

Fanny Walters



The destiny of  
Thérèse  
Martin

*Saint Thérèse of Lisieux*

*Nota : The English version was translated using Google Translate  
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*And Christ will enlighten you.*

Ephesians 5.14 – The Holy Bible

*It is trust and nothing but trust that  
must lead us to Love.*

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of  
the Holy Face (1873-1897)

*Sometimes, life takes a new trajectory. All it takes is a historical event in a country to remind you of your own experiences. The past resurfaces and gives you the courage to continue on your path. During a stay in Amsterdam in the Netherlands, I discovered the Basilica of Saint Nicholas on my way, opposite the central station. I was very surprised and happy to see, upon entering, a pretty statue of Saint Therese of Lisieux opposite Saint Anthony. Later, I found her in a magnificent wooden sculpture at the Hartebrugkerk church in Leiden. Therese is on my way and I feel confident, she has never left me since that August 9, 1987, when I first entered the Basilica of Lisieux and discovered Therese, I was sixteen and a half years old.*

*On a sunny afternoon, crossing the streets lined with typical Amsterdam houses, the path leads me to a charming door located in a completely new place. An incredible silence crosses my soul as I discover the beauty of the place. Old buildings surround a small church in a small park. There is also another chapel. The Begijnhof (Beguinage) is one of Amsterdam's hidden treasures. Leaving this exceptional little corner, I admire*

*the windows, some of which are decorated with angels. I continue on my way, observing the spectacle offered by the Venice of the North.*

*This magnificent day leads me to discover the world of Vincent van Gogh in the museum dedicated to him. This artist, this painter, was misunderstood in his time. Vincent van Gogh loved to read. He was a great admirer of Émile Zola. The latter's works inspired his paintings. The museum dedicated to him in Amsterdam is an open-air studio. Between the most famous and less famous works, we can well imagine the energy the artist provided during all these years during which he was looking for simple recognition among his peers of the time. When I arrive in front of the painting "Almond Blossom" (1890), it is a magnificent and timeless work. The beauty of the colors, of these small flowers on the branches, brings forth a light of eternal life. Vincent van Gogh had painted this painting in honor of the birth of his nephew, Vincent Willem, son of his younger brother Theo. He loved to paint these branches budding with flowers against a blue sky. He had chosen that of the almond tree, symbol of a new life and which announced the arrival of spring.*

*I continue on my way, life and nature are before my eyes. Children play on the large outdoor ice rink and all these bicycles that demonstrate a certain respect for ecology. The Netherlands is also known throughout the world as the country of flowers. Dutch culture is impressively rich. Dutch children are said to be the happiest on earth, according to a UNICEF study.*

*Is it possible to say that I met God through a saint, the saint of modern times? We are in the 21st century, in a world that is running after its loss. Values, respect, faith, work, compassion and love for one another cannot have disappeared from our earth. If good exists, then evil does too. So many mysteries surround faith. I sincerely believe that there is a higher force that guides us in the dark as well as in the light. What is certain is that, on our path, we encounter love and that we must let our destiny be fulfilled in sorrows as in joys. On Thursday, September 30, 1897, around 7:20 p.m., following a fatal case of tuberculosis, Thérèse, then aged twenty-four, died with a mysterious smile on her lips. She wrote to Father Bellière on June 9, 1897: "I am not dying, I am entering life."*

*We must all one day take this unknown and mysterious path... But what message did she leave us? At that time, this little Carmelite was known only in her cloister. She was encouraged by her Mother Superior to write, to put down on paper her memories, her thoughts, her poems... her "humble" and "precious" heritage of her time on earth. One thing is certain, Thérèse was endowed with great sensitivity, but also with great strength of character and a sense of observation. Photographs prove to us that Thérèse lived like any mortal before conquering the hearts and souls of people with her smallness, her freshness and her unique devotion to Jesus. So, I can well imagine the strength and love she was able to deploy to, as she had predicted by the simplicity of her sky, make fall "a shower of roses".*

*Despite the trials of life, I kept the faith. Thérèse Martin, known as Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, made me travel a spiritual path, simple and universal. She made me discover wonderful people, atypical universes, little treasures, like simplicity and hope. Beautiful stories exist*



*... We must still believe in the "mysterious" stories that we like to read to children so that they can dream, but also hope for a better world!*

*Through this document, I invite you to discover the "little Thérèse" or the "little flower of heaven". Do not be surprised by the term "little", it is through it that the greatest simplicity of the "saint of modern times" emerges. Indeed, during the last months of her life, she had specified: "You will call me little Thérèse."*

*I rejoice in being small since only children and those who resemble them will be admitted to the heavenly banquet.*

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face

Louis Martin, thirty-five years old, watchmaker, meets the encounter of his life one day in April 1858 on the Saint-Léonard bridge (now the Sarthe bridge) in Alençon in Normandy, his mother had told him so much about this young woman. Zélie Guérin, twenty-six years old, is a lacemaker in Alençon. They both have great faith in God. Their religious union will be celebrated on July 13, 1858 at the Notre-Dame church in Alençon. Zélie is an active woman and in love with her husband Louis, letters testify to this. Louis is calm, meditative, generous, he loves to read. From their union will be born between 1860 and 1873, nine children of whom five will survive. A terrible ordeal for Zélie and Louis. A deep faith animates the family. The youngest, Thérèse, was born on Rue Saint-Blaise in Alençon on Thursday, January 2, 1873 at 11:30 p.m., a gift from heaven. Zélie suffered little when she gave birth to her. The mother was reassured, the baby was doing well and seemed strong. On January 4, 1873, Thérèse was baptized at the Notre-Dame church in Alençon. Louis wrote a short poem for his daughter's birth, "You will be pink one day." Marie, Thérèse's older sister, was her godmother. The baby suffered. Barely two months old, Thérèse was entrusted to the caring Rose Taillé in Semallé, who breastfed little Thérèse, who recovered in the Normandy countryside and became a "big baby tanned by the sun." In April 1874, she returned to Alençon.

The family is delighted and surrounds her with love. Thérèse is pampered by her four sisters Marie, Pauline, Léonie, Céline. Blonde with blue eyes, Thérèse is a cheerful and lively little girl. She has character. She is sensitive and intelligent. The Martin couple are kind to the world around them, charity towards the poorest. Every day, the family prays around the Virgin Mary, the statue had been offered to Louis, later it will take the name of "Virgin of the Smile" for the family. At four years old, little Thérèse explains to her sister Céline why God is all-powerful. In July 1876, first photograph of little Thérèse in Alençon.

A terrible ordeal awaits the Martin family, on August 28, 1877, Zélie, forty-six years old, is taken by breast cancer. The whole family is very tested. Thérèse is four and a half years old; she keeps a distraught memory of this brutal loss. She is so young, and feels despair. A mother who was loving, courageous, an affectionate wife. Little Thérèse decides to choose her sister Pauline as her mother. Her character changes, from gentleness and shyness, excessively sensitive, she who was too lively. Thérèse also feels paternal love, all the tenderness of her father Louis.

