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Novena to
St. Mary Goretti

*Based upon the Canonization Homily
of Pope Pius XII*

by Father Conroy



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Introduction

This novena booklet has been written primarily to mark the first observance of the Feast of St. Mary Goretti following her Canonization during the Holy Year (June 24, 1950). On that occasion the Holy Father proposed the Little Maid of Corinaldo as a model for the youth of our times. Earlier, he had termed her "the Modern St. Agnes."

His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, is keenly aware of the temptations to which his young flock all over the world is subjected and he knows that the vice of impurity seeks to destroy the flower of our youth.

The novena begins on July 1st and ends on July 9th, Feast of St. Mary Goretti.

The prayers in this booklet are based upon his never-to-be-forgotten Canonization Sermon and quotations from this are used throughout the novena as a guide for each day's prayer. The prayers are intended to reflect the prayerful desires of His Holiness for the youth of our times and are written with their temptations in mind. Each day is dedicated to the attainment of a different virtue, though the over-all intention of the novena is for purity.

Prayers which could be used for group recitation, in case this is desirable, are conveniently marked for the purpose.

It is hoped that those who make this novena will be able to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion daily. However, if this is not possible, one could still make the novena by saying the required prayers. Coming as it does at the beginning of summer, the novena to St. Mary Goretti should prove useful in alerting the minds of youth to the spiritual danger lurking in the vacation days ahead.

Though the booklet is designed for the dates mentioned above, nevertheless the novena prayers could be said on any other successive nine days of the year. In the pamphlet are to be found other prayers for special occasions which youth could use to good advantage.

* * *

June 24, 1951, First Anniversary of Canonization of St. Mary Goretti.

St. Mary Goretti

MARY THERESA GORETTI was born at Corinaldo, Italy, on October 16, 1890. She was the third of seven children sent by God to bless the union of her parents, Luigi Goretti and Assunta Carlini.

The family lived in the direst poverty. At the age of five, Mary moved with her family from Corinaldo and located near the city of Rome, in a swampy area known as the Pontine Marshes. There Luigi, a sharecropper of his day, found things no better, and after three years of near starvation the family was forced to move again. This time the weary, bedraggled group arrived at Ferriere and the name of this little town was destined to be forever burned into the memory of Mamma Assunta.

Luigi looked in vain for a place to house his precious brood. Eventually he struck a desperate bargain with one Signor Serenelli, who had a son named Alexander—another name Assunta would never forget.

At any event, the Goretti's moved in with the Serenelli's.

The stage was now set for the tragic drama ahead. In less than two years the fever-ridden swamps claimed the life of Luigi. Now, Mary comes into prominence in the family picture. She was about 10 years of age and already possessed of a deeply religious nature. She immediately assumed practically all family responsibilities since Assunta was forced to divide her time between the home and the cruel marshes to earn a living. Luigi had left them in debt to the Serenellis. Assunta had no choice.

During the turmoil of the months after her beloved Father had died, Mary's gifts of character began to stand out in the eyes of friends, neighbors and other acquaintances. Her charming modesty, cheerful obedience and the serious, but free acceptance of a hundred thankless home-tasks—these and other qualities marked her off from the other children playing in the dusty streets of Ferriere. Like a child of another day, she was advancing "in wisdom and age and grace before God and men."

Mary made her First Holy Communion

on the Feast of Corpus Christi in June, 1902. Biographers have set forth this event as the happiest day of her life. Pope Pius took occasion to mention, "her ardent longing for the Eucharist" in his Canonization sermon, June 24, 1950.

Now, Alexander Serenelli! During the years before and since the Goretti's came to live under the Serenelli roof, this youth had been preparing his soul for the part he was to play in the life and death of Mary Goretti. In leisure hours and even while at his monotonous work, Alexander gave his mind over to the Devil. Long hours spent pouring over impure reading and pictures began to inflame his passions. No wonder then that Mary Goretti inevitably drew his lustful interest.

Today the world knows what happened as a result. On the 5th of July, 1902, Alexander came to his terrible decision. He had already asked Mary to sin with him on a number of occasions, but now he was to be denied no longer. One more demand, one more rebuff, ("no, it is a sin! God does not want it!") then Alexander lunged to the deed.

Doctors in Nettuno tried to save her life

in spite of the 24 stab wounds. It was no use. God was calling his "Little Marietta"! After 20 pitiful hours of suffering during which she forgave and prayed for Alexander, Mary Goretti entered the Kingdom of Heaven, fortified with the Last Sacraments. Her last earthly gaze rested upon a picture of the Blessed Mother. It was July 6, 1902.

Almost fifty years later June 24, 1950, Pope Pius XII, now gloriously reigning, stood on the steps of St. Peter's in Rome and with a half million people in attendance pronounced Mary Goretti a Saint and Martyr of the Universal Church. He proposed her as the Patroness of Modern Youth and set July 6th as her Feast Day.

This was the triumph of a little girl who loved God and hated sin.

