

1749, his career as a Redemptorist. He received the holy habit in due time, and his biographer writes that his life as a novice was begun where others end ; indeed, few at the end of their religious life reach the lofty perfection to which he had attained when he was still numbered among beginners. He wished only, as he himself expressed it, "to love God, to be always with God, and to do everything for His love."

The rapid progress he continued to make in religious perfection induced St. Alphonsus Liguori to shorten the time of his probation, and to give him the privilege he so ardently longed for of binding himself by the three ordinary vows of religion. This did not satisfy the glowing desire of Gerard for perfection, and, with the consent of his confessor, he added another vow, to do always that which was most pleasing to God.

Gerard did the ordinary menial work on the monastery. He mended clothes, dug in the garden, cooked in the kitchen, nursed the sick, opened the gate ; the lower the employment the better he liked it. He had, however, a more than passing longing to be at work near Our Lord under the sacramental veil, and his joy was quite complete when he was named sacristan. This gave him a chance to be near the altar and tabernacle, where he often heard the Divine Prisoner speaking to him with His human voice.

In these varied employments Gerard Majella sanctified himself, to prove to us that it is not in doing brilliant deeds that the true service of God consists, but in doing God's will even in little things. St. Alphonsus tells us that "all sanctity consists in the love of God, and the love of God consists in the fulfilment of His holy will." Gerard did God's will in doing the will of those who took God's place near him ; so great was his conformity in this respect that his founder called him a miracle of religious observance.

The other virtue that shone with more than ordinary brilliancy in the life and conduct of the young Redemptorist was his fraternal charity. While he was working at his