November 1877, a new turning point awaits the Martin family. Louis is fifty-four years old and decides to leave for Lisieux on the recommendation of his uncle Isidore Guérin, Zélie's brother. He sells his business and the whole family moves into a pretty bourgeois house, Les Buissonnets in Lisieux. This residence, set back from the city center, has a beautiful garden. Little Thérèse

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felt no sorrow in leaving Alençon, she believed that children liked change.

After mourning and hardship come happy days. The Martin family lives in faith and love, bonds are strengthened, everyone finds their place. Marie, seventeen, takes charge of the house. The family regularly goes to Saint-Pierre Cathedral in Lisieux. Thérèse loved to go fishing with her father Louis while admiring the birds, the flowers, the countryside. She meditated just like her father. She dreamed of the mystery of Heaven. Little Thérèse was inspired by Jesus and his life, even at a young age. She discovered the sea at Trouville, the grandeur and power of God that nature offers to humanity; everything spoke to her soul, as she describes in her memoirs.

On May 13, 1880, it was her sister Céline's communion. That day, Thérèse was flooded with joy, which she considered one of the most beautiful moments of her life. One day she heard that Pauline wanted to enter Carmel. She was also inspired to enter Carmel, it was not a child's dream but the certainty of a divine call. One day, little Thérèse thought she saw her father Louis bent over in the garden, she was very afraid. Louis was not in Les Buissonnets. This vision would mark her.

In 1881, Mrs. Besnier, a photographer in Lisieux, immortalized little Thérèse with her skipping rope with her sister Céline. Thérèse was eight and a half when she entered the Benedictine abbey of Lisieux as a boarder. Shy and delicate by nature, she did

not fit in with the other older students who teased her. She cries without saying anything, but every evening she is happy to return to the family home and especially to her father whom she called her "beloved king". She is a brilliant student. She finds comfort with her sister Céline. Despite everything, for Thérèse these were painful years. Pauline encouraged her to be a studious student.

In October 1882, Pauline returned to the Carmel of Lisieux. The whole family was in tears, little Thérèse, aged nine, lost her "second mother". But Thérèse believed in her vocation. She also wanted to return to the Carmel. She knew what she wanted to do with her life. Pauline had become Sister Agnès of Jesus, every Thursday the family was allowed to visit. For Thérèse, each time it was torture and suffering, she was only allowed two or three minutes. So close to her beloved and caring sister, the little girl was distraught. She had returned to school, she had to prepare for her first communion. Religious instruction was given, which pleased Thérèse.

At ten years old, Thérèse had a terrifying experience "a strange illness". Towards the end of the year, the child was seized with headaches. During a family evening with the Guérins, her uncle recalled memories of Zélie, Thérèse was touched and began to cry. Later in the evening she was seized with a strange tremor. The next day, Doctor Notta diagnosed a serious illness that no child had ever suffered from. Uncle Guérin brought Louis back from his trip to Paris, which he had left with the two older Martin sisters. Her father thought his child was going to go mad or die. The strange illness the little girl was suffering from got worse. She

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seemed delirious, saying words that made no sense. It was a horrible memory that she kept in her mind for such a young child.

She describes this terrifying experience of good and evil in her memoirs. Thérèse was surrounded by the love of her loved ones. But what revived her heart were Pauline's letters, she reread them several times until she learned them by heart. Thérèse was very fragile. Her hope of one day becoming a Carmelite soothed her suffering and kept her alive. One day in May, during a novena to Notre-Dame des Victoires in Paris, Thérèse and her sisters Marie, Léonie and Céline turned to their mother in Heaven, the Blessed Virgin, before the statuette of the Virgin of the Smile that stood in the Martin house.

Little Thérèse prayed that she might have pity on her. On May 13, 1883, this is how Thérèse received a divine grace through the smile of the Blessed Virgin. Her soul was transported by tenderness and kindness. Then Thérèse felt all her sorrows vanish, creating a deep and comforting joy. She wanted to keep this exchange a secret. But she confided in her sister Marie who spoke about it at the Carmel. The sisters questioned her, but Thérèse was troubled and pained. For her, it was as if she had told a lie, while she had lived a beautiful spiritual experience that had healed her in the depths of her young soul.

Thérèse is ten and a half years old, she is a pretty little girl, with long blond hair and blue eyes, her physique does not leave one indifferent. Following her "strange illness", the family decides to

extend her convalescence until the summer holidays. However, she remains fragile. It is also her entry into the world. One day she sees in a daydream the name she would give herself if she returned to Carmel. She wanted to keep Thérèse but inspired by Jesus, she would be called Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Her joy was great.

October 1883, Thérèse returns to school at the abbey. It is also her first communion that awaits her. She is very studious in her preparation, she is the best in catechism. She also works with her sisters at Les Buissonnets. And the beautiful day arrives, May 8, 1884, she remembers this day perfectly, on this day she felt carried away by the love of Jesus, united by divine strength. Joys flowed over her young face. Joy alone filled her heart. June 14, 1884 was her confirmation, she felt that the Holy Spirit gave her the strength to suffer. Thérèse had been deprived of her mother, she had also found comfort with her mother in Heaven who had saved her from her “strange illness”. Both of them watched over this child who already had the vocation to be a saint one day to save souls. “The little flower”, as she called herself, was the reflection of the love of the Divine. She also had an intuition that great trials awaited her. Her illness had disappeared.



On June 26, 1884, a new arrival at Les Buissonnets, the white spaniel, Tom, brings joy to Thérèse. She had asked her father. In the summer of 1884, Thérèse spent a radiant vacation before returning to school in October. She sometimes felt alone in this life as a boarder, but she motivated herself with little words of peace and strength, which gave her courage. Sometimes, her soul seemed troubled again, the young girl remained fragile, she confided in Marie. Her sister guided her, consoled her, and helped her in her quest for spirituality.

In March 1886, Thérèse suffered from continual headaches, her father decided to remove her from the abbey. She would not have a normal schooling like her sister Céline. She was thirteen years old and her father offered her private lessons with Mrs. Papineau, a very educated lady of fifty who lived with her mother and her cat. She took advantage of her free time to arrange a room in Les Buissonnets with

"a real mess", which she describes in detail in her memoirs. She liked to take refuge there to study, meditate, pray, read... She loved to spend hours in this place. It was her little universe. But when Marie was due to leave the house soon, this room lost its charm.

In October 1886, Thérèse lost her "third mother". Marie returned to the Carmel of Lisieux under the name of Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart. She lost her confidante. Only Céline and Thérèse remained with Louis. Léonie had also returned to religious life with the Poor Clares in Alençon. Thérèse had

difficulty recovering, she cried easily, her great sensitivity pursued her. She prayed to her four deceased little brothers and sisters, begging for help in all simplicity so that she could find peace and which arrived. Her soul was once again relieved by so much gentleness.

The beautiful teenager will soon be fourteen years old, she still dreams of entering the Carmel of Lisieux. But for this dream, Thérèse had to grow in her soul. This miracle happened on December 25, 1886, Christmas Day which celebrates the birth of Jesus on earth. She felt the love of God which made her strong and courageous. She received the grace to leave childhood, her complete conversion. She was returning from midnight mass and had had the joy of receiving a strong and powerful God. She found her strength of soul that she had lost at four and a half when she lost her mother Zélie. In her writings, she recounts this special night filled with light; then began a new period of her life, the most beautiful of all, the most filled with the graces of Heaven.

