

# Saint Gertrude of Helfta

Part 2

1256-1302

PURGATORY

In a vision Saint Gertrude of Helfta had the revelation of the state in which the soul of a fellow sister was found, as she narrated in the fifth volume of "The Messenger of divine mercy": "One month later the sister of the first one died. After Gertrude had prayed for her a long time, she saw that soul soon after her passing in a place filled with light, like a little maid, who dressed in red clothing is presented to the Spouse. There also appeared beside her the Lord in the figure of a refined young man. He revived with His five wounds the five senses of her soul with wonderful sweetness and consoled her with His gentleness and humbleness. Then Gertrude said to the Lord: 'You oh God of every consolation are so benevolent towards this soul. What does it mean that her sad look betrays an inner pain?' The Lord answered: 'Due to my presence she cannot yet enjoy the fullness of joy, because I only give her the joy of my humanity. Because in such a way I have recompensed just that love and devotion which she has shown for my Passion, on her deathbed. But later when she will be completely purified from the negligence of earthly life, I will fill her completely of joy with the presence of my beatifying divinity.' Then Gertrude continued: 'Were not all her earthly weaknesses expiated by her piety at her death, since in a place of Sacred Scripture it is said that man will be judged as he will be found at the end of his life?' Then the Lord gave this answer: 'When the strengths leave a person who is dying, then also his life is already at the end, he cannot do anything more with his

strengths, but only with his will. The one to whom through my gratuitous goodness, I continue to give good will and pious aspiration, goes still a step forward; he cannot nevertheless repair all the debt of the previous omissions in such a measure and so perfectly, as when the person is still healthy and capable of improving his life.'

Then Gertrude continued: 'But, oh my Lord, could not your most sweet mercy liberate this soul, to whom since her childhood You have given a heart so rich and benevolent towards everyone, from the impediment of her negligence?' The Lord responded: 'I will reward abundantly the sweetness of her heart and her good will, nevertheless, my Justice demands that she be first purified of every stain. My spouse is in agreement with my justice, because after the purification she will be completely consoled by the glory of my divinity.'

Having the soul of the deceased joyfully approved these words of the Lord, He immediately returned to Heaven, while she remained at the place where she was and stretching towards the sky with all her strengths, she tried to ascend. By having remained alone that soul was purified from her youthful carelessness, for which she entertained herself too much sometimes with other people and through the difficult ascent she was purified from the laziness in which she had at times indulged due to her weariness.

One day while Saint Gertrude was praying for this deceased novice during the Holy Mass, at the elevation of the Most Holy Host she prayed in this way: 'Lord,



Holy Father, I offer You this Most Holy Host for her on behalf of all those who are in Heaven, on earth and in Purgatory!' And behold that soul appeared lifted up a bit higher, and innumerable people, who were on their knees in front of her, were elevating the Most Holy Host high with both hands. She had much relief and benefit from it and said: 'Now I truly experience how certain is what Sacred Scripture says, namely that in man there is nothing good, be it even the smallest thing, that would not be repaid, and no fault that would not be expiated before or after death; thus for this reason, since I willingly received Holy Communion, now I receive much relief from the Holy Sacrament of the altar offered for me. And since I have always loved all people, now I benefit from the prayer said for me. Therefore, for all this, I anticipate an eternal recompense in Heaven!' At these words it appeared that she was lifted up even higher, carried by the prayer of the Church; when arriving to the place established for her, she knew that the Lord in the fullness of His mercy would have met her with the crown of glory and welcomed her in eternal glory."

