



The Little Flower Weekly

A Supplement to the St. Therese Parish Bulletin



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"When I die, I will send down a shower of roses from the heavens. I will spend my Heaven by doing good on earth." -St. Thérèse



RE-OPEN OUR CHURCHES!

Join the March for Faith THIS Saturday, October 10



Our Pastor, Fr. Philip Sullivan, will give the Invocation and will bless all the marchers (at about 10:00 a.m.). Please join him and all the other marchers to show that YOU want to worship INSIDE our churches! ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!



Here are the details:

Where: La Placita Church on Olvera Street, Downtown Los Angeles
When: Saturday, October 10, 2020

Schedule

- Assemble at 9:30 a.m.
- March from 10:00 a.m. to around 12:00 p.m.

Photo of the March for Faith that took place in San Francisco on September 20, 2020, which resulted in the re-opening of the churches there.

Route: Begin at La Placita (Our Lady, Queen of Angels Church, 535 N Main Street/Olvera Street), Los Angeles. From there we will march on the City sidewalks to the lawn and steps of Los Angeles City Hall (between North Main and North Spring Streets). Following the speakers' addresses, we will march back to La Placita along the same route.

What to Bring: Personal water bottles, hats, and face masks.

Why We Are Marching: As citizens of a country founded upon Judeo-Christian principles of faith, we are marching to protest government overreach and to defend our right to the free exercise of our faith guaranteed by the Constitution. The March for Faith is a powerful reminder that the blessings of liberty, including the right to worship, come from God—not from government!

The March for Faith does not endorse any political party. Please wear non-partisan hats and clothing to express your patriotism, love of our Constitution, and respect for the law—but NO Trump or Biden signs, hats, T-shirts or other campaign paraphernalia. You are welcome to carry American flags, prayer books, rosaries or other small devotional items. In the spirit of maintaining a peaceful event, we ask you to stay on city sidewalks and public property and observe all state and local laws on social distancing and personal safety.

Please register for updates at: <https://marchforfaith.org/>

“And the victory that conquers the world is our faith.” 1 John 5:4

SPONSOR A FRIAR OR RUN THE RACE YOURSELF!

GOAL:
\$21,000

Run the race so as to win!

Saint Therese Jog-a-Thon

Saturday, October 17, 11am-1pm, Church Parking Lot



Check in - 11am
Race - 11:30am-noon
Cool down with pizza and drinks - Noon-1pm



SPONSOR A FRIAR!

Or sign up to run against the friars!!!

ALL are welcome to pledge and participate!

Parish and school communities invited to join in Fr. Philip's last race.

I would like to pledge for:



- Fr. Thomas "Roller Koller"!!! Will anyone outrun him?
- Fr. Philip with his swift and famous backwards walk for the **BEST SCHOOL IN THE WORLD!**
- Fr. Albert strolling with the best version of himself.
- Fr. Bernard walking for the Lord.
- Fr. David joyfully walking and jogging and praising God.
- Br. Jason running in faith.
- Fr. Godfrey with incredible speed.
- Fr. Matthias running all the way from San Jose. Will he reach the finish line?



Me - Together with the friars, I will fight the good fight and finish the race. My pledge is included below.

Runner's Name - _____

Address - _____

Phone Number - _____

LAPS COMPLETED:
(Official Use Only)

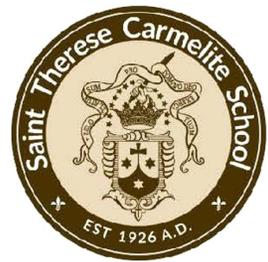
PLEDGER INFORMATION			
Pledger Name	<i>Susie Sample</i>	<i>Elliott Example</i>	
Address	<i>123 St. Alhambra 91801</i>	<i>321 St. Alhambra 91801</i>	
Phone Number	<i>123-456-7890</i>	<i>321-654-9870</i>	
FLAT Pledge OR	\$100		
"PER LAP" Pledge		\$ 10.00 PER LAP	\$ Per Lap
<i>(Office Use Only)</i>			
TOTAL Pledged/DUE	\$100	\$300 (for 30 laps)	

Your pledges are most appreciated!