In May 1887, Louis had a paralytic attack. During the year, Thérèse continued on her path. She was fulfilled. On the beach at Trouville, she was called "the great Englishwoman" with her braids. Her desire to love and be loved was present. She loved what was great and beautiful, but knowledge dominated. She had resumed her classes with Mrs. Papineau. She cherished and accumulated history and science books. She read a lot. Everything interested her, especially *The Imitation of Christ*. In her writings, she often spoke of

the joy that nature gave. She also dreamed of living in the countryside in a charming little house where all the windows would overlook the sea. With animals and close to a church. She would go and visit the poor and help them.

Céline taught her to draw. She did very well. She began to nourish herself with spiritual reading. She also got closer to Céline, she shares her new confidences. Young Thérèse feels the need to pray for sinners. She is attracted by this new momentum, something calls her. There is a trial of a murderer, Henri Pranzini, sentenced to death who has never expressed regret for his murders. His execution is scheduled for the summer. Thérèse prays for Pranzini's conversion, she had confidence in the infinite mercy of Jesus.

During the execution, Pranzini refused to see a priest, and finally he decided to kiss the crucifix before dying. Thérèse learned the news the next day in her father's diary. She saw it as a "sign"; the one she had been asking God for. With this new grace, she was determined to return to Carmel to pray and save souls. Thérèse had found her mission. She continued her prayers for Pranzini, whom she would call her "first child".

At fourteen, she never left her little book of the Imitation of Jesus Christ, she had not yet found treasures in the Gospel. She already had beautiful thoughts of Jesus, she felt loved and nourished in abundance. All the mysteries of eternity and the truth about religion delighted her sensitive young girl's soul. Her heart, her light, guided her towards Carmel. Céline became the

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confidante of her struggles and her sufferings. She had to tell her father about it.

She was so young; an ambition of love pushed her towards a path that would make her live an authentic experience lifted by the love of God. Thérèse wanted to enter Carmel on December 25, 1887, but obstacles arose. No matter, she was more than determined, and on the day of Pentecost, in the evening she found herself with her father, her "little queen" as he called her, confessing her secret to him. She wanted to enter Carmel. All day long Thérèse prayed to have the courage to tell him this great confidence. Louis was contemplating the wonders of nature. Shy and moved, she came to sit near her father, whom he pressed to his heart. Thérèse, in tears, confided to him her desire to enter Carmel.

So young, already such a vocation, that of a deep faith. For Thérèse, it was the desire of God, which had inspired her. She received her father's consent, who saw this request as a great honor that God was giving her. This moment will remain forever engraved in the teenager's heart. Louis picked her a small white flower, comparable to a miniature lily, and offered it to Thérèse, who kept it preciously as a relic and placed it in her book *The Imitation of Jesus Christ*.

Young Thérèse discusses her dream of entering Carmel with her uncle Isidore Guérin, who advises her not to enter before the age of seventeen. For a fifteen-year-old child, it would be a great

disservice to religion for a life as a Carmelite, everyone would talk about it. He tells her that a "miracle" would be needed for it to become the Gospel. She already has beautiful thoughts about Jesus, she feels loved and nourished in abundance. All the mysteries of eternity and the truth about religion delighted her sensitive young girl's soul. His heart, his light, guided her towards Carmel. Céline becomes the confidante of her struggles and her sufferings. She had to talk about it to her father. She was so young; an ambition of love pushed her towards a path that would make her live an authentic experience lifted by the love of God. Thérèse wanted to enter Carmel on December 25, 1887, but obstacles arose. No matter, she was more than determined, and on the day of Pentecost, in the evening she found herself with her father, his "little queen" as he called her, and confessed her secret to him. She wanted to enter Carmel. All day long Thérèse prayed to have the courage to tell him this great confidence. Louis was contemplating the wonders of nature. Shy and moved, she came to sit near her father, whom he pressed to his heart. Thérèse, in tears, confided to him her desire to enter Carmel. So young, already such a vocation, that of a deep faith. For Thérèse, it was God's desire, which had inspired her.

She received the consent of her father, who saw this request as a great honor that God was giving her. This moment will remain forever engraved in the heart of the adolescent. Louis picked a small white flower for her, comparable to a miniature lily, and offered it to Thérèse, who carefully kept it as a relic and placed it in her book *The Imitation of Jesus Christ*.

Young Thérèse discussed her dream of entering Carmel with her uncle Isidore Guérin, who advised her not to enter before the age of seventeen. For a fifteen-year-old child, it would be a great disservice to religion for a life as a Carmelite, everyone would talk about it. He told her that a "miracle" would be needed for this to happen. Thérèse consoled herself in prayer, praying to Jesus for this "miracle" to happen. She let time pass before seeing her uncle again. Thérèse was in pain, she felt abandoned by God. And one day she came back to see her uncle, delighted to see her again, he told her that she could enter Carmel. It was a victory for her. She felt light, in the sky the clouds had dispersed. Jesus had given her back her joy in the early morning. But other trials awaited Thérèse.

She needed courage. A second step was to have the agreement of Mr. Deloatroëtte, superior of the Carmel in Lisieux since 1870, and it was a categorical refusal. It was a failure for the young Thérèse who was convinced of her vocation. She was determined to go all the way, to go even to the Holy Father. Life resumed its normal course, she took drawing lessons with Céline, and continued to study. She grew in the love of God, feeling her heart close to him.

In October 1887, Thérèse, full of hope, left alone with her father for Bayeux, for a new meeting with Bishop Mgr Huguenin. She remembers the smallest details. She also had to overcome

her shyness. Louis tried to reassure his daughter. Thérèse was ready for this meeting, she needed an argument about this strong desire to return to Carmel, this vocation dedicated to God and to souls that had attracted her since her youngest age. But tears came to rest on Thérèse's delicate face. She had to be strong in front of Mgr Huguenin. He made her talk. He thought it was very good that she was making the trip to Rome, which should have made her happy instead of crying. He added that he would give his answer later. This last conversation did not reassure Thérèse who plunged into bitterness, she was sad, but she felt a certain peace, she was only looking for the will of God.

The pilgrimage to Rome began in Paris in November 1887. It was led by Mgr Germain, Bishop of Coutances, on the occasion of the jubilee of Leo XIII, and one hundred and ninety-seven pilgrims and seventy-five priests gathered. The first meeting was at the crypt of the Montmartre Basilica in Paris. But the Martin family had left by train a few days before. Louis wanted to show his daughters Paris. It was a wonder, the Champs-Élysées, the Arc de Triomphe, the Bastille, the Palais-Royal, the Louvre, and the Printemps department stores... Thérèse discovered the Notre-Dame des Victoires Basilica, dear to Louis. She felt all the love of the Holy Virgin when she saw it, the one who had healed her on May 13, 1883; this profound benevolence that she had perceived. She also prayed that her dream could come true. She also spoke to Saint Joseph. She was not afraid of this future trip. Thérèse's only goal was to speak to the Pope and defend her vocation.