FIRST DAY

Purity

“ . . . there stands out above everything else her purity . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Most lovable little Saint, * who valued your purity above any earthly gain, * and who sealed this choice with a martyr's death, * obtain for me also a strong love of this virtue, * so consoling to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. * The pleasures of the world create many temptations for me. * I turn to your powerful intercession in Heaven, * so that with this help I may remain ever loyal to God, no matter what the price. * In danger inspire me to repeat with you, * “No, it is a sin!” Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Lord, have mercy of us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven, have
mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the World,
have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy
on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy
on us.

Holy Mary, Pray for us.

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of Virgins,

Mother of Christ,

Mother of divine grace,

Mother most pure,

Mother most chaste,

Mother inviolate,

Mother undefiled,

Mother most amiable,

Mother most admirable,

Mother of good counsel,

Mother of our Creator,

Mother of our Redeemer,

Virgin most prudent,

Virgin most venerable,

PRAY FOR US

Virgin most renowned,
 Virgin most powerful,
 Virgin most merciful,
 Virgin most faithful,
 Mirror of justice,
 Seat of wisdom,
 Cause of our joy,
 Spiritual vessel,
 Vessel of honor,
 Singular vessel of devotion,
 Mystical rose,
 Tower of David,
 Tower of Ivory,
 House of gold,
 Ark of the covenant,
 Gate of heaven,
 Morning star,
 Health of the sick,
 Refuge of sinners,
 Comforter of the afflicted,
 Help of Christians,
 Queen of angels,
 Queen of patriarchs,
 Queen of prophets,
 Queen of apostles,
 Queen of martyrs,
 Queen of confessors,
 Queen of virgins,
 Queen of all saints,
 Queen conceived without original sin,
 Queen assumed into heaven,
 Queen of the most holy rosary,
 Queen of peace,

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Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us.

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God! Despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever-glorious and blessed Virgin!

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross, be brought to the glory of His resurrection, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Official Prayer to St. Mary Goretti

(Daily)

O Saint Mary Goretti who * strengthened by God's grace, did not hesitate, even at the age of twelve * to shed your blood and sacrifice life itself to defend your virginal purity * look graciously on the unhappy human race * which has strayed far from the path of eternal salvation. * Teach us all, and especially youth * with what courage and promptitude we should flee for the love of Jesus * anything that could offend Him or stain our souls with sin. * Obtain for us from our Lord victory in temptation * comfort in the sorrows of life * and the grace which we earnestly beg of thee * (here insert daily intention) * and may we one day enjoy with thee the imperishable glory of Heaven. * Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for Us!

In the Name of the Father, etc.

SECOND DAY

Obedience

“ . . . We see (in her life) a tender and docile love for her parents which was at the same time practical and obedient . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear St. Mary Goretti, model of loving obedience to parents, * teach me to imitate your example. * Help me to overcome all selfishness and stubborn pride, * draw my parents to Thee * then lead me to accept this authority as the Voice of God in my life. * Help them to direct me aright and enable me to obey their every wish. * Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)
Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!
Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!
Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 13)
Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the
Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for Us!
In the Name of the Father, etc.

THIRD DAY

Self Denial

“ . . . there was the sacrifice she made in her difficult daily work . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear Little Saint Mary! * You were ready for the moment of martyrdom * because your short life was given over to daily and heroic self-denial. * Your great love of the Sacred Hearts made all this possible. * Teach me to love Jesus and His Blessed Mother * so that I too will be inspired to daily self-denial. * I am inclined to pamper myself, to gratify my senses, and to excuse myself from all penance. * This keeps me from being a true follower of Christ. * Help me, lovable Little Martyr, * to a sincere practice of self-denial, * so that I may be your worthy follower and thus gain Heaven for all Eternity. * Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 18)

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the

Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for us!

In the Name of the Father, etc.

FOURTH DAY

Contented Living

“ . . . there was that evangelical poverty to which she freely submitted . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear Little Saint! Your days were spent in the filth of the marshes, * willingly helping your desperately poor parents and family. * Obtain for me the grace to accept my present circumstances in life, * no matter how difficult or humiliating they may be. * “Just one little drop of water” was the only request that fell from your parched lips * during those last horrible hours of life. How much I demand, how unhappy I am * when I cannot have my share of the world’s conveniences and gaudy attractions! * Teach me by your heroic example to be content with what I have, * to be grateful for the blessing which God has already showered upon me. * Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 13)

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for us!

In the Name of the Father, etc.

FIFTH DAY

Confidence in God

“ . . . she was sustained by her confidence in heavenly Providence . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear Little Saint, ° I depend a great deal upon the help of my friends in time of trouble or sorrow. ° I look for their approval in many things that I do. ° I am disconsolate and lonely when they desert me. ° Through your powerful intercession in Heaven, ° obtain for me the grace to place all my confidence in God. ° Only by walking constantly in His presence and depending upon His help, ° will I have the courage to stand up for His laws, ° even though it may mean loss of friends, ° criticism and complete removal of wordly comfort. ° Help me to look for all of my strength in Him. ° Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 13)

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the

Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for us!

