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Saint Philomena



The Cure of Ars and St. Philomena

THE little town of Ars, France, has become famous through the holy life and labors of St. John Vianney, its beloved Cure. And he, perhaps more than any other single individual, has brought to the world's attention the power of his own favorite among the saints—St. Philomena. He was wont to call upon her for every kind of favor, and made her, so to say, his “miracle-proxy.” He used to take refuge under St. Philomena's cloak, and “throw the blame on her,” as someone has said, for the extraordinary miracles he himself worked. St. Philomena solved

his financial worries; she converted sinners; she healed malignant diseases; she worked numberless prodigies in answer to his simple prayers. Many are recorded in the biography of the saint, but if all were written they would fill a volume by themselves.

A person once approached the Cure and said: "Is it true, Monsieur le Cure, that St. Philomena obeys you?" To which the holy priest replied, "And why not, since every day God Himself obeys me at the altar?" A perfect understanding existed between the Cure and his dear little saint, so that he constantly felt the closeness of her presence. He addressed her by the most familiar and tender of names, and spared no efforts to induce others to invoke her intercession in their needs of body and soul. Often he would say in his soft, penetrating voice which drew all hearts to him: "My children, St. Philomena has great power with God, and she has, moreover, a kind heart; let us pray to her with confidence. Her virginity and generosity in embracing her heroic martyrdom have rendered her so agreeable to God that He will never refuse her any-

thing that she asks for us.” It is said that *he did everything for her, and she did everything for him.*

The Cure first came to know of the wonderful power of St. Philomena through a friend of his, Pauline Jaricot, the foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, who in 1835 had been miraculously cured of a hopeless malady through the intercession of St. Philomena. Miss Jaricot offered him a part of the precious relics of the saint which she had obtained from the shrine at Mugnano, and the Cure received them with intense joy. At once he set to work to have a chapel erected in his church at Ars to enshrine them. The spot soon became the scene of innumerable cures, conversions and miracles.

Burning with intense love for the little saint, he chose her as his special heavenly patroness, and dedicated himself to her by vow. In season and out of season he spoke of her and recommended novenas to her for the countless intentions of every kind which people referred to him. He earnestly admonished the sick to pray to Saint Philomena. He would bless them and join them in the novenas he had instructed them

to say, but always impressed on them that all cures were due to the little saint, and that after God it was to her that all gratitude was owing.

Thousands of people came to the chapel of Ars on pilgrimage for the purpose of invoking the aid of St. Philomena in their necessities and trials. Tangible evidence of the favors obtained, the miracles worked, the conversions wrought, the prayers answered, was to be seen in the ex-voto offerings of every type which the grateful recipients of the favors placed at St. Philomena's shrine.

Due to the fervor of the Cure's devotion to St. Philomena, and the numerous cures and favors obtained through her intercession, all France soon rang with her name. Every diocese had altars and chapels or churches dedicated to her. But devotion to her was not confined to France. Kings, queens, cardinals, bishops, priests, and a vast multitude of religious and faithful of all climes claimed her as a heavenly patroness. Churches were also erected in her honor in mission countries such as China, Kurdistan, Africa, and India. In other countries, such as our own, many

churches have pictures and statues of her.

Nor was St. John Vianney the only "saint" so-called, who cultivated devotion to St. Philomena. We find St. Madeleine Sophia Barat, foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart; Blessed Peter Chanel, the first martyr of Oceania; Blessed Peter Julian Eymard, founder of the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament; and the Ven. M. DuPont, the "Holy Man of Tours," all tenderly devoted to her. Many Popes, too, since the authorization of her cultus by Pope Gregory XVI, have paid her high veneration.

Discovery of Her Relics

Little, indeed, is known historically of St. Philomena previous to her glorious martyrdom, and even that little is without authentic foundation. Her real history commences when her blessed remains were found after having rested in the obscurity of the Catacomb of St. Priscilla for some seventeen hundred years. But God is wonderful in His saints, and St. Philomena strikingly exemplifies this oft-repeated truth. After allowing her name and memory to be buried with her earthly remains

for centuries, He suddenly brought the attention of mankind to this little maiden-martyr, and now works astounding prodigies in her name, as if wishing to show that He wills in this way to recompense the long time He allowed her to remain in obscurity.

According to a widely accepted account, St. Philomena's relics were unearthed at the beginning of the 19th century. On May 24, 1802, during the excavations which are continually being made in the Roman Catacombs, an earthen tomb was brought to light. Three tiles, set together, closed the entrance, and on them was an inscription which seemed to be: LUMENA PAXTE CUM FI. The letters were in red paint and surrounded with Christian symbols. After a little study it was evident that these tiles had been disarranged, either because they were put in place in too great haste, or because someone not too familiar with Latin had laid them in the wrong order. For, properly arranged, they read: "PAX TECUM FILUMENA!—Peace be with thee, Philomena!"

When, on the following day, the stone slabs were removed, there was found with-

in the burial place a thin, half-broken vase, whose inner wall was covered with what appeared to be congealed blood. It was undoubtedly blood which had been collected at the death of the martyr, according to the custom of the Christians during the persecutions, and placed with the remains as a testimonial to her death by martyrdom. This blood was loosened from the broken pieces of the vase to which it adhered, and carefully placed in a crystal urn. Those present, among whom were men of great learning, were amazed to see that these little particles of blood, as soon as they fell into the urn, glittered like burnished gold or silver, or shone like diamonds and precious jewels, or, again, were resplendent in all colors of the rainbow. This extraordinary phenomenon continues to the present day.

Another remarkable feature with regard to the blood is the fact that sometimes it takes the form of black earth. This appears to denote the unworthiness of those who are venerating it. One such instance was that of a priest who had lived unworthy of his sacred calling. When he kissed the reliquary the blood became very

dark. It took on its usual appearance at his departure.

Insignia on the Tomb of the Saint

Cut on the tomb of the saint were the emblems of a *lily* and a *palm*, to indicate her virginity and her martyrdom. There were also an anchor, a scourge, and three arrows, two pointing in opposite directions, and one with a curved line upon it, probably signifying fire, and intended to symbolize the different torments which the martyr endured in testimony of her faith in and love of Jesus Christ.