Return this form with payment to the school office by October 26.

Kindly make checks payable to St. Therese School.

Should you choose "PER LAP" pledge, you will be informed of total amount due. Average number of laps run is 30 laps.



Saint Therese Carmelite School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization; your contribution may be tax deductible according to IRS regulations. Please consult your tax advisor for details pertaining to your donation. Federal Tax ID #951727669

Bio of Our Patroness, St. Therese



St. Thérèse of Lisieux, born Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin, in Alençon, France, on January 2, 1873, and baptized shortly after at the Basilica of Notre-Dame d'Alençon, was a French Carmelite nun who died at the age of 24 on September 30, 1897. Her religious name was Sr. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, but after her death, she became known as "*The Little Flower of Jesus*" or simply "*The Little Flower*".

Thérèse was the ninth and last child of Azelie (Zelie) Guerin, a lacemaker, and Louis Martin, a jeweler and watchmaker. Both her parents were devout Catholics. Louis had tried to become a monk but had been refused because he knew no Latin and couldn't seem to learn it. Zélie, possessed of a strong, active temperament, wished to serve the sick, and had also considered becoming a religious, but the superior of the sisters of the Hotel-Dieu had discouraged her inquiry outright. Disappointed, Zélie learned the trade of lacemaking. She excelled in it and set up her own business on Rue Saint-Blaise at age 22.



Age 8

As a child, Thérèse liked to play at being a nun. One day she went as far as to wish her mother would die; when scolded, she explained that she wanted the happiness of Paradise for her dear mother.

Described as generally a happy child, her mother's humorous letters from this time provide a

vivid picture of the baby Thérèse. In a letter to Pauline when Thérèse was three: "She is intelligent enough, but not nearly so docile as her sister Céline. When she says NO, nothing can make her change, and she can be terribly obstinate. You could keep her down in the cellar all day without getting a yes out of her; she would rather sleep there." Mischievous and impish, she gave joy to her family but she was emotional, too, and often cried. "I hear the baby calling me 'Mama!' on every step as she goes down the stairs. If I don't respond every time, she remains there without going either forward or back."

In 1876, **Zelie Martin** was diagnosed with breast cancer. Feeling the approach of death, she wrote to Pauline in the Spring of 1877, "You and Marie will have no difficulties with Thérèse's upbringing. Her disposition is so



good. She is a chosen spirit." On August 28, 1877, at the age of 45, Zélie Martin died of breast cancer when Thérèse was barely 4 1/2 years old. Her mother's death dealt Thérèse a severe blow and later she would say that the first part of her life stopped that day. She wrote: "Every detail of my mother's illness is still with me, especially her last weeks on earth." Three months after Zélie died, Louis Martin left Alençon, where he had spent his youth and marriage, and moved to Lisieux, where Zelie's brother Isidore Guérin lived with his wife and two daughters. Louis leased a pretty, spacious country house called Les Buissonnets. Thérèse saw the move there as the beginning of the "second period of my life, the most painful of the three: it extends from the age of four-and-a-half to fourteen, the time when I rediscovered my childhood character, and entered into the serious side of life."

In Lisieux, Pauline took on the role of Thérèse's Mama. Thérèse was taught at home until she was eight and a half, and then entered the school kept by the Benedictine nuns of the Abbey of Notre Dame du Pre in Lisieux. Thérèse, taught well and carefully by Marie and Pauline, found herself at the top of the class, except for writing and math. However, because of her young age and high grades, she was bullied. The one who bullied her the most was a girl of fourteen who did poorly at school. Thérèse suffered very much as a result of her sensitivity, and she cried in silence.

Furthermore, the boisterous games at recreation were not to her taste. She preferred to tell stories or look after the little ones in the infants' class. "The five years I spent at school were the saddest of my life, and if my dear Céline had not been with me I could not have stayed there for a single month without falling ill. Fortunately, I could go home every evening and be cheered up. I used to jump on Father's knee and tell him what marks I had had; when he kissed me, all my troubles were forgotten..."