In the Name of the Father, etc.

SIXTH DAY

Respect for Teachers

“ . . . there was her religion to which she tenaciously clung—and which she desired to understand better with each passing day . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear Little Saint! * Help me to greater love of my Faith. * I have many God-given opportunities to study it but, * sad to say, I neglect them. * I am even critical of the Priests, Brothers and Sisters * who offer their lives that I may better know and love my holy religion. Dear Saint Mary Goretti, * teach me to be thankful for these graces which you did not have. * Make me proud of my Faith and ready to die for it, * if God should require that of me. * Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 13)

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the

Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for us!

In the Name of the Father, etc.

SEVENTH DAY

Love of Holy Communion

“ . . . there was her ardent longing to receive Jesus in the Eucharist . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear Little Saint, * never was Jesus more welcome in a human heart than in yours. * The Great Day of First Communion could not come quickly enough. * In borrowed clothes and head crowned with flowers of the field, you knelt to receive Him into your soul, * so rich with Innocence and Love, * and this after months of keen anticipation! *

O Powerful Intercessor with the Lamb of God * inflame my soul with your “ardent longing to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.” * Obtain for me the grace to put aside laziness and indifference * so that I may often, even daily, * allow myself to be consumed in the “burning Furnace of Charity.” * Teach me what true Love really is! * Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 13)

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for us!

In the Name of the Father, etc.

EIGHTH DAY

Charity to Others

“ . . . as the crown of her charity, there was the heroic pardon granted to the man who murdered her . . . ”

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear Little Martyr! * To the last you followed your beloved Jesus! * He, while hanging upon His Cross of Suffering, * uttered through parched lips, * “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do!” * And you upon your bed of pain, burning with fever, * forgave your murderer with the words, “I too, pardon him . . . * I too, wish him to join me in Paradise!” *

Grant me the grace, O Heroic Saint, to be charitable to others! * Much of my time is spent on vengeful thoughts * seeking how I may pay back to others the harm they have done me. * Teach me to forgive, so that I may not only gain Heaven, * but also lead others there who might otherwise be doomed to Hell. * If I am to follow Christ, * help me to imitate His Charity, * even as you have done. * Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 13)

Our Father, etc.

NINTH DAY

Love of Our Blessed Mother

*“ . . . in you, . . . through Our hands . . .
all young people will find safe refuge . . . ”*

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Let us pray

Dear Saint Mary Goretti! * Once again I turn to you, * and beg of you in the words of Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, * that “serenity of spirit and deep joy which is the heritage of those who are pure of heart.” * Help me to turn to Our Blessed Lady, * confident in the hope that she will take my hand as she did yours, * and lead me on to Paradise, my heavenly country, * there to enjoy with you and Her, * the company of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost for all Eternity. * Amen.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin, (See page 10)

Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love!

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation!

Prayer to St. Mary Goretti, (See page 13)

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the

Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for Us!

In the Name of the Father, etc.

Prayer During Vacation

Dear Saint Mary Goretti! With added time on my hands the danger to my soul is now greater than ever. My thoughts tend to wander and to dwell on suggestions put there by Satan himself. My imagination is stirred by the loose living I see all around me. My body resents being aroused to useful activity and craves far too much ease. Teach me, Oh Little Saint, how to make every minute count for Eternity.

Oh Little Saint, whose eleven short years were so fruitful for Eternity, teach me the value of keeping my mind and body usefully occupied, so that by imitating your example, I too may reach my Heavenly Home. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for Us!



Prayer Before A Dance or Party

Dear Saint Mary Goretti! The world teaches that we must please others in order to be popular. Conscience demands that I please God more than one who ask an evil thing in the name of false love. Teach me by your example to instill into others a real respect for modesty and purity. Through your powerful intercession, help me to make of this evening an occasion for helping others to become spiritually stronger. Grant that others may see in me reason to change their ways, if that be necessary, and that I may have the courage to resist any temptation to sinful conduct. Let others be led closer to Jesus and Mary by my example.

Oh Little Saint who wanted to be popular only with your Divine Master and His Blessed Mother, help me to imitate you. Amen.



*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory
be to the Father, etc.*

*St. Mary Goretti, Pray for
Us!*

Prayer Before A Date

Dear Little Saint Mary Goretti! Teach me that God must be my first love and that all other love is based on Him and Him alone. Obtain for me the grace to cease toying with the occasions of sin and to remember that my body and the bodies of all in grace are temples of the Holy Ghost, destined someday for a glorious resurrection.

Through your beautiful example teach me the value and dignity of Christian modesty. Grant that I may never be the occasion of dragging others into Hell, by suggestive words or evil deeds of any kind. Through the merits of your Martyrdom obtain for me the grace to turn aside from sin, no matter what the cost, so that one day I may enjoy Heaven with you and all the other Saints. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, etc.

St. Mary Goretti, Pray for Us!