The story of St. Philomena's life is regarded as merely legendary. The reported facts are claimed to be based on private revelations made by the saint in 1836 to three different persons in answer to the prayers of many of St. Philomena's clients to let them know who she was and how she met martyrdom. These favored persons were a young artist of good morals and pious life, a zealous priest, and a devout nun of Naples, the Ven. Mother Mary Louisa of Jesus.

While the Holy See does not guarantee the authenticity of the purported revela-

tions, the Holy Office gave its sanction to their dissemination on December 21, 1883. This means that the Church in no wise condemns the story, which may be accepted at its worth. But the supposed details are comparatively unimportant in the light of the uncontested and positive miracles which prove that there is a saint who responds to the name of Philomena, and whose influence with Almighty God is very great. Hence it seems more prudent to omit what may be legendary and dwell at greater length on known facts.

Exhumation and Translation of Her Holy Remains

The relics of the saint having been exhumed, they were left in Rome until 1805. At that time Canon Francis de Lucia of Mugnano, a small town near Naples, visited the Eternal City. He was filled with the ardent desire of procuring the relics of some martyred saint for his private chapel. Since the Bishop of Potenza, whom he had accompanied to Rome, supported his petition, Canon Francis de Lucia was allowed to visit the Treasury of Relics, a large hall where the exhumed remains of several

saints were preserved. On pausing before the relics of St. Philomena, he was suddenly filled with an unaccountable spiritual joy, and at once begged for them. It was with some difficulty that the relics were finally consigned to him, since it was contrary to custom to bestow such treasures on a simple priest. Through the negotiations of a friend, the body of another saint was at first given him, which he accepted with reluctance. In the meantime, Canon de Lucia became very ill. He prayed to Philomena and was instantaneously cured. He renewed his attempts to procure her relics, and, shortly after, the insurmountable difficulties to his possessing them were overcome, whereupon he had them taken to Naples. The travellers lodged in the house of a good friend in that city. Here the relics were encased in a statue of the saint, especially made for the purpose, and this in turn was placed in a wooden casket. Soon many miracles took place. Lady Angela Rose, the mistress of the house, had suffered twelve years from an incurable disease. She begged the saint's intercession and was instantly healed. Others too obtained wonderful cures.

Transfer of the Relics to Mugnano

On the 10th of August, 1805, the relics of the saint were transferred to Mugnano, a hill town near Naples and the home of Canon de Lucia. Continual miracles of every kind accompanied this transfer. The day before their arrival, at the prayer of the inhabitants, a plentiful rain refreshed the fields and meadows of Mugnano after a long season of drought. Lord Michael Ulpicella, a lawyer who had not been able to leave his room for six weeks, had himself carried to the relics and returned home completely cured. A lady of rank had a cancerous ulcer on her hand which required an operation. A relic of the saint was brought to her. In the evening she placed it on the wound. The following morning when the surgeon arrived to operate, he found to his surprise that the wound had disappeared.

St. Philomena's shrine at Mugnano became the scene of the most marvelous prodigies. Among these, as mentioned earlier, was the cure of Pauline Jaricot, which is known as the "Great Miracle of Mugnano." It was this cure which, after

a long and mature deliberation, led to the formal approval of the cult of St. Philomena by Pope Gregory XVI, who declared it a first class miracle. The Pope in his decree called the saint "the Thaumaturga (Wonderworker) of the Nineteenth Century." This title, as thousands attest, she deserves no less in our own day, for her miracles are as numerous and as brilliant as ever.

The Great Miracle of Mugnano

Pauline Marie Jaricot was the favorite daughter of wealthy French parents, from whom she inherited a vast fortune. Her beauty was striking and singled her out in the most fashionable gatherings as the object of admiration. She was, moreover, clever, bright and gay, gifted with an attractive personality and possessed of a generous, effusive nature. Notwithstanding the allurements of pleasure and flattering admirers, Pauline's heart was turned to things of the spirit rather than to things of the world though the combat between the things of God and the call of the world was long and fierce. Grace, however, triumphed, and Pauline will be re-

membered for all time as the foundress of three important modern associations. Two of these render great financial assistance to the missions, thereby yearly enriching the Church by gathering into it many abandoned souls, and the third gains many more souls by fostering its inner life. These Associations are, first, the *Living Rosary* the fruits of which are incalculable. Second, the *Society for the Propagation of the Faith*, which in an incredibly short time she placed on so firm a basis that new life and vigor were given to the existing missions and the mission apostolate was extended to a wider field. And third, the *Association of the Holy Childhood*, which annually rescues countless infants from the degradation of paganism. Though not the sole foundress of the latter, she played an important part in its establishment.

Although Pauline had previously suffered from the ailment which was the matter of her cure, it was in March, 1835, that the disease showed unmistakable signs of becoming greatly aggravated. Her malady affected her heart, and in proportion as it increased, the palpitations became so vio-

lent that they could be heard at a distance and caused her unspeakable agony. A slight movement or change of position was sufficient to send the blood rushing so violently back to her heart that she almost suffocated. Her breathing seemed to cease and her pulse became imperceptible. Drastic remedies had to be applied to restore her. The abnormal dilation of her heart compressed the lungs, making her breathing a torture. In a part of her chest a cavity had been gradually formed by the violent palpitations, and when she attempted to swallow food, it would lodge there, causing still greater danger of suffocation. The doctors made two openings in her side in a vain effort to check the progress of the disease. In consequence she was reduced to such a state that it seemed death was not far off.

During several years of torture, only short intervals of relief had been accorded. One was that which followed a novena to St. Philomena, soon after she had learned of her power. At the mere mention of the saint's name, Pauline experienced intense joy, and was filled with a longing to visit her shrine. But such a thing seemed im-

possible, for the sanctuary was at a great distance from France and Pauline was unable to bear the least fatigue. Acting under a strong inspiration, however, she attempted a journey to the Sanctuary of the Sacred Heart at Paray-le-monial, after eliciting from her doctor the information that her state was so desperate that nothing she could do mattered much one way or the other. The members of the Living Rosary were praying for her, and by God's Providence, and contrary to the expectations of all, she survived the trip. Then she said to herself, "This first journey did not kill me, so let me go to Rome and get the Holy Father's blessing." This was the ambition of her life.