But she also suspected that this trip would include some trials on its path. Thérèse and her sister Céline are very noticed, they are flirtatious and are the youngest of the pilgrimage. However, Thérèse is shy by nature, she feels at ease in this experience. A quarter of the pilgrims are part of the nobility. They are still astonished by this luxury, they who live in the simplicity of Les Buissonnets. On the train that takes them to Italy, Thérèse looks at the landscape that passes by. She is in admiration. Her soul is delighted, she sees the greatness of God in his wonders. These memories will help her when she is at Carmel, will give her courage in the face of the ordeal of her future life as a hidden Carmelite.

Arriving in Milan, the city is visited in the smallest detail. Thérèse is very observant, the following Italian cities follow one after the other: Venice, Padua, Bologna, Loreto, which she details in her memoirs. The pilgrims stayed in the best hotels. Sometimes, Thérèse and Céline are very surprised by the conversations they hear. Thérèse understood the meaning of her vocation in Italy.

Thérèse arrived in Rome, the eternal city. She was delighted to see the Colosseum, without entering it. She wanted to go down into the arena that she describes in her memoirs with her audacity, she manages with her sister to cross the barrier. She knew that Christians had been martyred on this historic site. The two young girls took some stones as relics. Thérèse felt the



protection of God in this perilous adventure. They visited the tomb, and the house of Saint Cecilia, transformed into a church. Thérèse finds in Saint Cecilia a tender friend, she becomes her favorite saint, her intimate confidante. She admires her for her abandonment and her unlimited trust.

Thérèse is fourteen years old, she is determined to meet the Holy Father Leo XIII. Her heart beats very fast, but she is confident. She has prayed a lot for this day to come. Her goal, to make her precious request. The big day is set for Sunday, November 20, 1887. Young Thérèse must embark on the interview of her life, a great test. That day, the weather is not favorable, it rains. She sees it as a bad omen. She is sensitive to nature. She is dressed according to the Vatican ceremonial in black with a lace mantilla in her beautiful hair, hanging from her dress a medal of Leo XIII. An impressive mass is given in the pontifical chapel. At the end of the mass, the pilgrims enter the audience hall. Each bishop presents his diocese. The seventy-seven-year-old Pope was seated on a large armchair. The Martin sisters are close to him. Céline whispers to her little sister to speak. So Thérèse kneels as protocol requires and kisses the Pope's mule. She begins her interview as she recounts in her memoirs. She asks him to enter Carmel at the age of fifteen. Thérèse is moved to the point of tears running down her sweet face. She insists to the Pope and replies that she would enter Carmel if God wills it.

Little Thérèse still wanted to speak, tears like "diamonds" according to Mr. Révérony, ran down her face. She ended up being carried away by two guards, one gave her a medal from the Holy Father.

Louis tried to console his little flower but in vain. Despite everything, Thérèse felt a great peace deep in her heart, she had done everything she could to what God asked of her. But she felt very alone, as if abandoned. Thérèse had to endure this ordeal. But she knew that God was with her.

The journey to Italy continued to Naples and Pompeii, where she perceived the power of God in front of these ruins. Thérèse was aware that she was living this journey in a certain luxury. She preferred herself in a thatched roof with the hope of Carmel. She was modest and humble. The newspaper "L'Univers" echoed Thérèse's adventure with the Pope. The entire pilgrimage was aware of it. No matter, Thérèse already had allies with her. The journey to Italy ended by passing through Nice, where a glimmer of hope emanated from the vicar general who promised Thérèse support for her entry into Carmel. A detour to Marseille at Notre-Dame de la Garde and to Lyon at Notre-Dame de Fourvière, where of course Thérèse prayed. During this journey Thérèse contemplated life, rich in emotion, formative, despite her failure with the Pope, she still wanted to be a Carmelite. She wants to be a "prisoner."

She wants to give herself to souls, serve God and pray for priests. Back in Lisieux in December 1887, more than determined to enter Carmel, Thérèse knew that she would have to overcome obstacles. She was perhaps thinking of Saint Joan of Arc, a fighter for a cause that was dear to her and guided by God.

She wanted to enter Carmel on December 25, 1887, she had chosen this date which reminded her of the grace of leaving childhood in 1886. She had to send a letter to Bishop Hugonnin, but the letter remained unanswered. Thérèse now knew that she would not return on the date she had chosen. She was in tears, but did not give up, she had to trust in God and let his will be done. This ordeal made her faith grow.

On January 1, 1888, Thérèse, who would be fifteen the next day, would receive happy news after her fervent fight, it was a positive response from Mother Marie de Gonzague to Bishop Hugonnin. Thérèse will return to the Carmel of Lisieux, but only from April after Lent. She was almost impatient for this joyful news. Thus Thérèse prepared herself to become the “fiancée” of Jesus. In the meantime, life resumes its normal course at Les Buissonnets. Léonie is back home. Thérèse is again with Mrs. Papineau.

She keeps in mind her beautiful trip to Italy, which taught her a lot of knowledge. Thérèse is a young girl happy to live and full of humor that she shares with Céline. She is lucid about her

femininity and her beauty. A photo of Thérèse taken by Mrs. Besnier in April 1888 in Lisieux immortalizes the young postulant before her entry into the Carmel. She has this strength in her, and this adaptation. The long-awaited date is announced, April 9, 1888. Thérèse already knows that great trials await her at Carmel, but no matter, God calls her and forges her destiny.

*The good Lord cannot give me trials that are beyond  
my strength.*

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face

**M**onday, April 9, 1888, Thérèse, aged fifteen, entered the Carmel of Lisieux, founded in 1838, the chapel would be completed in 1852. The day before, it was the last family reunion at Les Buissonnets. Louis said almost nothing, his "little queen" felt in his eyes all this unique love for his beloved daughter. On the morning of her departure which was to lead her to her destiny, Thérèse took a last look at this place where she had spent her childhood. Facing the wooden door of the entrance to the Carmel, Thérèse felt her heart beating very fast. She had to say goodbye to her family. The whole community was waiting for her. The door closed. Finally her desire to return to the Carmel was fulfilled. It was a sweet and deep peace that she felt, she who had already gone through trials. The community that welcomes Thérèse is made up of twenty-six nuns, with an average age of forty-seven, the Carmelites are led to pray and live in community. They come from different backgrounds. The Carmelites have a schedule. It is a life of silence, focused on the love of God. The Carmelite order was reformed in the 16th century by Saint Teresa of Avila, Thérèse's patron saint. The young arrival focuses her attention on Mother Marie de Gonzague, aged fifty-four. The latter has worked hard for the young Thérèse to enter Carmel.

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Thérèse enters her small cell which charms her immediately, everything is simple. She visits Carmel, repeating with deep joy that she will be there forever. But she knows that she will encounter obstacles and sacrifices. No matter, her desire is to save souls and pray for priests. Thérèse finds herself with her sisters in the convent, Sister Agnès de Jésus (Pauline), Sister Marie du Sacré-Cœur (Marie). Louis is touched by the entry of his youngest into the convent and feels deep down God's call for this sacrifice. In the midst of her tears is a deep joy in her heart. Thérèse adapts well to her new environment. She respects the rules. All this change is far from life in Les Buissonnets. Thérèse learns that her father Louis has health problems, which worries her, she who has become a "prisoner".

She tries to comfort him during correspondence. Céline, aged nineteen, receives a marriage proposal. She remains troubled. She also decides like her sisters, that one day, she will return to the Carmel of Lisieux, she tells her father Louis.