In October 1882, when Thérèse was nine years old, **her sister Pauline**, who had acted as a "second mother" to her, entered the Carmel at Lisieux. Thérèse was devastated. She said to herself, "Pauline is lost to me!" The shock of this reawakened in her the trauma of her mother's death.

At this time, Thérèse was often sick and began to suffer from nervous tremors. In 1882, Dr Gayral diagnosed that Thérèse "reacts to an emotional frustration with a neurotic attack." An alarmed, but cloistered, Pauline began to write letters to Thérèse and attempted various strategies to intervene. Eventually, Thérèse recovered after she had gazed at the statue of the Virgin Mary placed in Marie's room, where Thérèse had been moved. **She reported on May 13, 1883, that she had seen the statue smile at her.** She wrote: "Our Blessed Lady has come to me, she has smiled upon me. How happy I am."



In October 1886, her oldest sister, Marie, entered the same Carmelite monastery, adding to Thérèse's grief. Now only she and her sister Céline remained with their father. At this time, Thérèse also suffered from scruples. She wrote: "One would have to pass through this martyrdom to understand it well, and for me to

express what I experienced for a year and a half would be impossible." However, Christmas Eve 1886 was a turning point in the life of Thérèse; she called it her "complete conversion."

On that night, Thérèse heard her father say to Celine, "Well, fortunately, this will be the last year for this!" (referring to Thérèse putting out her shoes waiting for the Christ Child to come and fill them with gifts). These words made Thérèse cry, so Céline advised her not to go back downstairs immediately. But, suddenly, Thérèse pulled herself together and wiped away her tears. She ran down the stairs, knelt by the fireplace, and unwrapped her surprises as jubilantly as ever. She wrote about this experience in 1895: "In an instant, Jesus—content with my good will—accomplished the work I had not been able to do in ten years." She had recovered the strength of soul she had lost when her mother died—and she retained it to the end. She discovered the joy in self-forgetfulness and added, "I felt, in a word, charity enter my heart, the need to forget myself to make others happy. Since that blessed night, I have not been defeated in any battle, but instead I went from victory to victory and began, so to speak, to "run a giant's course" (Psalms 19:5).

In May 1887, Thérèse approached her 63-year old father **Louis Martin**, who was recovering from a small stroke, and told him that she wanted to celebrate the anniversary of "her conversion" by entering Carmel before the Christmas holidays.



Louis and Thérèse both broke down and cried, but Louis got up, gently picked a little white flower, root intact, and gave it to her, explaining the care with which God brought it into being and preserved it until that day. Thérèse later wrote: "while I listened, I believed I was hearing my own story." To Thérèse, the flower seemed a symbol of herself. She renewed her attempts to join the Carmel, but the priest-superior of the monastery would not allow it on account of her youth.



In November 1887, Louis took Céline and Thérèse on a diocesan pilgrimage to Rome for the priestly jubilee of **Pope Leo XIII**. During a general audience with the Pope, an old man of seventy-seven, Thérèse, in her turn, approached him, kissed his slipper instead of his hand, and said, **"Most Holy Father, I have a great favor to ask of you"** and then asked his permission to enter the Cloister at age 15. The Pope replied, "Well, my child, do what the superiors decide. You will enter if it is God's Will," and he blessed her. She refused to leave his feet, and the Swiss Guard had to carry her out of the room.



Soon after that, the Bishop of Bayeux authorized the prioress to receive Thérèse, and **on April 9, 1888**, she became a Carmelite postulant.