A journey to Rome meant traveling by coach over the Alps, through wild and abandoned stretches of territory—a journey that was most wearisome and full of dangers even for those in a normal state of health. But Pauline set out. The pains she endured were excruciating. At Cambery, her courage almost gave out, and she resigned herself to die far from home and far from the Vicar of Christ. For two days she was unconscious. The pupils in

the convent-school of that town made a novena to St. Philomena for her recovery. At its conclusion, she was much better and continued her journey. The snow was deep and progress was slow. On the summit of Mt. Cenis, France, a pass between the French and Italian Alps, such a glorious view burst upon the gaze of the travelers that they stopped to contemplate it. Suddenly a beautiful child appeared—no one knew whence. He approached the carriage, smiled sweetly on Pauline, gave her a beautiful white rose, which exhaled a delightful perfume, and then disappeared. The guides had never seen the child before. They likewise declared that no such flowers were to be found in those regions of Alpine snow. To Pauline this strange apparition and gift proved a great consolation.

The invalid suffered a serious relapse in Loretto, Italy, but after a few days rallied and resumed her journey. She arrived in Rome in an almost unconscious state. The nuns of the Sacred Heart received her with great commiseration. Her weakness was now so extreme that it was impossible for her to leave the convent.

It seemed that after such a long and difficult journey, she was not to realize her aim of obtaining the blessing of the Pope.

But the holy Mother of God and St. Philomena did not forsake her. Her arrival in Rome was reported to the Holy Father, Pope Gregory XVI, who, being informed of her state, resolved to go in person to visit this young woman who had done so much for Holy Church. This was truly an extraordinary honor, and likewise an unspeakable consolation to Miss Jaricot. The Holy Father was most kind and gracious. He thanked her repeatedly for her work in behalf of the Christian religion, and blessed her over and over. He asked her to pray for him when she got to heaven, and Pauline promised. Then she asked: "Holy Father, if I come back well from my visit to Mugnano, and go on foot to the Vatican, will Your Holiness deign to proceed without delay with the final inquiry into the Cause of St. Philomena?"

"Yes, yes, my daughter," replied the Pope, "for that indeed would be a miracle of the first class." Turning then to the Superior of the Sacred Heart nuns, the

Holy Father continued in Italian: "How ill our daughter is! She seems to me as if she had come forth from the grave. We shall never see her again. She will *never* return."

Pauline understood, but only smiled confidently. The Pope blessed her anew before taking his departure, and turning to Cardinal Lambruscini, who had accompanied him, bade him pray for her and grant her all the indulgences possible.

It was August and exceedingly hot. The party set out for Mugnano, traveling by night to avoid the great heat of the day. They arrived at Mugnano on the eve of the feast of St. Philomena. Vast crowds had assembled to celebrate the feast. When they learned who Pauline was and what was her purpose in coming, they were greatly excited. They cried out, "Saint Philomena, you must cure her! She has done so much for God and for the Madonna, you *must* cure her!" Then knocking on the saint's shrine, they repeated, in seeming threats: "Do you hear, Saint Philomena! You must cure her, or we will invoke you no more!" Their noise almost deafened Pauline.

The next morning, the feast of Saint Philomena, Pauline received Holy Communion near the shrine of the saint's relics. She suffered frightful pains all through her body, and her heart beat so violently that she fainted. The crowds thought that death had taken her, and so loud was their outcry that those who were with Pauline attempted to take up the invalid chair on which she was lying and carry it out of the church. But she recovered consciousness sufficiently to make a sign to leave her near the relics. Suddenly a flood of hot tears burst from her eyes, color came back to her cheeks, a healthy glow spread over her benumbed limbs. Her soul was filled with celestial joy, and she thought she was about to leave this earth for heaven. But it was not death. Philomena had cured her! She was still to live many years to toil for God and His Church!

Pauline, certain of her cure, remained silent for a few moments lest the enthusiasm of the crowd be too vociferous. But the Superior of the convent, surmizing the truth, ordered all the bells to peal in announcement of the miracle. The people were frantic with joy, and shouted over

and over: "Live, St. Philomena! Live, our dear saint! Live, the good French lady!"

Pauline lingered for some days at the shrine in thanksgiving, and when at length she departed, she took with her a large relic of St. Philomena, encased in a life-sized statue of the saint. This was clothed in royal robes and given the place of honor in the carriage. As Pauline made her way back to Rome, large crowds gathered in the various stopping places and shouted: "A miracle! A miracle!"

Pauline had not informed the Holy Father of her cure, the more to enjoy his surprise when she should present herself before him. All in the Vatican who had heard of her were astounded on learning of her cure. The Pope, above all, was struck with amazement on seeing her before him in perfect health. His Holiness would not have believed the reality, had he not seen her with his own eyes. At her request he granted the privilege of building a chapel in honor of St. Philomena. In order to investigate the miracle thoroughly, the Pope commanded Pauline to remain in Rome for a year, during which time he conferred on her many privileges. At

the end of the year, Pauline returned with His blessing to Fourviere, France.

Veneration of St. Philomena Formally Approved

The Church's solemn sanction of the veneration of St. Philomena was formally given by Pope Gregory XVI, after the Sacred Congregation of Rites had thoroughly investigated the case, and after the reputed miracles had been attested and proved. The Pope was himself a witness of the "Great Miracle of Mugnano," the cure of Pauline Jaricot, as we have seen. Though profoundly touched by what he himself declared "a miracle of the first class," he in nowise relaxed the rigorous laws of the Roman tribunals. He took immediate steps, however, as he had promised Miss Jaricot, that a thorough study should be made by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and the Cause of the saint begun. All difficulties and doubts standing in the way of the Church's approval were resolved after a careful sifting of evidence by the keenest experts. Only after protracted examination did the Sacred Congregation give a favorable report authoriz-

ing devotion to the saint. The Holy Father, however, notwithstanding his own love and personal devotion to the saint, waited and prayed two years more before making the final proclamation allowing her the honors of the altar.

The principal feast of St. Philomena is kept on August 11th. It was formerly observed on August 10th, the day of her martyrdom and of the translation of her relics to Mugnano, but the Church has changed it to the 11th, out of respect for Saint Lawrence, whose feast is celebrated on the 10th throughout the entire world. In addition to this, there are two other feasts in her honor, namely, the Finding of her Relics, May 25th, and the feast of her Patronage, which occurs on the Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension.