Thérèse's life as a teenager, in community, is not so simple. Thérèse is not very good at manual work. She sometimes receives humiliating remarks. She discovers the character of each one, but no matter, Thérèse tries to adapt and observes this new life. She does not forget the purpose of her entry into Carmel. Young Thérèse decides to confide in Father Pichon, a Jesuit. She who had difficulty opening her soul, from this confession comes a deliverance concerning her young experience of life and faith

towards God. Mother Marie de Gonzague does not spare young Thérèse. She is very strict with her. It is a test for Thérèse who is fond of the prioress.

In June 1888, Louis leaves his home, he is found a few days later at the post office in Le Havre. His health is fragile, having become lucid again, he has a fixed idea, to withdraw into solitude and live like a hermit. The whole family is upset and worried. Louis seems disoriented, marked by the departure of his three daughters to the Carmel, he who was attached to his children. His youngest, who cannot be at his side to comfort him, wants to be far from the rumors about her "beloved king". Thérèse is strong, she writes to him remembering her travels and this sweet complicity between them. With this new ordeal, she also feels a dryness in her faith, no matter, she senses that she knows that greater trials await her. She suffers in her own way and in silence. His confessor, Father Pichon, must leave for Canada, Thérèse will write to him. Louis' mental state is fragile but he improves in December.

Thérèse was now sixteen years old and on January 10, 1889, she had to take the habit. That day, Thérèse saw snow in the garden. She was happy, it was a new step for her. She now wore the Carmelite habit, Thérèse officially entered the Carmelite family. At her profession, she would take a vow of chastity, obedience and poverty in public. Thérèse signed her correspondence, Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy



Face. The very young novice had new tasks within the Carmelite Church. Jesus was still in her heart. In January 1889, two photographs were taken by Father Gombault, Thérèse with a rounded face and smiling near the cross in the courtyard. The food was rich in starches, she had gained weight. She suffered from stomach pains.

In February 1889, Louis fell seriously ill, he saw and heard horrors. He takes his revolver, feeling his family threatened. He is disarmed by his uncle Isidore Guérin and a friend. The doctor decides to commit him to the Bon-Sauveur asylum in Caen. The whole family is devastated by this ordeal, especially since Louis will stay there for three years. Léonie and Céline go to boarding school with the sisters of Saint-Paul-de-Vence. A lot of correspondence is done between Lisieux and Caen. Thérèse, touched by this bitter and humiliating ordeal of her beloved father, suffers and cannot express this anguish. She prays a lot, for her family and especially for her father. Sometimes Louis has periods of lucidity, accepting the ordeal that God sends him. From her isolation, Thérèse as a teenager is courageous, it is a terrible suffering to know her father is sick. She seeks silence while relying on the Word of God in the liturgy and its readings. During these few months, Thérèse wants to make herself small. Life at Carmel is not easy, she lacks sleep. The fear of sin torments her. She suffers for her scattered family but she does not complain.

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Her love for Jesus is intact. She is flexible, authentic and smiling by nature. New tasks are entrusted to her, she adapts. Thérèse is close to Mother Geneviève of Saint Thérèse. The latter guides her several times in her life as a nun. A spiritual bond unites them.

Darkness will invite itself again into the life of the young Thérèse. She doubts her vocation, she explains it in her own way in her memoirs. She must take the veil. Confiding in her Mother Superior seeking humility, Thérèse receives laughter in return. Thérèse, who was to take her vows on September 24, 1890 for this taking of the veil, amused herself by composing on September 8, 1890, a letter of invitation to her own wedding with Jesus, a sort of announcement. To unite with her Beloved Jesus, her only love, with trust and love with purity that will help her and guide her in her vocation. That day, she was flooded with a peace surpassing any feeling that she describes in her memoirs but when the big day arrived, tears ran down the face of the seventeen-year-old girl in the absence of her beloved father. That day, her cousin Marie Guérin, daughter of Isidore Guérin, decided to return to Carmel. For two years, Thérèse had been in a permanent struggle, she had been fighting for holiness, she who had told her sister that she wanted to be a saint.

She had to prove her love to Jesus. She drew strength from her readings in her Imitation of Jesus Christ "Love can do everything, the most impossible things do not seem difficult to it...". She sensed her weakness in this fight for holiness. The winter of 1890-1891 was very cold, Thérèse almost fell ill. She invested herself every day in her daily tasks, every little gesture was done with love, but no one noticed. Thérèse stayed in her place, she did not get involved in the stories between Carmelites. She always kept her smile, and ate everything she was given. Thérèse had this singular adaptation. Everything is experienced in the experience of God's love and silence.

On December 5, 1891, Thérèse lost Mother Geneviève, who had told her that "Our God is a God of peace." It was the first time that Thérèse witnessed a death at Carmel. She dreamed of her friend three times. Thérèse attached little importance to her dreams, which were not very symbolic; she even wondered, she who thought about God all day long, why he was so little present in her dreams. She often dreamed of nature, of children catching butterflies, of birds like she had never seen.

In January 1892, an influenza epidemic struck France. Carmel did not escape this ordeal. Thérèse had just turned nineteen. She took care of the sick sisters as best she could, almost all of whom were bedridden. There were three of them who were not suffering. The life of the community was completely disrupted. Thérèse is inhabited by a certain strength despite the difficulty

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facing death and the sick. The Carmel slowly resumes its life and discovers another variant of Thérèse who has faced this ordeal.

Thérèse had a new dream, to see her sister Céline return to the Carmel. She thinks it is improbable. In May 1892, Louis leaves the Bon-Sauveur asylum in Caen. It is a relief for Thérèse and the family. He meets his daughters in the visiting room. His daughters find him changed and thinner. Despite everything, their father is lucid, but he does not have a conversation. He cries when leaving his daughters. It is the last time that Louis sees his daughters at the Carmel. The old man is installed with uncle Guérin where he finds his two daughters Léonie and Céline, who take care of their suffering father. He must be helped to move and feed him, he no longer walks.

Not having a Bible at her disposal, Thérèse asks Céline to prepare for her a collection of the Gospels and the epistles of Saint Paul; by meditating, she discovers new lights there. She seeks her path through the word of God. Only the love of God attracts her. She also draws strength from her readings of Saint John of the Cross, whom she considers the “Doctor of Love”. Thérèse feels the love of God, which guides and inspires her, which makes her a spiritual soul in search of love for her neighbor.

Thérèse has new inspirations on this June 9, the feast of the Holy Trinity. She understands why Jesus desires to be loved. This love that she describes as merciful renews her, purifies her, and does not make her fear purgatory. Thérèse describes herself as a “little white flower”, who feels that the Mercy of God will always accompany her.

Thérèse is now twenty-one years old. She has just spent five years at Carmel. A life as a young Carmelite is made up of a personal experience that is both spiritual, in search of love and the sufferings of the soul. No matter, she must go through this path, she knows that it is God's will. God has chosen her little flower for a very special mission. No matter the thorns on the path, she has this divine strength in her. In February 1893, her sister Pauline is elected Sister Agnes of Jesus for three years. A delicate situation for the two Martin sisters, who must call their sister Mother Agnes of Jesus, who has become prioress. Thérèse is nevertheless delighted to find her adoptive mother again, so to speak. But she remains lucid. Thérèse is assigned a new task, assisting Mother Marie de Gonzague, mistress of novices. The new novices must be helped with religious life.