Thérèse entered the Carmel of Lisieux with the determination to become a saint. She wanted to go to Heaven by an entirely new "Little Way." She said, "I wanted to find an elevator that would raise me to Jesus." The elevator, she wrote, would be "the arms of Jesus lifting me in all my littleness." She described her entry into Carmel and her life there: "At last my desires were realized, and I cannot describe the deep sweet peace which filled my soul. This peace has remained with me during the eight and a half years of my life here, and has never left me—even amid the greatest trials." Though she was now reunited with Marie and Pauline, from the first day she began her struggle to win and keep her distance from her sisters. She saw them together only in the hours of common recreation after meals. At such times she would sit down beside whomever she happened to be near, or beside a nun whom she had observed to be downcast, disregarding the tacit and sometimes expressed sensitivity and even jealousy of her biological sisters. "We must apologize to the others for our being four under one roof," she

was in the habit of telling them. "When I am dead, you must be very careful not to lead a family life with one another...I did not come to Carmel to be with my sisters; on the contrary, I saw clearly that their presence would cost me dear, for I was determined not to give way to nature."

The years which followed were those of a maturation of her vocation, as she humbly accepted criticisms in silence, even unjust criticisms, and smiled at the sisters who were unpleasant to her. The Carmel of Lisieux in 1888 had 26 nuns from very different classes and backgrounds. When Thérèse entered the convent, the prioress, Mother Marie, was 54, a woman of changeable humor who sometimes used her authority in a capricious manner. Towards the end of her life, after spending nine years in the cloister, St. Thérèse wrote plainly, "the lack of judgment and education, the touchiness of the characters of some of the nuns, all these things do not make life very pleasant. I know very well that these moral weaknesses are chronic, that there is no hope of cure."

In her letters from this period of her novitiate, Thérèse returned over and over to the theme of littleness, referring to herself as a grain of sand, an

image she borrowed from Pauline. The remainder of her life would be defined by retreat and subtraction. She absorbed the work of John of the Cross, spiritual reading uncommon at the time,



especially for such a young nun. "Oh! what insights I have gained from the works of our holy father, **St. John of the Cross!** When I was seventeen and eighteen, I had no other spiritual nourishment." She felt a kinship with this classic writer of the Carmelite Order (though nothing seems to have drawn her to the writings of Teresa of Avila), and with enthusiasm she read his works. Passages from these writings are woven into everything she herself said and wrote.



The end of Thérèse's time as a postulant arrived on January 10, 1889, with her taking of the habit. From that time she wore the rough homespun and brown scapular, white wimple and veil, leather belt with rosary, woolen stockings, and rope sandals.

Thérèse's names in religion, Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, must be taken together to define her religious significance. The first name was promised to her at nine by Mother Marie de Gonzague and was given to her at her entry into the convent. In itself, veneration of the childhood of Jesus was a Carmelite heritage of the seventeenth century. It concentrated upon the staggering humiliation of divine majesty in assuming the form of a baby, one who is weak and helpless. Yet when she received the veil, Thérèse herself asked Mother Marie de Gonzague to confer upon her the second name. During the course of her novitiate, contemplation of the Holy Face had nourished her inner life (the Holy Face is an image representing the disfigured face of Jesus during His Passion). Thérèse meditated on certain passages from the prophet Isaiah which prefigured Christ. On the eve of her profession, she wrote to Sr. Marie, "Tomorrow I shall be the bride of Jesus 'whose face was hidden and whom no man knew'—what a union and what a future!" Mother Marie de Gonzague wrote to the prioress of Tours: "The angelic child is seventeen and a half, with the sense of a 30 year old, the religious perfection of an old and accomplished novice, and complete possession of herself; she is a perfect nun."

When St. Thérèse's sister, Celine, entered the Lisieux convent on September 14, 1894, she brought her camera and developing materials with her—with Mother Agnes' permission. Thanks to her, there are so many photographs that exist of Thérèse. Even when the images are poorly reproduced, her eyes arrest us. Described as blue or gray, they look darker in photographs. Céline's pictures of her sister

