



"The world's  
thy ship and  
not thy home."



# St Thérèse of Lisieux

THE LITTLE FLOWER - DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH



"For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy."

"Jesus, help me to simplify my life by learning what you want me to be and becoming that person."

JCR: 10.13/1.8/2.2/2.8/2.9/  
3.1/CBA1  
SENIOR RE-NON-EXAM SECTIONS: A/C/E/G/H

WHAT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED FOR IN THIS LIFE?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL THE WORLD? BE KNOWN AS AN INFLUENCER? BE FAMOUS FOR SOMETHING? EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER

## WHO WAS ST THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX?

Sometimes the unlikely of characters can have the greatest influence. Thérèse Martin was born in France in 1873, the youngest of a family of five daughters, and throughout her childhood was pampered, spoiled and prone to emotional outbursts at the slightest criticism or perceived lack of appreciation.

At the age of just four and a half, Thérèse tragically lost her mother, Zélie, to breast cancer. Her sixteen year old sister Pauline became like her second mother, and loss struck Thérèse again when Pauline entered a Carmelite convent five years later. The Carmelites are an enclosed order of religious sisters, so once Pauline entered, she did not leave Carmel again. She was later followed by Marie and Leonie who left to join the Carmelites and Poor Clare orders, and Thérèse was now alone with her sister, Celine, and father, Louis. Thérèse was treated like a little queen by her father, and reacted over-sensitively to even the slightest criticism she received.. She would frequently dissolve in tears, and was so sensitive that sometimes she would even cry because she had cried!



More than anything as a teenager, Thérèse wanted to join Pauline in Carmel, but the path would not be easy as she was too young, and so unable to control her emotions. Receiving a special grace during Christmas Mass 1886, Thérèse developed a strong will. That strength of character led her to even request permission

from the Pope in Rome to enter Carmel, and finally at the age of just sixteen Thérèse entered the enclosed order with her sisters Pauline and Marie, taking the name, "Thérèse of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face".

Life in Carmel wasn't always easy for Therese and she suffered much there. Her father became ill and was taken to a mental hospital, and she couldn't even visit him.



She experienced a terrible dryness in prayer and eventually became very ill with tuberculosis, which claimed her life at just twenty-four years of age.

However, Thérèse's interior life and understanding of God deepened incredibly while in Carmel. She knew that as a Carmelite nun she could never perform great deeds or travel the world on mission. She understood however that her vocation was to love, and that she could show great love through small deeds: by simply doing ordinary things with extraordinary love.



However, Thérèse's interior life incredibly while in Carmel. She knew that as a Carmelite nun she could never perform great deeds or travel the world. She understood that her vocation was to love, and that she could show great love through small deeds: doing ordinary things with extraordinary love. She offered up countless little unseen sacrifices, smiling at those sisters she didn't like, eating whatever she was given without complaining, doing good deeds wherever she could.

Thérèse wanted to be a saint but she knew there was too much of a gap between her and the great saints.

However, with her childlike faith, she also discovered what she called "**her little way**", a short and simple elevator to get to heaven: by allowing Jesus to lift her, like a father picking up a little child.

Most of the sisters saw nothing particularly special in Thérèse, except for her sister, Pauline, who knew that her little sister had developed an intense prayer life and an incredible inner sanctity that many could learn from. She requested Thérèse to write a journal of her memories and detail her "Little Way" so they would have something to circulate after her death. Her writings, emphasising her way of trusting in Jesus to make her holy, and relying on small daily sacrifices instead of great deeds, struck a chord with thousands of Catholics everywhere. Since then, millions of copies of "Story of a Soul" have been sold.

NOW WATCH FR ROBERT BARRON: ST THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX (MUNDELEIN SEMINARY)



What is your initial response to the life and death of St Thérèse?

What question would you ask Thérèse if you had the chance?



1. Where was St Thérèse born?
2. What is St Thérèse the patron saint of? Why is that unusual, given her life story?
3. What is St Thérèse known as (her full religious title)?
4. What is the book of her writings called?
5. Why is there a sewing basket depicted in her stained glass window at Mundelein seminary?
6. What was her motto (of sorts) in her spiritual life?
7. Why are the shoes shown in the stained glass significant in her life?
8. Why was this particular Christmas a significant moment in her spiritual life?
9. What does the little girl with her arms up in the air in the window represent?
10. What is the famous symbol of Therese?
11. Why are these flowers associated with her?
12. What did Thérèse ask of Pope Leo XIII?

**QUIZ**

BASED ON BISHOP BARRON'S VIDEO

"I understood that all we accomplish, however brilliant, is worth nothing without love."

"Holiness consists simply in doing God's will, and being just what God wants us to be."

"If every flower wanted to be a rose, nature would lose her springtime beauty."

## DID YOU KNOW?



- When Thérèse was a young teenager, she became so ill with fever that it was thought she would die. She suffered not just physical pains but was also tormented by hallucinations. Thérèse had a beautiful statue of Mary in her room, and once when her sisters were gathered praying for her recovery, Thérèse looked up, and later said that Our Lady smiled at her, and in that instant she was cured.

- Thérèse was often so tired from grief or suffering, that she fell asleep in prayer. She consoled herself by saying that mothers love their children as much when they are asleep in their arms as they do when they are awake, so God must love her during those times she fell asleep too!



- Thérèse became the patron saint of the missions, not because she ever went anywhere but because her love of, prayers for and letters to, missionaries. It's a good reminder to us when we feel like we can't do much, God can use the little we do to achieve great things.

- The Catholic Church venerates her also as the patron saint of florists, those who are sick and those who have lost parents. **Why do you think Thérèse was chosen as patron for each of these? Why did her "Little Way" inspire the Church to name her "Doctor of the Church" also?**



- Thérèse's parents, Louis and Zélie Martin, were both declared saints in 2015, the first married couple to be canonised together! Click their image to learn more about them!

LOOK UP MATTHEW 18:3 - HOW DOES THIS QUOTE RELATE TO THE LIFE OF THÉRÈSE?




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**Novena prayer to St Thérèse (for 9 days)**

Sometimes we can small and insignificant, or that our actions will make no real difference in the world. Thérèse's life teaches us that the smallest deeds done out of love can change the world.

*O Little Thérèse of the Child Jesus, please pick for me a rose from the heavenly garden and send it to me as a message of love. O Little Flower of Jesus, ask God to grant the favours I now place with confidence in you hands ( mention your special prayer request here ) St. Thérèse, help me to always believe as you did, in God's great love for me, so that I may imitate your "Little Way" each day.*

## YOU CAN BE A GAME-CHANGER LIKE ST THÉRÈSE!

- Ask God for the grace and desire to put others before yourself!
- Offer up daily little sacrifices, little inconveniences and discomforts
- How can you treat others in your school / workplace / family like St Thérèse treated the other sisters (even the ones she found hard to love)?
- Turn to Our Lady when you feel sick, or frustrated or alone.
- Pray a novena to St Thérèse for a special intention.
- Research the Carmelite Order: are there any Carmels near you?



## Game-Changer Playlist!

Listen to and think about how they reflect the life and witness of Thérèse. Click the titles.

- **"Draw me to your presence"** (Michael Doyle)
- **"I give you my heart"** (Hillsong)
- **"Small things with great love"** (Danielle Rose)
- **"My Song of Today"** (Mike Stanley)

- Create some artwork using one of Thérèse's quotes
- Read "The Story of a Soul" (her autobiography)

- ASCEND YOUTH MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -