her to make her vow to be a religious, but not to add anything to this vow; she might live like a nun, but would never enter a particular convent). Gemma was canonized on May 2, 1940, only thirty-seven years after her death.

******(excerpted from: www.marys-touch.com)

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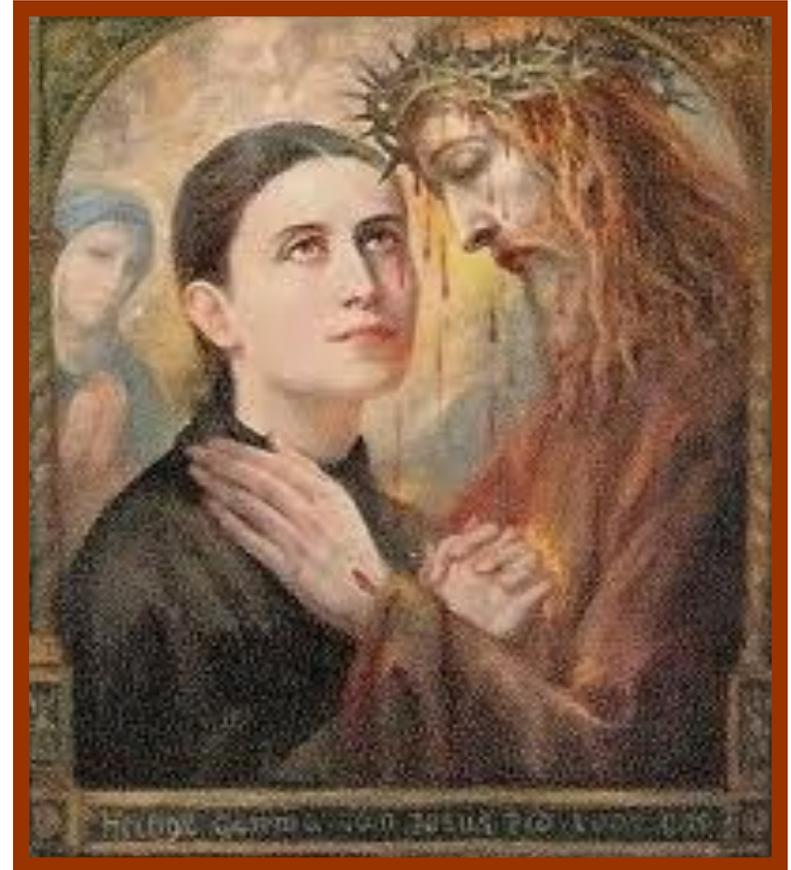
Saint Gemma Galgani

"The Gem of Christ" 1878-1903

Saint of the Passion of Jesus

Feast Day April 11

Feast Day for Passionist Congregation May 16



***"I wish, oh Jesus,
that my voice could reach to the ends of the world,
to call all sinners and tell them to enter into Thy Heart...
Oh, if only all sinners would come to Thy Heart!...
Come! Come sinners, do not be afraid!
The sword of Justice cannot reach you Here!"***

~ St. Gemma Galgani ~

Saint Gemma Galgani

*Saint Gemma Galgani was born at Camigliano in Tuscany, Italy, on March 12, 1878. In 1898 began her extraordinary mystical experiences. She was miraculously cured of tuberculosis of the spine with aggravated curvature on Friday, March 3, 1899—First Friday of the month (Sacred Heart devotion), after receiving a vision of the young Saint Gabriel Possenti. On June 8, 1899, on the vigil of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she received the Stigmata. She died on Holy Saturday, April 11, 1903. She was beatified on May 14, 1933 by Pope Pius XI, and canonized on May 2, 1940, by Pope Pius XII. She is the patroness of pharmacists, loss of parents, those suffering back injury or back pain, those suffering with headaches (migraines), those suffering with temptations to impurity and those seeking purity of heart.

*(excerpted from: www.stgemma.galgani.com)

**From time to time, God calls a generous soul to live in reparation for the sins committed by men against their Creator and Savior. Such a lover of the cross was the young Italian mystic, Gemma Galgani, who dedicated herself as a victim of atonement. Gemma could have said "No" to God, in answer to many of His requests for sacrifice. Instead, she modeled herself on Our Lady's answer, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord."

Gemma is the Italian word for gem. The child's mother was worried that this name was not a saint's name, but a priest friend comforted her with the remark that perhaps the child would one day be a "gem of Paradise." At a very young age, Gemma developed a love of prayer. She credited her mother, who died when Gemma was very young, with inspiring in her the desire for Heaven, and with teaching her about God. She made her First Communion on June 17, 1887. Later, she wrote, "It is impossible for me to describe what passed between Jesus and myself in that moment. He made himself felt so strongly in my soul. I realized in that moment how the delights of Heaven are not like those of earth, and I was seized by a desire to make that union with my God everlasting." Once, the sister at Gemma's school, asked her class to pray for a dying man who refused the Sacraments. After the prayer, Gemma whispered into the ear of her teacher that "The grace is granted." That evening news was received

that the man had converted and received the consolations of the Faith before his death. Gemma had an immense love for the poor, and when she was no longer able to give any material help, she gave them the gift of friendship. She would weep over their misfortunes, while completely ignoring her own. Feeling herself tempted by the devil, she prayed for help to St. Gabriel Possenti (a Passionist). He appeared to her several times, promising her help and calling her "sister." Through his intercession, Gemma who was also suffering from meningitis, was miraculously cured. Gifted with the ability for prophecy, Gemma predicted that the Passionists would establish a monastery at Lucca; this came to pass two years after her death.

On the 8th of June, 1899, Gemma had an interior warning that some unusual grace was to be granted to her. She spoke of this to her confessor and received absolution. She gave the following account to her spiritual director: "It was Thursday evening, and suddenly I felt an inward sorrow for my sins; but so intense that I have never felt the like again; my sorrow made me feel as if I should die then and there. After that I felt all the powers of my soul in recollection. My intellect seemed to know nothing but my sins and how they offended God...Then thoughts crowded thickly within me and they were thoughts of sorrow, love, fear, hope and comfort." In rapture, she saw her heavenly Mother, who wrapped Gemma in her mantle. At that moment, according to her own account, "Jesus appeared with His wounds all open; blood was not flowing from them, but flames of fire which in one moment came and touched my hands, feet and heart...then my Mother kissed my forehead, the vision disappeared...helped by my guardian angel, I got into bed." Each Thursday evening, Gemma would fall into rapture and the marks of the stigmata would appear. They remained until Friday afternoon or Saturday morning when the bleeding would stop, the wounds would close, and only white marks would remain in place of the deep gashes. Gemma's stigmata continued to appear until the last three years before her death. At this time, her director forbade her to accept this phenomenon, and through her prayers it ceased, although whitish marks remained on her skin until her death.

There is good record of Gemma's words during ecstasy. In this state of rapture, the soul is so absorbed in God that the normal activity of the senses is suspended. Her confessor often overheard Gemma in her state of rapture and recorded her conversations. Father Germano once overheard her arguing with Divine Justice for the salvation of a soul. Some of her words were: "I do not seek Your Justice, but for Your Mercy. I know, he made You shed tears; but...You must not think of his sins; You must think of the Blood You shed. And now answer, Jesus, and tell me You have saved my sinner." Gemma actually named the man she was praying for. Soon afterwards, she broke out joyfully, "He is saved! You have won, Jesus; triumph always does." Then she came out of ecstasy. Father Germano had