Thérèse is also in charge of the painting department, she who loves drawing. She makes pictures. One day Thérèse begins a fresco with cherubs with whom she represents herself sleeping next to Jesus. On February 2, 1893, she tries her hand at poetry for the first time: “The Divine Dew, or The Virginal Milk of Mary.”

In June 1893, her sister Léonie returned to the Visitandines in Caen. During the summer of 1893, Thérèse continued to correspond with her sister Céline. The latter wondered about her future. Thérèse drew inspiration from the Word of God to help her sister find her way. For the first time, Thérèse spoke about abandonment while detaching herself from herself.

September 1893, Thérèse decided to stay permanently at Carmel. After three years of profession, a Carmelite normally leaves the novitiate. Her status was not the same as that of the other nuns, her tasks were modest. She always had to ask for permission. Thérèse began fasting like the other sisters. January 1894, Thérèse was now twenty-one years old. Thérèse's spirituality was enriched every day in silence. Jesus instructs her in secret, she cannot see him, nor hear his voice as she writes in her memoirs. She abandons herself with complete trust in the arms of Jesus like a little child, who guides her. She senses that God is looking for love.

Thérèse writes her first pious recreations, small plays that are performed between the nuns. At the end of January, Leo XIII authorizes the introduction of the cause for beatification of Joan of Arc, declared venerable, France is mobilized to prepare a national celebration in her honor, on May 8. Since her early childhood, Thérèse has been attracted to Joan of Arc. She loves this warrior, her story, her fight, her faith.

One day she received a grace from the latter, feeling that she herself had a fight to lead, that God had inspired her to one day be a great Saint. Premonition or inspiration, even the fight she had to lead with God to achieve the victory of love through sacrifice. She also thought of the martyrdom that Joan of Arc had experienced. But Thérèse knew that she must also experience suffering. Very inspired by the life of Joan of Arc, and helped by a book by Henri Wallon (1877) with extracts from the trial of Joan of Arc. Thérèse prepared two sharp recreations. For a time, she became an author, actress, and director.

She paid a lively tribute to this martyr. During her first performance, Thérèse was as if inhabited by the main heroine. This new creativity stimulated Thérèse and developed a new, unexpected path for the young Carmelite. Her sisters, who discovered her new talents in her, encouraged Thérèse in her creation. This is how she continued to write hymns and spiritual poems. Thérèse also enjoyed collecting small religious images. During the year 1894, Thérèse began to have sore throats and sometimes chest pains.

In July, Louis is at his worst. He is at the end of his life. His daughter Céline is at his bedside. He dies peacefully on July 29, 1894 in La Musse in Eure on the property of his uncle Guérin. Thérèse remains silent. At the end of August, she writes to her sisters. For her, the terrible ordeal began five years earlier, when Louis fell ill in 1889, with his first stroke later diagnosed as

arteriosclerosis. The youngest sees it as a deliverance and another life beginning for her beloved father. She also now feels protection from her father. She also composes a nine-stanza prayer for her father "Prayer of the Child of a Saint". She also remembers the vision of this old man that she had had in Les Buissonnets, and understood its meaning. A little later, Thérèse painted a magnificent chasuble representing two roses (her parents) and nine lilies representing the Martin children with the Holy Face as the central point, made in a dress by Zélie Martin. A tribute to the Martin family in connection with God.

In September 1894, Thérèse's great desire was to be fulfilled. Her beloved sister, Céline, decided to return to Carmel. However, there were oppositions, a new Martin sister within Carmel, what did it matter if it was God's will. She was eager for this new life that awaited her sister. Thérèse was once again faced with an experience of God, inviting us to have confidence in our destiny, thus fulfilling our desires that he patiently inspires in us. She based her theory on a word from Saint John of the Cross. Thérèse was sensitive, life in the novitiate was not easy, there was also suffering. But with the arrival of her sister, she felt courage come to her. Correspondences bear witness to the moments of life between the Martin sisters.

On September 14, the entire community welcomed Céline. For the first time in the history of the Carmelite Order, the same convent welcomed four sisters. Six years of separation between



Céline and Thérèse. Céline was twenty-five years old, she had kept a house, she had taken care of her father Louis. She was independent and direct. Céline had refused two marriage proposals. She was the artist of the Martin family. With permission, she brought a camera into the Carmel. This last element would forever fix her sister Thérèse and the community at that time. Céline took the name Sister Marie de la Sainte-Face, and later Sister Geneviève de Sainte Thérèse. Her little sister, who had lived in the Carmel for six years, took Céline under her wing.

The latter notices the path Thérèse has taken. From hardness and obedience, Thérèse is there to comfort her sister so that she does not become discouraged by this new life. On October 11, 1894, Thérèse writes a pretty letter to her sister Thérèse-Dosithée, Léonie, assuring her that one day she will emerge victorious from her great trials, and that she will one day in turn be a nun. She assures her that joy will follow the trial. Towards the end of the year, Thérèse questions herself. She thinks about her life and her vocation. In addition to six years spent at Carmel, Thérèse has suffered a lot, she has also struggled. She relies on the lives of the great Saints. Sometimes she has doubts, but she does not become discouraged. She must accept her imperfections. Thérèse meditates and prays a lot. She addresses God, entrusting her life to Him. It is also modernity that comes to invite itself into the world at this time, electricity, the telephone, the automobile... All this change brings novelty. Céline also brought small notebooks where she copied extracts of Scripture taken from the Bibles. Thérèse borrows them, she is passionate

and one day she sees a light there that fills her with joy. Thérèse understands that one must make oneself small in the arms of Jesus, which will lead her to Holiness. She is delighted with this great discovery, it is “the little way” that of spiritual childhood. Thérèse lets herself be enveloped by the love of God. She strengthens herself in divine trust. From this moment on, she will often sign her letters “the very little Thérèse”.

Her schedule within the Carmel is busy, Thérèse has very little time for herself. A new task is imposed, she must write a lot. She uses her free time, she has already composed more than fifteen poems and a recreation. No matter, Thérèse is inspired and her time is limited for her creation, she who gives so much to the other nuns. At Christmas, a period dear to Thérèse, she composes in theatrical form "The Angels at the Crib" with the baby Jesus and five angels. A month later, Thérèse takes on the role of "Joan of Arc fulfilling her mission", the title of the play. Sixteen characters in total. The entire novitiate mobilized for this new play written by Thérèse. The nuns prepare the costumes and accessories. A small incident occurs, the alcohol stoves used as a set catch fire and nearly burn the heroine. The fire is quickly brought under control. Later, Thérèse will say that she was not afraid of dying. Five photographs of her sister Céline immortalize Thérèse in the role of Joan of Arc, she is twenty-two years old and already has the soul of a fighter. She is ready to accept martyrdom for the love of Jesus.

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A new period of her life is preparing. Mother Agnès of Jesus asks her sister Thérèse to write down her childhood memories, an idea that came during a winter evening, between the Martin sisters gathered. Thérèse had also evoked some memories at Les Buissonnets. Thérèse must find the time.