contributed to the extraordinary cult of personality that formed in the years after Thérèse's death. Along with her camera, Céline had brought notebooks with her, passages from the Old Testament, which Thérèse did not have in Carmel. (The Louvain Bible, the translation authorized for French Catholics, did not include an Old Testament). In the notebooks Thérèse found a passage from Proverbs that struck her with particular force. If anyone is a very little one, let him come to me (Proverbs 9:4). And, from the book of Isaiah (66:12-13), she was profoundly struck by another passage: As a mother caresses her child, so I shall console you, I shall carry you at my breast and I shall swing you on my knees." She concluded that Jesus would carry her to the summit of sanctity. The smallness of Thérèse, her limits, became in this way grounds for joy, more than discouragement. It is only in Manuscript C of her autobiography that she gave to this discovery the name of the Little Way (Petite Voie). Echoes of this way, however, are heard throughout her work, with her letters being signed with the words "very little" ("toute petite") in front of her name. By the end of that year, six full calendar years as a Carmelite made her realize how small and insignificant she was. She saw the limitations of all her efforts. She remained small and far off from the unfailing love that she would wish to practice. She understood then that it was on this very littleness that she must learn to ask God's help.

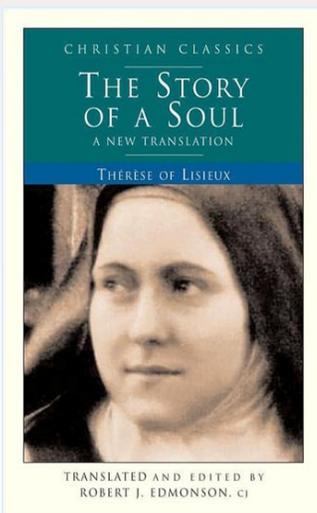
Thérèse's final years were marked by a steady decline, borne without complaint. Tuberculosis was the key element of her final suffering, but she saw that as part of her spiritual journey. After observing a rigorous Lenten fast in 1896, she went to bed on the eve of Good Friday and felt a joyous sensation. She wrote: "Oh! how sweet this memory... I had scarcely laid my head upon the pillow when I felt something like a bubbling stream mounting to my lips. I didn't know what it was." The next morning she found blood on her handkerchief and understood her fate: Tuberculosis, which meant death. She wrote: "I thought of the joyful thing that I had to learn, so I went over to the window. I was able to see that I was not mistaken. Ah! my soul was filled with a great consolation; I was interiorly persuaded that Jesus, on the anniversary of His own death, wanted to have me hear His first call!"



As a result of this disease, Thérèse suffered terribly. Even her doctor was driven to exclaim, "If you only knew what this young nun was suffering!" Towards the end

of her life, after spending nine years in the cloister, St. Thérèse wrote plainly, "the lack of judgment and education, the touchiness of the characters of some of the nuns, all these things do not make life very pleasant."

In July 1897, she made a final move to the monastery infirmary. On August 19, 1897, Thérèse received her last Communion. During the last hours of Thérèse's life, she said, "I would never have believed it was possible to suffer so much—never, never!" Having spent the last eighteen months in Carmel in a dark night of faith, she died at the age of 24 on September 30, 1897. On her death-bed, she is reported to have said: "I have reached the point of not being able to suffer any more, because all suffering is sweet to me." Her last words were, "My God, I love you!"



The impact of *The Story of A Soul*, a collection of her autobiographical manuscripts, printed and distributed a year after her death to an initially very limited audience, was great; and she rapidly became one of the most popular saints of the twentieth century. The book has since been translated into over 55 languages!

In addition to her spiritual autobiography, she also left letters, poems, religious plays, and prayers—even her last conversations were recorded by her sisters. The depth of her spirituality, of which she said, "my way is all confidence and love," has inspired many believers. In the face of her littleness and nothingness, she trusted in God to be her sanctity.

Thérèse was buried on October 4, 1897, in the Carmelite plot at the Lisieux municipal cemetery, where Louis and Zélie had been buried. In March 1923, however, her body was returned to the Carmel of Lisieux, where it remains.

Before he died that year, Pope Pius X opened the process of her canonization on June 10, 1914. On August 14, 1921, Pope Benedict XV promulgated the decree on her heroic virtues and gave an address on her Little Way, recommending it to the whole Church. Note: According to some biographies of Edith Piaf, in 1922 the singer (at the time, an unknown seven-year-old girl) was cured from blindness after a pilgrimage to the grave of Thérèse, at the time not yet formally canonized.