The Shrine at Mugnano

The principal shrine of St. Philomena is at Mugnano, Italy.* The bones of the saint have been placed in a waxen figure which rests in a magnificent case, the front of which consists of a crystal plate,

*Sanctuary of St. Philomena, Mugnano de Cardinale, Avelino, Naples, Italy.

allowing visitors to see the image clearly. This shrine is on the left side of the church and in front of the chapel where the blood of the saint is preserved. The figure is clothed in silken robes. On one finger is seen a very large gold ring, set with a giant topaz, one of several gifts of Pope Pius X to the saint.

The image, like the blood, undergoes marvelous transformations, which are witnessed by large numbers of visitors and pilgrims. Indeed, it is in very truth a "miraculous" image, as is apparent even from the fact that when the statue was first made, it was anything but a work of art, whereas now it is truly beautiful. At first the figure was clumsy, and the features of the face coarse and somewhat repelling. Moreover, the ebony case which was made for the image proved unfortunately to be too short. As a consequence, the figure, when placed in it, lay in an unbecoming and ungainly position. Nevertheless, the case was closed and sealed, and the key was taken to Naples for safe-keeping. The 29th of September, 1805, was fixed as the day on which the case should be placed in the altar prepared for

it in the church of Mugnano. Great was the amazement of all when it was noticed that the figure had taken on a more graceful position and form. Still more wonderful, the face had become beautiful and now wore a pleasing smile.

Another remarkable circumstance was noted about twenty years later, when a new and more beautiful case was made for the image. The hair became more abundant, and several times the eyes opened, a fact vouched for by many witnesses. The statue also changed its position somewhat, and even grew in length to fit the new shrine, as it were. No interference from outside agencies could have been possible, since the figure rested within a wall, closed by a thick glass plate, and locked with three keys, which were held by different authorities.

A priest-visitor to the shrine testified regarding the many strange occurrences which have taken place there: "Never have I seen a sanctuary so full of wonders, so alive with the atmosphere of the supernatural, where one sees heavenly manifestations so palpably as at Mugnano. I do not mean to claim greater things for

it than for other sanctuaries; but as the little saint's special prerogative seems to consist in her amazing power of miracles and in the extraordinary abundance of favors which she dispenses to her clients, so her sanctuary is specially distinguished for the constant, visible, and striking signs which the Almighty is pleased to work in it."

Other Favored Sanctuaries

The original church at Mugnano, in which the relics of St. Philomena were first enshrined, Our Lady of Grace, was rebuilt between 1853 and 1856, since it had become unworthy of Our Lady and the holy martyr. The splendid church which replaced it was financed by the contributions of the royal family of Naples and the alms of the countless pilgrims who visited it. Philomena's chapel is beautifully constructed of marble agate and porphyry.

Pauline Jaricot and the Cure of Ars were the chief instruments used by Divine Providence for spreading devotion to St. Philomena in Europe. The thousands of visitors who came to Ars learned the devotion from the saintly Cure, and returned to their respective countries to foster it.

Thus a gentleman who had received a wonderful favor from the saint placed an image in the church of St. Gervais, Paris, as an expression of his gratitude. The faithful began to venerate it, and such amazing favors were obtained that it soon became necessary to dedicate one of the side chapels to the saint. Public devotions were begun in her honor and a novena conducted before her feast. Cures and conversions, temporal and spiritual blessings, were received in abundance. The confidence of the people in their saint, and her gracious response, may be seen in the fact that during the upheaval of revolutionary days, terrible outrages were perpetrated in the vicinity of the church, and several efforts were made to destroy it; but the enemies were always foiled in their nefarious attempt and St. Philomena manifested her marvelous protection. At a time when all the buildings in the district were one great conflagration, St. Gervais alone stood intact.

At this shrine, thirteen lamps are kept burning day and night to commemorate the thirteen years of St. Philomena's life.

Other famous shrines are to be found

at Sempigny and Thivet, in France. The wonders wrought in some of these sanctuaries are so marvelous as almost to rival those of Mugnano.

Her Shrine in England

St. Philomena also has a shrine at Pinner, England, as a result of "Irish" devotion to the saint, which can be said to form a strong link between the two countries. Pinner is a small countryplace, near London. In December, 1913, Father John Caulfield was sent by his Archbishop to establish a parish there. Realizing that this would be no easy task, the priest put the matter into the hands of St. Philomena. He had conceived a fervent devotion to her following his ordination, at which time his mother had given him a book of the Cure of Ars and St. Philomena, and he had found her to be a good friend. There were only about twenty Catholics in the district and little could be expected in the way of money towards building a church. An empty house had been put at the priest's disposal to serve as a rectory. Here he fitted up a room for a chapel and in February, 1914, the Holy Sacrifice was

offered in Pinner for the first time since the Reformation. A few months later World War I broke out and the handful of parishioners began to thin out. Yet the confident and zealous pastor talked about building a church, for with the help of Saint Philomena he did not consider the lack of money an obstacle.

A year and eight months later the church of St. Luke was blessed by the Cardinal Archbishop. By 1923 the debt was entirely paid off, and an extension was opened in another part of the town. However, the old rectory was situated a mile from the church, so the priest had to walk this distance every morning for Holy Mass. He asked St. Philomena to get him a new rectory. He had it by August 1926, a gift in honor of his Silver Jubilee, which he was to celebrate in a few months. On the jubilee he was presented with a fine statue of the saint by an Irish friend. In 1930 a relic of the saint was obtained and on August 9, 1931, feast of St. John Vianney, a beautiful shrine-chapel with a magnificent altar was opened, with everything free from debt. The Holy Father sent a special blessing, and the High Commis-

sioner of the Irish Free State, an old parishioner of Pinner, a letter of congratulation. But St. Philomena was not content yet. In 1932, relics of St. John Vianney were placed in her chapel and his statue erected. Outdoor processions with the saint's relics are a noteworthy event in Pinner, and are participated in by crowds.

Devotion of the Popes to St. Philomena

A most significant feature in St. Philomena's cultus is the remarkable devotion that the Popes have shown to the little wonderworker. Since the finding of her relics, Pope after Pope has shown her public honor and fostered a personal devotion to her. It is indeed remarkable that the highest eulogiums of the saint have come from the Sovereign Pontiffs. Pope Leo XII (1823-1829), who preceded Pope Gregory XVI in the Pontifical Chair, expressed the greatest admiration for this unknown child-saint, and gladly gave his permission for the erection of altars and churches in her honor.

