

A rose from St. Therese

If you've ever prayed a novena to St. Therese of Lisieux, you know that as you pray, you start looking for roses. The idea—or the belief—is that you'll receive a rose as a gift from St. Therese and you'll know that your prayers were heard.

St. Therese's feast day is Oct. 1, so I started a novena to her nine days ago through PrayMoreNovenas.com. I had a few intentions on my list, but a central one was a desire for peace as I am juggling several different tasks.

A few weeks ago I found I wasn't sleeping well because I had so much on my plate. So, when I started the novena, I asked for peace—and that I might even succeed at what needs to be done.

The peace started creeping in almost immediately. There's something about turning to a friend in Heaven for help, of course. But there's also something special about St. Therese.

I have always admired St. Therese's approach to life—how she loved Jesus with her whole heart and how she found holiness in the ordinary moments of life, living in her “little way.” St. Therese believed that nothing was too small to matter to God, and that we should try to do everything with love.

It sounds so simple—and it is! It's also extremely difficult. But I love holding onto the belief that if we can do the small things with love, the big ones will follow.

I am someone who is always wondering what more I could or should be doing. The question of whether I am where God wants me to be is important to me.

But then I found this line from St. Therese: “The value of life does not depend on the place we occupy. It depends upon the way we occupy that place.”

So, there we go.

On the day I prayed the ninth day of the novena, I ended up overscheduling us. I realized this weekend that I had booked both a doctor's appointment and then a trip to the dentist with both of our boys—on top of the usual busyness of a working

Monday. As an added bonus, the children had the day off from school, so I had to arrange for a sitter.

Somehow, though, I was fairly relaxed as the day continued to unfold. And, as we turned onto the road by the dentist's office, I glanced at the street sign, and I almost laughed.



There was my rose. Naturally, because of the current craziness of my life, it wasn't a bouquet of red roses in a crystal vase, or a tiny pink bud pushing out of the ground. No, my rose was one I couldn't miss—a sign for "Rose Street" by the dentist's office on a hurried day. St. Therese knows me well enough to know I am a reader of street signs.

And God does have a sense of humor.

After the appointment, I took a photo. And, it was only then that I realized it was a no-thru street, too. Because I am here, exactly where God wants me to be in that moment. There's no need to rush through what needs to be done. I can embrace where I am and make the most of it.

One October a few years ago, I blogged every day, seeking holiness in the ordinary. It was a beautiful month for me, spiritually and personally. This October, I am not feeling I should commit to writing every day, but I will be looking for roses in this garden of life, and I will share them with you as I find them. I hope you will also share yours with me.