

St. Gertrude the Great, Nov. 16

Gerelyn Hollingsworth | Nov. 16, 2009 NCR Today

Today is the feast of [St. Gertrude the Great](#), [1] c. 1256-1302.

*To him who ever thought with love of me
Or ever did for my sake some good deed
I will appear, looking such charity
And kind compassion, at his life's last need
That he will out of hand and heartily
Repent he sinned and all his sins be freed.*

--[Gerard Manley Hopkins](#) [2]

Sr. Mary Jeremy Finnegan, the renowned Sinsinawa Dominican poet and scholar, noted in *The Times Literary Supplement* in 1952 that Hopkins was paraphrasing words Jesus spoke to Gertrude: "When I behold anyone in his agony who has thought of Me with pleasure, or who has performed any works deserving of reward, I appear to him at the moment of death with a countenance so full of love and mercy that he repents from his inmost heart for having ever offended Me, and he is saved by this repentance."

Dorothy Disse, at "[Other Women's Voices](#)," [3] provides links to online sites about St. Gertrude, excerpts from translations of her writings in print, and information about secondary sources, including Sister Mary Jeremy's "groundbreaking work", *The Women of Helfta: Scholars and Mystics*, [4] published in 1961 and re-issued in 1991.

"O Love, be Thou Thyself my Evening, that in Thee my soul, with joy and exultation, may bid my body a fond farewell, and in Thy shade my spirit, returning unto the Lord who gave it, may softly rest in peace."

--Gertrude of Helfta, [Fifth Exercise](#) [5]

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Links:

[1] http://www.stgertrudes.org/Community/St_Gertrude.htm

[2] <http://www.bartleby.com/122/74.html>

[3] <http://home.infionline.net/~ddisse/gertrud.html>

[4] http://openlibrary.org/b/OL1878731M/women_of_Helfta

[5] http://ldysinger.stjohnsem.edu/@texts2/1290_gert-gr/03_ger_exer.htm#Ex_5