Pope Gregory XVI (1831-46), who authorized her public veneration, showed his esteem and devotion to the saint by

giving her the title of "Patroness of the Living Rosary," and also donating a magnificent gold and silver lamp to her sanctuary in Mugnano.

Of all the Popes, however, Pope Pius IX cultivated the most special devotion to the virgin-martyr. As Archbishop of Spoleto he was one of her devout clients and did much to spread her veneration. Later in life, when Archbishop of Imola, he fell very ill and his cure was attributed to St. Philomena's intercession. When raised to the throne of St. Peter, this Pope availed himself of his power to bestow still greater lustre on the saint by going on a pilgrimage to her shrine at Mugnano, where he offered Holy Mass on the altar of the saint, and afterwards publicly venerated her relics. In 1849, he named her "Patroness of the Children of Mary." A Mass and proper Office in her honor were approved by him in 1834 or 1835. This is an extraordinary privilege granted to comparatively few saints. It seems, however, that the Mass and Office have since been suppressed, probably in the reform of the Missal and Breviary in 1913. Where the feast is observed, as in the Dio-

A Powerful Helper in Every Need



Someone has remarked that the greatest miracle in connection with St. Philomena is the rapidity with which devotion to her has spread throughout the world. Churches, religious orders, orphanages, hospitals, societies, all have taken her as a patroness. There is no class she does not help in a particular way. Her patronage is wonderful in the needs, spiritual or temporal, of priests, monks and nuns. She loves children with a love of predilection. To the sick, she is ever compassionate. Mothers of families find her an exceptionally solicitous aid. She obtains the blessing of happy births. She is a saint who particularly loves the foreign missions and the making of converts. Many owe to her the grace of returning to the sacraments, and of a happy death. She obtains help for the scrupulous, and money and food for the poor. She finds financial assistance for those who are burdened with debts, and gives success in business undertakings. She is a patroness of working

people. In short she consoles and assists *in every kind of difficulty.*

St. Philomena, Patroness of Schools

The cause of religious education is very dear to St. Philomena. At the present time when there is so much controversy over school questions, Saint Philomena ought to be invoked earnestly and assiduously by Catholic parents, teachers and children, that their rights may be safeguarded, that Catholic schools may continue to function without hindrance and embarrassment from anti-religious agencies, and that the pupils may receive their just allotment of public benefits. In countless instances in times of persecution in other countries, the saint has come to the rescue and saved schools from the relentless attacks of anti-clerical officials whose sole aim was to destroy religious influence. Principals do well to place their schools under her protection and burn a votive light before her image to ask her assistance.

Boys and girls learn quickly to love this little saint, and she bestows on them many marks of her love. Especially is this true if they receive her name in baptism

or take it in confirmation. In the matter of examinations, St. Philomena's help is often experienced by unhopèd for success.

Another way in which her power is manifested is in bringing postulants to convents. Often she has been invoked with gratifying results by convents where shortage of vocations was experienced.

The Secret of Philomena's Power

St. Philomena does not desire honor for herself, but seeks only to give glory to God in whatever way she can draw souls to Him. In a purported revelation to Mother Mary Louisa of Jesus, when the nun was kneeling in front of the altar in the church and thinking how much Saint Philomena suffered, the little martyr said to her in the depths of her soul: "Meditate on the Passion of the Redeemer and compassionate Him alone who suffered intensely. I only suffered a little because Jesus Christ had suffered for us."

The nun on another occasion asked the saint in prayer to thank God for a grace she had obtained through her intercession. Philomena promised to do so, and added that Mother Mary Louisa should in turn

recite the *Gloria Patri* three times in thanksgiving to the Blessed Trinity for the graces given to her during the time of her martyrdom, by which the Lord made Himself her strong shield and caused her to be rapt in ecstasy for three hours so that she did not know what torments the tyrants sought to inflict upon her until the clamor of the people brought her back to her senses, and she was forthwith beheaded.

When Mother Mary Louisa of Jesus asked St. Philomena to teach her some devotion that would be acceptable to her, she heard an interior voice saying: "Recite the *Creed* three times: once for the perseverance of the just, once for the conversion of sinners, and a third time for the return of heretics and infidels to the Faith."

Another time St. Philomena told Mother Mary Louisa that she had been preserved from death in the midst of tortures because she was not satisfied in offering up *one* single life, but desired to have a *thousand* lives to offer to her Spouse, and He had now given her as much glory as if she had really done so.

St. Philomena also explained the wonderful power of her intercession when

asked what was the difference between the *essential* glory of the saints and their *accidental* glory. "We realize," said Philomena, "that we are before God as so many vases of honor, some larger, some smaller. The vases of our souls dilate according to the desire to love God that we had when we were on earth. As soon as we are brought into the presence of God, each vase is filled to the brim with knowledge and love of Him. This plenitude is what is called *essential* glory, and this, through all eternity, cannot be enlarged or diminished. God Himself can put in the hearts of the faithful to pray to Him through His saints; and then graces descend from Him like limpid water, falling on our vases. But being already full, they cannot contain it, wherefore the water splashes from them, and falls down on the earth and on you who are pilgrims. This glory is called *accidental*, and can increase or diminish. But in either case we lose nothing. *Always we give glory to God.*"

"To Philomena Nothing Is Refused"

One night, Mother Mary Louisa had a vision in which she saw Our Lady and St.

Philomena. The latter confided her to the protection of the Mother of God, saying: "Stand firm beneath the protection of Mary." Again she saw Our Lady, clothed with the sun, and St. Philomena laying down her crown before her throne, saying: "Lady of Heaven, I am come to ask grace," whereupon she solicited more than thirty graces for different persons. Our Lady replied: *To Philomena nothing is refused.* St. Gabriel wrote down the concessions with a golden pen. Then the saint turned to Mother Mary Louisa and asked: "Have you seen how this was done? *I asked the graces from Mary, and through Mary they were granted to me.*"

These revelations have received the Imprimatur of the Holy Office, which means simply that the Church has pronounced them free from anything contrary to the Faith. It does not pronounce further. Everyone is left quite free to accept them at their worth or reject them. But surely the speedy and marvelous answers everywhere to prayers which have been offered in her honor, and by all classes of persons, seem to verify the words: *To Philomena nothing is refused!*

Practices of Devotion to St. Philomena



St. Philomena's Cord

Of the several forms which devotion to St. Philomena has taken, perhaps the one that is best known and most used is that of her *Cord*. The use of her Cord has been from the beginning a favorite way of honoring the saint and invoking her protection. The holy Cure of Ars himself blessed and distributed a great many. The cord is white and red, and may be made either of linen, woolen, or cotton threads, so interwoven as to give an almost equal preponderance to both colors. The white color represents virginity, the red, martyrdom.

