

Inspiration from The Little Flower: Saint Thérèse de Lisieux

“Holiness consists simply in doing God’s will, and being just what God wants us to be.”

— Saint Thérèse de Lisieux



Today the Church celebrates the feast of the young French Carmelite Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, also known as Thérèse de Lisieux, who entered the monastery at the early age of 15 and modeled a simple life of humility by both her words and example. She dedicated much of her free time, especially after becoming ill, to writing her autobiographical memoirs, with its reflections and words of inspiration. Though she died very young at age 24 her memory lives on through her writings, especially her autobiography “The Story of a Soul,” originally titled, “The Story of the Springtime of a Little White Flower.” It is from this title that Thérèse has become known as “the Little Flower.” From her writings we also learn of “the little way” which entails doing small things with great love.

Thérèse was canonized in 1925, just 28 years after her death, by Pope Pius XI. He proclaimed her a patron of the missions two years later. Blessed Pope John Paul II declared her to be a Doctor of the Church in 1997.

Some words of inspiration for her feast day:

“Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love.”

“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.”

“Without love, deeds, even the most brilliant, count as nothing.”

“If every tiny flower wanted to be a rose, spring would lose its loveliness.”

“A word or a smile is often enough to put fresh life in a despondent soul.”

“When I die, I will send down a shower of roses from the heavens, I will spend my heaven by doing good on earth.”



Image from the Order of Carmelites website

Prayer of St. Thérèse de Lisieux:

A MORNING PRAYER

O my God! I offer Thee all my actions of this day for the intentions and for the glory

of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I desire to sanctify every beat of my heart, my every thought, my simplest works, by uniting them to Its infinite merits; and I wish to make reparation for my sins by casting them into the furnace of Its Merciful Love.

O my God! I ask of Thee for myself and for those whom I hold dear, the grace to fulfill perfectly Thy Holy Will, to accept for love of Thee the joys and sorrows of this passing life, so that we may one day be united together in heaven for all Eternity.

Amen.

Check out this excellent 10-minute video on Saint Thérèse de Lisieux from his series "Who Cares About The Saints?" with Fr. James Martin, S.J.