Pope Pius XI made her the "star of his pontificate". First, he beatified her in 1923 and then canonized her on May 17, 1925—only 28 years after her death. (Note: Our own church here in Alhambra was named after her at its founding in 1924—before she was even canonized!)



In 1927, Thérèse was declared co-patron of the missions with St. Francis Xavier; in 1944, she was named co-patron of France with Joan of Arc. Her feast day was added to the Roman Catholic calendar of saints in 1927 for celebration on October 3 (in 1969, Pope Paul VI moved it to October 1st, the day after her "birthday to heaven".) On October 19, 1997, Pope John Paul II

declared her one of the thirty-three Doctors of the Church, one of only three women so named, the others being another Carmelite nun, St. Teresa of Avila, and St. Catherine of Siena.



What is St. Therese's Little Way?

St. Therese believed that the people of her time lived in too great a fear of God's judgment, preventing them from experiencing the freedom of the Children of God. She knew from her life and from Scripture that God is Merciful Love. She loved the maternal images of God in the Old Testament and the love of God for us in Jesus Christ. In fact, St. Therese once wrote that she could not understand how anyone could be afraid of a God who became a child. Because she knew that she would never be perfect, she went to God as a child approaches a parent—with open arms and deep trust.

St. Therese was committed to her tasks in life and to being kind and loving to the people she met in her everyday life. She completed her assignments in the convent of Lisieux as ways of manifesting her love for God and for others. She worked as a sacristan; she served in the refectory and in the laundry room; she wrote plays for the entertainment of her community. Above all, she tried to show a love for all the nuns in the community. She played no favorites; she gave of herself even to the most difficult members. Her life sounds so routine and ordinary, but it was steeped in a loving commitment that knew no breakdown. She did all these things because of her deep love for God, and she called this spirituality her "Little Way" to Heaven, precisely because it is simple—yet it is a way which calls for amazing fortitude.

Many people have been attracted to St. Therese's "Little Way," as it puts holiness of life within the reach of ordinary people. Live out your days with confidence in God's love for you! Recognize that each day is a gift in which your life can make a difference by the way you choose to live it. Put hope in a future in which God will be all, and love will consume your spirit. Choose life!—not the darkness of pettiness and greed.

St. Therese did not chase lofty achievements or merits to achieve holiness. To live out the Little Way, she turned to the Gospel: "He called a child, whom He put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven'" (Matthew 18:2-4) The Little Way is about being doing the smallest actions with great love. St. Therese compared this method to using an elevator: "I am too small to climb the rough stairway of perfection, so I told Jesus that His arms were the elevator which will lift me to Heaven!"

Why should YOU follow the Little Way? This childlike outlook on our everyday lives puts the focus on God rather than ourselves. We let Him be our motivation for everything! When we make ourselves small and humble, we let go of trying to control our lives—even our spiritual lives. We become blank canvases for God to work through us, rather than despite us. The Little Way puts our spiritual journey into God's hands. Whether we're washing dishes or becoming missionaries, everything is done with extraordinary love. When it comes to becoming like a small child, we have an advantage—we've already been children! When we were young:

- We didn't worry about the past or the future, we only woke up excited about the present.
- We knew we were not able to do big or hard things, but we did the small, easy things we could.
- We did not rely on ourselves, but instead we put our trust in our parents to provide for us.

We need to become childlike in our relationship with God—without becoming childish! Begin by approaching God in prayer as a close son or daughter—not as a distant observer. Bring simplicity and honesty into your conversation with Him. God knows all things but, like a loving parent, He wants to hear about our thoughts and desires. Next, begin by pondering how you can bring God into your normal, everyday tasks. Ask yourself:

- Do I complete my work without focus or commitment or do I do it out of love for God and His glory?
- When speaking with others, do I strive to learn about them or do I want them to know about me?
- Do I rejoice in my neighbors' successes... or do I become sad because of envy?
- Am I happy to be last or must I always be first?

The Little Way is immediately accessible and actionable. It makes all things in our lives become avenues to God. EVERYTHING becomes grace!

"Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, or even at their difficulty, as at the love with which we do them."

ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