The Cord has been approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites and is enriched with indulgences. The formula of blessing is found in the Roman Ritual, and the needful faculties may be obtained from the Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul, Rue Dantzig, Paris-Vaugirand, France. It is usually worn under the outer clothing as a

girdle. No ceremony is required in conferring it, but it should be blessed. When replacing a worn Cord with a new one, this too should be blessed. Wearers of the Cord ought to have the intention of honoring Saint Philomena to the best of their ability in order to merit protection against evils of soul and body, and to obtain through her prayers perfect chastity and the spirit of faith. It is also recommended that the following prayer be said daily:—

O St. Philomena, Virgin and Martyr, pray for us that through thy powerful intercession we may obtain that purity of mind and heart which leads to the perfect love of God. Amen.

The Cord of St. Philomena has been the instrument of innumerable favors. It is used by the sick, and is a protection against accidents and evils of every kind. Those suffering from temporal trials, or spiritual temptations, have found it a wonderful help. It is especially recommended that children be given the Cord, for it is a marvelous preservation from evil in the many mishaps which threaten them.

But the Cord is worn especially as a safeguard of the virtue of chastity. St.

Philomena is regarded as a powerful protectress of this virtue because, if the reputed facts of her life be true, her own virginal purity was so outstanding. Hence her clients believe God has given her a special power of assistance to those who are tempted against this virtue.

The legend of her life indicates that she realized the full value of the angelic virtue, having bound herself to it by vow at the tender age of eleven; that she preserved her innocence in spite of the temptations to which she was subjected in a sensuous Greek court at a time when heathenism had full sway, and when the immodest images of the Greek gods and most shameful scandals everywhere shocked the modesty of innocent eyes and blighted the purity of innocent hearts. According to the same legend, a mighty emperor offered her a kingdom and a crown. The anger of a wrathful father, the tears of an affectionate mother, stormed her heart; she stood alone, abandoned and forsaken. But she trusted her Divine Bridegroom, she remained faithful to her vow, and conquered. The Lord was her strength in the combat and He will likewise come to

the assistance of all who invoke her aid in the midst of temptations; He will glorify again her name and her virtue. Let those who find themselves carried away by passion, and tempted to disregard the laws of Holy Mother Church by entering into marriages which are sinful in the eyes of God and man, implore St. Philomena's kindly assistance. She has conquered in similar circumstances. Grace came to her aid, and the enemy will be put to flight again through her intercession if it is confidently asked and the fear of God allowed to rule the mind and will.

Plenary Indulgences of the Cord of Saint Philomena

1. On the day on which the Cord is worn for the first time.

2. On the 25th of May, the anniversary of the opening of St. Philomena's tomb in the Catacomb of St. Priscilla.

3. On August 11, her proper feast.

4. On December 15, the anniversary of the approbation of the Cord by the Holy See.

5. At the moment of death, under the ordinary conditions.

With the exception of the last, it is necessary for gaining the above indulgences, to go to confession, receive Holy Communion, make a visit to some church and there pray for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff.

Partial Indulgences

Seven years and seven quarantines (period of 40 days) on each of the four Sundays which immediately follow the Ember Days. To gain these partial indulgences, one ought to be at least contrite of heart, and to visit some church and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.

The Medal of St. Philomena

Many clients place great confidence in the medal of the saint. Wonderful favors have been obtained through faith in its efficacy.

Novena Prayers

Novenas made in a spirit of faith and confidence, using any form of prayers such as those given farther on in this booklet, have proved wonderfully efficacious. It is well during a novena to assist at Holy Mass and receive Holy Communion in honor of the saint, especially when the intention is very urgent and important.

Other Means

Those who spread devotion to the saint have found this, too, an excellent means to win her favor. This can easily be done by acquainting others with this booklet, which can be procured from the address on the cover; also by distributing leaflets and pictures.

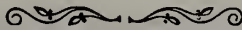
The “Little Crown” of St. Philomena

The “Little Crown” of St. Philomena is a popular way of asking her help. This is prayed by saying first the *Apostles’ Creed* to ask for the grace of faith. Then three *Our Fathers* are said, in honor of each of the three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity, in thanksgiving for the graces bestowed on St. Philomena, and for all favors obtained through her intercession. The following prayer is then repeated thirteen times to commemorate the thirteen years that St. Philomena is supposed to have spent on earth:—

Hail, O holy St. Philomena, whom I acknowledge, after Mary, as my advocate with the Divine Spouse, intercede for me now and at the hour of my death.

St. Philomena, beloved daughter of Jesus and Mary, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

Hail, O illustrious St. Philomena, who didst so courageously shed thy blood for Christ. I bless the Lord for all the graces He bestowed upon thee during thy life, and especially at thy death. I praise and glorify Him for the honor and power with which He has crowned thee, and I beg thee to obtain for me from God the graces I ask through thy intercession. Amen.



In praying the "Little Crown," it is suggested that one ask for the grace of purity in honor of the virginity of the saint, who suffered death rather than tarnish this virtue; and secondly, for courage and fortitude to be faithful to the duties of a Christian, even as she persevered unto death.



Prayers in Honor of St. Philomena



For Victory over Temptations

O God, who dost sustain us by the merits and example of the blessed Philomena, Virgin and Martyr, mercifully grant that, strengthened in faith and charity, we may never be separated from Thee by any temptation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

For a Special Request

(Suitable for a novena.)

Illustrious Virgin and Martyr, Saint Philomena, behold me prostrate in spirit before the throne on which it has pleased the Most Holy Trinity to place thee. Full of confidence in thy protection, I beseech thee to intercede for me with God. From the height of thy heavenly country, deign to cast a look upon thy humble servant. Spouse of Jesus Christ, console me in my troubles, strengthen me in temptations, protect me in the dangers which surround me on every side; obtain all the graces neces-

sary for me, especially (*here mention your particular intention*), and, above all, assist me at my death. Amen.