At the end of January 1895, she begins to write in a small school notebook, often in the evening, in her poorly lit cell. Before beginning her writing session, she prays to the statue of the Virgin of the Smile which is in the same room. Thérèse opens her Gospel at random. She comes across a passage that speaks to her and confirms her in her vocation. Thus in particular conditions, Thérèse will write throughout the year 1895 according to her inspiration and with the light of God the beginning of her memoirs with her experiences and the determination of her vocation. This encounter between her and God, from her experience to the love of God, who never abandoned her during her life. She will fill six small notebooks. All these pages reflect her gentleness of soul. It is her sister Céline who will be her first reader, the latter is delighted with the writings of her little sister.

In the meantime, Thérèse continued her creations. She composed other poems and recreations on “request”. She was the poetess of Carmel. She wrote without worrying about style

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and spelling, Thérèse expressed her deep joy and her desires and of course her love for Jesus. She knew that God guided her. On February 26, 1895, Thérèse spontaneously wrote one of her most beautiful poems “Living for Love” in fifteen stanzas. In this composition there appears a strength of soul whose sole aim is to reach her destiny with confidence and love.

On June 9, 1895, the feast day of the Holy Trinity, Thérèse was inspired to write what she would call her “Act of Offering to Merciful Love”. In this act, she offered herself to God as a victim, she desired to love God and to make God loved. She wants to work for the Holy Church and save souls. She desires to be a saint while feeling her helplessness. She abandons herself totally in the trust and love of God. She senses that the kingdom of God is within us. Thérèse feels the power of Jesus in her, he inspires her, guides her at every moment. After reading her act of offering in front of the statue of the Virgin of the Smile with Céline, she feels a few days later a strong burning of love towards God, she sees there the confirmation of the acceptance of her offering.

In October 1895, a twenty-one-year-old seminarian, Father Maurice Bellière, asks the Carmel of Lisieux, that a sister be devoted to him so that he can be accompanied spiritually in his missionary path. Mother Agnès chooses Thérèse to accompany this young man in his mission. She is delighted, one of her dreams is coming true. She wrote a prayer to her brother priest and encouraged him in her letters.

In March 1896, Mother Marie de Gonzague was re-elected to the Carmelite order. She chose Thérèse as her assistant. She would train the novices, a delicate mission for Thérèse, who was now twenty-three years old. It required pedagogy and adaptation to each of the sisters. But Thérèse did not have the title. She found comfort in prayer. She encountered difficulties, no matter what, she taught her sisters, her elders, the little way of trust and love for God. Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face taught her spirituality by going to the essential. Thérèse also had a sense of humor during recreation by doing imitations.

In April 1896, one night Thérèse was seized with an unexpected spitting fit, she had not looked at her handkerchief, she was not worried, her light had already gone out. When she woke up, in the light of the light, she discovered her handkerchief covered in blood. She spoke to Mother Marie de Gonzague about it, begging her not to intervene. Thérèse resumed her duties and fasted. During the night, Thérèse was again seized with haemoptysis. Young Thérèse sensed that it would soon be time to find the one her heart loved.

The Carmelite order brings the family doctor, Dr. La Néele, who examines her, he notices a gland in her neck, and gives her some medication. She resumes her activities with strength and courage, she knows that God is with her, and that something

awaits her. But Thérèse is suddenly invaded by darkness, questioning her faith and her vocation. She begins to go through the tunnel of darkness, thinking that her dreams are only illusions. It is a new fight that she must lead. Despite this ordeal, Thérèse continues to write. Her faith is tested, her hope is consumed by love.

She likes to compose little poems, which comfort her by expressing her dismay. Thérèse mentions a dream she had in May. A bright dream for her. A Carmelite announces to her that she will soon die and that God is very pleased with her. Her heart was in joy, she who very rarely had dreams about the spiritual life. At the end of May 1896, Mother Marie de Gonzague entrusted her with a new missionary, Father Aldophe Roulland, from the foreign missions of Paris, he was twenty-six years old. He had to be ordained a priest before leaving for China, in the eastern Su-Tchuen region, Thérèse was delighted with her second brother. An exceptional correspondence between them took place. They exchanged their photographs. Thérèse wrote to him that nothing could separate them, not even distance. A little later, her missionary brother introduced her to Théophile Vénard, a young French priest who was a missionary in Vietnam, who died a martyr in 1861. She appreciated his writings, and she found spiritual common ground in them.

In September 1896, despite the ordeal that Thérèse was going through, she held on. She was inspired by other vocations. She

wanted to be "a warrior, priest, apostle, doctor, martyr, missionary...". She wants to accomplish for Jesus, the most heroic works, all the vocations that she details in her memoirs, but her main vocation is Love. All her "follies" as she calls them. In her spiritual quest, Thérèse opens the epistles of Saint Paul, and finds answers there. In a serene joy, Thérèse has found her vocation, she knows that it is Love that unites everything. She refuses to think of nothingness, seeking only the truth. Her trust in God is powerful, she knows that God has traced a destiny for her. Thérèse feels it deep inside herself, if she must cross nothingness, no matter she does not forget that God has also inspired her greatest desires and dreams.

On September 13, 1896, Thérèse wrote a long letter to her Sister Marie du Sacré-Cœur, inviting her to abandon herself without fear into the arms of God like a little child. Thérèse explained the depths of the Eternal, thus recognizing weak and imperfect souls. For her, Jesus does not ask for great actions, but only abandonment and recognition. Jesus only needs love.

On September 17, 1896, Thérèse wrote again to her sister, a magnificent letter speaking of trust and love feeling all the tenderness of Jesus. A symbolic gesture since her early childhood, Thérèse threw flowers, rose petals, with her sisters of Carmel at the foot of the Cross of Jesus in the courtyard, small actions that united them to Christ, and that became graces for all human beings. Thérèse was on a burning path, but she knew that she was

in the arms of God like a child. She felt this divine security. It is her smallness and her poverty that please God, she knows it. Her little soul that lets itself be guided by the love of God. On the door of her cell, she engraves "Jesus is my only Love".

January 1897, Thérèse is twenty-four years old. She has been living in the Carmel of Lisieux for almost nine years. These recent times have been difficult, she is experiencing the test of faith and the illness that is eating away at her. She knows that she will soon die. Two years ago she began to write her memories in manuscript form but also various compositions. She tries to keep her strength within the Carmel, but her illness does not improve. Thérèse is tired, but despite everything, she finds the strength to continue writing. She composes a poem for Théophane Vénard "My soul resembles his", she writes new recreations. Thérèse is inspired to do good after her death. She has desires to be a missionary at the Carmel of Hanoi. In her fight against her earthly combat, she finds the words in a new poem "My Weapons". She reads her fighter's sentences to her sisters, without knowing that this special moment will be the last. The community has just heard Thérèse's testament.

In April 1897, a dramatic turn of events concerning the Diana Vaughan affair that had fascinated Catholic public opinion, it is nothing more than a hoax, this woman Diana Vaughan never existed. It is a man who unmasks himself, Léon Taxil. The latter recounted her adventures in the satanic world and her



conversion under the influence of Joan of Arc. Her writings had arrived within the Carmel. Thérèse is touched and finds a common point with Joan of Arc. At the request of Mother Agnès, Thérèse tries to write a poem for this woman. But she does not succeed. She decides to send her a letter and a photo of herself taken during her performance on Joan of Arc at Carmel, she will receive a response.

