

of Lacedogna, during which time many extraordinary things took place, Gerard went back to tailoring again, and gave all his earnings to the "dear poor of Jesus Christ," who were for him the poor here below and the suffering Souls in Purgatory.

The many acts of virtues that Gerard practised made him command the respect and admiration of all; and he passed for a model among the young men of his age. He served God faithfully day by day, and kept himself united to His blessed will. In the eyes of the world he was doing all that was needful to save his soul. But the world cannot scrutinize men's hearts, and it could not see the grace of God working powerfully in the soul of the poor young tailor.

There is a higher life that worldlings have little idea of, namely, the closer imitation of Jesus Christ, who, for love of us, was not satisfied with going about doing good, but who, besides, suffered and died. "If thou wilt be perfect, take up thy cross, and follow Me." Gerard had already heard this voice calling him to the higher and more perfect life. The craving has long come over him to consecrate himself to God in religion, and he made two attempts to enter the Order of St. Francis. But God had another destiny in store for him.

A great mission preached by the priests of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in his native town, in 1749, moved Gerard profoundly. The austere lives of the holy missionaries and the fervor and earnestness of their preaching made such a deep impression on him that he begged to be admitted among them. He cast himself at the feet of the Superior, Father Cafaro, and asked to be received as a lay-brother. The young man's health had been so reduced by the austerities he practised, that God permitted the Superior to refuse his request, under the plea of his ill-health. This was only a temporary cross, however, for shortly afterwards, he entered the Monastery at Iliceto, and began in May.