For Growth in Virtues

O glorious Virgin! whose glory God has been pleased to make known by singular miracles, we address ourselves to thee with entire confidence. Obtain for us that, following thy example, we may fight courageously against whatever is opposed to the reign of Jesus Christ in our hearts; that we may adorn our souls with virtues like thine, particularly with that angelical purity of which thou art the perfect model; and that, inflamed with the love of Jesus, we may continually walk in the way which He has marked out, to the end that we may one day partake of thy everlasting happiness. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, lives and reigns one God in perfect Trinity, forever and ever. Amen.

Prayers for Purity

O glorious St. Philomena, who, animated by a burning love for Jesus our Saviour, didst shine in Holy Church by the

splendor of perfect virginity and the practice of the most heroic virtues, obtain for us of thy Divine Spouse the grace to keep ever unsullied the precious treasure of chastity and to practice with generosity the virtues of our state, that having, after thy example, walked in His footsteps during our life on earth, we may, with thee, rejoice in His glory through all eternity.

St. Philomena, happy virgin, adorned with all the charm of innocence, and beautified, besides, with the purple of martyrdom, obtain for us the grace to know how to suffer all, and to sacrifice all in order to be faithful to God till death, and possess Him eternally in paradise.

For Detachment from Earthly Goods

O St. Philomena, faithful Virgin and glorious Martyr, who so courageously preferred to the visible goods of this world the invisible goods of a holy eternity, obtain for us a lively faith, an ardent charity, and a piety always increasing, in order that, faithfully serving our Lord Jesus Christ during our life, we may merit after our death the happiness to contemplate Him face to face in life eternal. Amen.

Prayer in Affliction

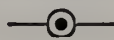
(Suitable for a Novena)

O glorious Virgin and Martyr, beloved of God, blessed Philomena, I heartily rejoice in thy glory, and give thanks to God that He has given thee so much power, for the glory of His Name, for the edification of His Church, and for the honor of the merits of thy life and of thy death. I rejoice to see thee so great, so pure, so faithful to Jesus Christ and to the precepts and counsels of His Gospels, and so munificently rewarded by Him both in heaven and on earth.

Attracted by thy example to the practice of solid virtue, filled with hope at sight of the rewards bestowed on thee, I resolve to imitate thee in the avoidance of all evil, and in the fulfilment of God's holy will. Assist me, O glorious little saint, by thy powerful intercession, and obtain for me especially a perfect purity, a fortitude invincible in all sorts of attacks, a generosity which refuses nothing to God, a love stronger than death for the one true Faith, and a ready and willing obedience to the Holy Catholic Church,

and to our Sovereign Pontiff, the common Father of all the faithful, the Pastor of pastors and of their flocks, the Vicegerent of Jesus Christ throughout the universe.

Besides these favors which I have now asked through thy intercession, O blessed Philomena, I also ask an additional favor which I have the fullest confidence of obtaining through thy powerful intercession (*here mention your request, with simplicity, confidence and humility*). Surely, God, who is so good, and for whom thou hast given up thy life; God, who is so good, and who has bestowed so many gifts and favors upon and through thee; God, who is so good as to have died for me, and to give Himself to me in Holy Communion; God, who is so good as to have revealed the burning love of His Sacred Heart for me, surely He will not refuse to hearken graciously to thy prayers, to my supplications, and even to His own desire to help the afflicted. For this do I hope, while I put all my confidence in God, and in thee, O blessed Philomena. Amen.



Prayer for Those Who Wear the Cord of St. Philomena

O most pure Virgin, glorious Martyr, Saint Philomena, whom God in His eternal power seems to have revealed to the world in these disastrous days of ours in order to revive the faith, sustain the hope, and inflame the charity of Christian hearts, I kneel at thy feet. Deign, O kindest Virgin, to receive my humble prayers, and to obtain for me that strength of soul which made thee resist the most terrible attacks of tribulation and suffering; that ardent love for Jesus which the most fearful sufferings could not extinguish in thy heart. Protect me in all the events of my life, from all dangers, spiritual and temporal. Be present with me also in my last hour, which I commend to thy loving charity with confidence, since in life I love thee and wear thy holy Cord as a mark of my special devotion towards thee, the beloved of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

Prayer for Help in Need

Faithful Virgin and glorious Martyr, who workest so many miracles on behalf of the poor and sorrowing, have pity on

me. Thou knowest the multitude and diversity of my needs. Behold me at thy feet, full of misery, but full of hope. I entreat thy charity, O great saint! Graciously hear me and deign to obtain from God a favorable hearing for the request which I now humbly lay before thee. (*Here specify petition.*) I am firmly convinced that through thy merits, the scorn, the sufferings, and the death thou hast undergone, united to the merits of the Death and Passion of Jesus, thy Spouse, I shall obtain what I ask of thee; and in the joy of my heart I will bless God, who is admirable in His saints. Amen.

Litany of St. Philomena

Composed by St. John Marie Vianney,
Cure of Ars

(For private use)

Lord, have mercy on 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,*
God the Holy Ghost,
Holy Trinity, one God,
Holy Mary, Queen of Virgins,†
St. Philomena,
St. Philomena, filled with abundant graces
from the cradle,
St. Philomena, model of virgins,
St. Philomena, temple of the most perfect
humility,
St. Philomena, victim of the love of Christ,
St. Philomena, example of strength and
perseverance,
St. Philomena, invincible athlete of
chastity,
St. Philomena, mirror of most heroic
virtues,
St. Philomena, firm and intrepid before
torments,
St. Philomena, scourged like thy Divine
Spouse,
St. Philomena, pierced by a shower of
arrows,
St. Philomena, consoled in chains by the
Mother of God,

*Have mercy on us.

†Pray for us.

- St. Philomena, miraculously cured in
prison,*
- St. Philomena, sustained by angels in the
midst of tortures,
- St. Philomena, who didst prefer humilia-
tion and death to the splendor of a
throne,
- St. Philomena, who didst convert the
witnesses of thy martyrdom,
- St. Philomena, who didst weary out the
fury of thy executioners,
- St. Philomena, patroness of the innocent,
- St. Philomena, patroness of youth,
- St. Philomena, refuge of the unfortunate,
- St. Philomena, health of the sick and
infirm,
- St. Philomena, new light of the Church
Militant,
- St. Philomena, who dost confound the
impiety of our age,
- St. Philomena, who dost reanimate the
faith and courage of the faithful,
- St. Philomena, whose name is glorious in
heaven and terrible in hell,
- St. Philomena, illustrious by the most
splendid miracles,
- St. Philomena, powerful with God,

*Pray for us.

