



### THE CHURCH PENITENT: TEN WAYS TO BRING RELIEF TO THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

#### 1. **Make Reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus**

Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, a 17<sup>th</sup> century French nun and mystic, received many apparitions from Jesus during her life. In one of her visions, He showed her His Sacred Heart and said:

*Behold the Heart that has loved men so much that It has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming Itself, in order to testify to them Its love. But in return I receive from the greater part of mankind only ingratitude, by reason of the contempt, irreverence, sacrilege, and coldness shown Me in this Sacrament of Love.*

It behooves us, then, to periodically make atonement for this disregard for the Lord's Sacred Heart and, at the same time, we can sometimes offer it up for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

#### 2. **Pray the Rosary for the Holy Souls**

The Rosary for the Holy Souls is basically the standard Rosary, but it specifically mentions and remembers the souls in purgatory. For instance:

*The Agony in the Garden: Lord Jesus Christ, through Your bloody sweat of fear that You shed on the Mount of Olives, we ask You to have mercy on the Holy Souls in Purgatory. Bring to completion their purification and console them with the Cup of heavenly comfort.*

#### 3. **Offer up Holy Communion**

You do not need to say a special prayer, only ask that the Lord that the graces you would have received at that particular Holy Communion be applied to the souls in purgatory.

#### 4. **Offer Gregorian Masses**

“The practice of Gregorian Masses goes back to a tradition hailing from Pope St. Gregory the Great (540-604). According to legend, a deceased monk appeared and requested 30 Masses to be celebrated for the release of his soul from purgatory. On completion of the stipulated days he appeared once more radiant in heavenly glory. From this legend the practice of celebrating 30 consecutive Masses for one and the same person with the intention of procuring release from purgatory became an established custom which has been regulated in various ways over the centuries.” EWTN

## 5. Pray the Eternal Rest Prayer

(English)

V. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

R. And let the perpetual light shine upon them.

And may the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

(Latin)

V. Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine.

R. Et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Fidelium animae, per misericordiam Dei, requiescant in pace. Amen.

## 6. Pray St. Gertrude's Prayer

According to tradition, the Lord told St. Gertrude, a 13th century German nun and mystic that this prayer, when piously recited, would release 1,000 souls from purgatory:

*Eternal Father, I offer You the most precious blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal Church, for those in my own home, and in my family. Amen.*

## 7. Sprinkle Holy Water on the Ground

St. John Macias used to sprinkle Holy Water on the Ground for the souls in purgatory. Say the following prayer:

*By this holy water and by Thy precious blood, wash away all my sin, O Lord, and relieve the souls in purgatory,*

then make the sign of the cross.

## 8. Alms-giving

We should always give to charity with the intention of helping the poor souls. St. John Chrysostom says, "Not by weeping, but by prayer and alms-giving are the dead relieved."

## 9. Sacrifice and Mortification

Give up something small for the intention of providing relief for the Holy Souls in purgatory, or add an extra devotion, especially when you don't feel like it.

## 10. Promote the Mission to Pray for the Souls in Purgatory

Speak to those in your parish about praying for the Poor Souls in Purgatory. I know a woman who has an apostolate where she hands out for free, copies of *Hungry Souls: Supernatural Visits, Messages, and Warnings from Purgatory* (TAN Books). In that way, she helps Catholics to learn about the plight of the poor souls and encourages them to pray for them.

For those who never had a devotion to the Poor Souls in Purgatory, I hope this article has convinced you to at least set aside some time, daily, weekly or even monthly to help the Holy Souls in Purgatory in some small way.

There will come a time when we will all need the same attention.