St. Philomena, who dost reign in glory,*
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of
the world, *Spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, who takest 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.*

V. Pray for us, St. Philomena,

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

LET US PRAY

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to grant us
the pardon of our sins, by the intercession
of St. Philomena, Virgin and Martyr, who
was always pleasing in Thy sight by her
eminent chastity and by the profession of
every virtue. Amen.



Favors Received



A devout client of St. Philomena's re-
ported that she had been praying for three
months for a special intention without
avail, and being almost in despair of ob-

*Pray for us.

taining it, she turned to St. Philomena. She made a novena, at the end of which the request was granted. She declares that she is convinced of the wonder-working power which the saint possesses, and urges all to take their petitions to her with faith and confidence.

Another lady sent the following testimonial: "My sister was threatened with a grave operation. My husband and I made a special novena to St. Philomena for her recovery. Since she was in a very weak and run-down condition for over two years, her chances for recovery were not very good. The operation proved to be a success, and we feel that we owe this favor to St. Philomena, since everything now points to a complete restoration of her health."

A devout Irish lady was filled with anxiety when looking forward to the birth of her fifth child, since to her great sorrow the four previous children had been stillborn. She confided her trouble to a Good Shepherd nun and asked her to pray for this intention. The nun promised to do so and urged her to invoke St. Philo-

mena's intercession. When the child was born, the mother's joy knew no bounds to find it a beautiful little girl, strong and healthy. In gratitude to St. Philomena she gave it her name.

A religious reported the following favor: "I had a grievous attack of erysipelas, aggravated by other grave complications. My state was desperate and I received the Last Sacraments. St. Philomena was invoked in my favor, and I was blessed with her relic. Immediately the fever, which was 104, fell, so that in a few hours my temperature became normal, and I was pronounced out of danger. I attribute it all to St. Philomena.

A child was at the point of death. The frantic mother implored the two doctors who were present to say that there was some hope, but they told her frankly that there was none and the end was inevitable and near. A few minutes later friends came to the house bringing a relic of St. Philomena. It was placed on the little sufferer, whose face was already covered with the hue of death. Shortly afterwards, the diseased frame showed signs of

returning to life, the eyes opened, the breathing became natural, and the little one began to play with a pet. Once more St. Philomena had proved her power.

A man reports that he had a grave attack of pleurisy, accompanied with severe pains, high fever and irregular pulse. Two and a half pints of liquid had gathered in the pleura and the case was considered grave. He placed on himself a Cord of St. Philomena and prayed with great confidence for her help. Friends, hearing of his serious illness, promised to have a novena of Masses offered for him in honor of St. Philomena, begging the saint to come quickly to his relief. The answer to these prayers was almost immediate. When the doctor had left the previous day, he was much concerned over the case. Upon his return and examination, his amazement was unrestrained. No trace of fever was evident, the pulse had become perfectly normal, and the liquid had disappeared from the pleura. When told of the prayers to St. Philomena, he declared: "Your recovery is clearly miraculous, and it seems to me a very striking answer to prayer."

A seaman reports the following:

“In January I learned that the name of an old shipmate of mine in the Navy, a Protestant, had failed to appear on the promotion list for Captain. He had only one more chance on June 30th, after which he would be obliged to leave the service if he did not get the desired promotion. That would have meant great hardship, indeed a great calamity, for a man with a family, for at his age and with his training, he could not turn to a trade or a profession for his support. He is a man of sterling quality and great ability, but unfortunately with no luck and no influence. Everything seemed against him. There were one hundred forty-five men for promotion, some with powerful political influence, others with a list of brilliant services in their favor. Of these, only ten men would be promoted. I wrote to my friend, who, as mentioned above, was a Protestant. I felt what a state of suspense, almost despair, he must be in. I encouraged him, assuring him I would pray daily to St. Philomena for his success and that I felt *absolutely certain* that

she would hear my poor prayers, for I can truly say she has not yet refused me any favor. In a short time I had a grateful letter announcing that not only had my friend been promoted but he was actually second on the list! How did it happen? St. Philomena could tell if she wished. I want to publish my thanks to the Wonder-worker for this new and striking favor, which I regard as granted to myself.

The last letter from my friend informs me he has just been received into the Church, and that he has received splendid promotion in the Navy.

A woman who had suffered for three years with a disease of the eyes, endured so much pain that she could neither eat nor sleep. The slightest contact with air or light would cause her to scream with pain. The doctor did all in his power to help her, but finally pronounced her case absolutely hopeless. Being devout to Saint Philomena, the poor woman commenced a novena and anointed her eyes with oil from a lamp that had burned before a shrine of the saint. During the novena her sufferings increased in intensity, and continued

until the morning of the ninth day. She had to be helped and guided by her daughter in every step she took in the house. On the last day of the novena, the woman had a Mass celebrated for herself, and after the Mass, on taking off the bandages, she found her eyes had been cured.

Conversions Obtained through Saint Philomena

A man who had not frequented the sacraments for thirty-four years was persuaded by his friends to join in a public novena made before Saint Philomena's feast. On August 10th, the last day of the novena and the feastday of the saint, he made his confession and received Holy Communion. He is most grateful for this favor.

A young man who had been brought up by a good Catholic mother unfortunately fell into evil ways and became addicted to the most shameful vices after being away from home for a short time. His behavior nearly broke his mother's heart. She expostulated with the erring boy, but he paid no heed, and took offense at her loving words of admonition. Thinking he

would have more freedom, he joined the army. His mother persisted in entreating him to make his peace with God, but he sneered at the idea of going to confession and laughed in her face. She had recourse to St. Philomena, and at last, overcome by his mother's tears and entreaties, he yielded to Divine grace. So complete was his conversion that he gave up all his evil companions and entered a monastery where he became a fervent religious.



To Philomena, nothing is refused!



St. Philomena, powerful with God, pray
for us!



All that is contained in this booklet we submit unreservedly to the judgment of the Holy Catholic Church and its infallible Head. If the appellation of "miracle" is used in cases not formally investigated and approved by the Church, they claim no other authority and belief than that which is ordinarily conceded to narratives based merely upon human credence, and in no wise is it intended to pronounce upon their authenticity or supernatural character.

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