Thérèse had been inspired by a play featuring names taken from the writings of Diana Vaughan. At that time, it was important to also fight against evil and fight it with humility. The photograph sent of Thérèse as Joan of Arc was used to fuel the revelation of this scandal. Thérèse, already tested in this spiritual path and in illness, feels deeply humiliated. No matter, she seeks comfort in her prayers. She confides in her missionary brothers Bellière and Roulland, who share together "the little way of trust and love".

Thérèse's state of health does not improve, she can no longer participate in the activities of Carmel. Mother Agnès freely notes down some of her words, her "last conversations". In May 1897, the pain was persistent, Thérèse suffered in silence. Despite the ordeal, she continued to sew in her cell. At the Carmel of Paris, a Carmelite, Mother Henriette, had heard about the beautiful compositions of the young sister Thérèse of Lisieux. She wanted to receive a poem.

Thérèse decided to compose “Une rose effeuillée” in five stanzas. But Mother Henriette felt that a verse was missing. Thérèse was surprised and invited her to create the verse, for her desire was to be stripped to delight God. She thought that only God could understand her.

Thérèse would continue to write other poems. She felt that her poems could do good. She shared them with the community, with her missionary brothers, and her family. Thérèse also wondered about death, she felt close to one of the plays she had written about Joan of Arc facing death.

At the end of May 1897, Thérèse revealed to her sister Mother Agnès her first two bouts of spitting blood the previous year. Mother Agnès was very worried about her younger sister Thérèse. Pauline thought back to Thérèse's notebooks, the memories she had written at her request. In June, Thérèse continued her writing in a small black moleskin notebook, which she considered too beautiful for her.

Thérèse was still suffering, her illness continued to eat away at her. Despite everything, she kept her sense of humour and her gift for imitation. Thérèse continued her way of the cross, she wanted to be a saint but felt her smallness, she had to climb the mountain. She did not get discouraged, and believed that God could not inspire unrealizable desires. Thérèse had to grow up,

which was impossible for her, because she had to accept her imperfections. But Thérèse wanted to find the way to Heaven by a small, simple path. She had to make herself very small.

She writes that she has suffered a lot with sadness since her childhood, but now she suffers in joy and peace. Thérèse lives her test of faith, a dark tunnel that must be crossed because at the end there is light. The darkness watches to disturb her soul, whistling nothingness to her. But Thérèse knows that there is a Heaven, she wants to believe. No one knows what she is really going through except God and her guardian angels. Thérèse always remains smiling and cheerful, she has little wishes like eating a chocolate éclair.

A novena is made to Our Lady of Victories for the healing of Thérèse. She continues her very inspired writings on faith, in her memoirs she continues to justify her love and trust in God, relying on religious writings. She recognizes the will of God in this spiritual path.

Life with the sisters of Carmel was not always easy with the different characters, but Thérèse always sought to find the positive point in each of them. Thérèse also knew she was imperfect. Having a little moment of respite, Céline takes a photo of Thérèse, who poses with two photos in her hand, that of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, which confirms her vocation.

But Thérèse is exhausted, Céline will take a second photograph that will immortalize her sister forever. Thérèse senses that she will soon die.

Despite the worsening of her illness, Thérèse continues her writing which will again evoke the period of her feelings between 1896 and 1897 and her quest for God. Thérèse has an excellent memory, she remembers dates and actions, she has always been very observant. She remembers the psalms that have enlightened her spiritual thinking and that she quotes in her writings and which are important for her to continue on her path. She attaches great importance to the soul.

She places her trust in God who has traced a path for her child. For Thérèse, prayer is a simple thought dedicated to Heaven, “a surge of the heart”, a gesture of love experienced in the midst of a trial or happiness, which enriches the soul by uniting it to God. She also feels protected by the Holy Virgin, she feels like a maternal protection.

Sometimes it does not take much for Thérèse to console a sad soul, with her kind smile, a word is enough to bring a smile back to this soul. Sometimes, she also feels discouraged with the sisters of Carmel. She wants to be kind to everyone to please Jesus. Sometimes Thérèse is surprised by her writings. But she feels within her this strength that God has given her since her childhood, she has dedicated her youth to God, with confidence and love. Thérèse knows that she will die soon.

From this hidden life, Sister Thérèse leaves traces of a unique destiny and a spiritual search that she has experienced with complete confidence despite the trials she has gone through. She held on. Her spiritual determination is a simple path full of wisdom, as her life has been. At the end of June, she had her last conversations with her family in the visiting room of the Carmel. Sister Thérèse had difficulty writing; she now used a small pencil instead of her pen.

July 1897, Thérèse is worse. She has a fever, her spitting up of blood is different and more serious, hemoptysis is diagnosed. The doctor considers her to be "dying". Few people escape this illness. Despite the news, Thérèse feels a certain joy. She confides in the chaplain and asks for extreme unction, which will be refused a few days later. Thérèse is still very cheerful. She is placed in the Carmel infirmary. Her room is on the ground floor, it overlooks the Carmel garden. Beside her, her favorite images, The Holy Face of Christ, The Virgin, Théophane Vénard... the statue of the Virgin of the Smile.

Mother Agnès is at her bedside. She suffers from different pathologies linked to her illness. Mother Agnès continues to collect her words. As her condition worsens day by day, Thérèse finds the strength to talk with the Carmelites. She also wonders how her writings will be used.

Thérèse asks her sister Pauline, Mother Agnès, to make all the corrections she deems useful in her last unfinished writings. She has a presentiment that after her death, her writings and her vocation will travel the entire world.

Despite the trials she goes through, Thérèse suffers without saying anything, even if sometimes she also has her spiritual sufferings, she keeps her freshness and her youth with her smile, and her liveliness of mind and her cheerfulness. She who wants to die of love, universal love. She no longer has the strength to write in her little black notebook. Thérèse continues with Mother Agnès the little mysterious sentences until the most prophetic one on her mission. Thérèse feels that her mission is about to begin, her goal is to make God loved as she loves Him through a small, simple way, she wants to give herself to souls, she wants to do good on earth.

Mother Agnès talks with Thérèse about a possible publication of her writings. She has confidence in her sister. By rereading some of her writings, Thérèse senses that her writings could do good. She takes advantage of a moment of respite to write her last letters to her missionary brothers and her family. The community and the family pray for Thérèse. At the end of July, Thérèse is seriously ill, she receives extreme unction. But the young patient is still there. She does not understand.

At the beginning of August, there is a respite, but the patient is affected throughout her body and particularly her lungs. Long moments of solitude for Thérèse who remembers her childhood and her life at the Carmel, she realizes that her life will be short.

Her crucifix with Jesus has never left her since she fell ill. Her three sisters are gathered with her. On the feast of the Assumption, Thérèse experiences various great sufferings. Doctor Néele, Thérèse's cousin, is the first to diagnose tuberculosis, a disease that was ravaging at the time.

On August 19, 1897, Thérèse offers her last communion to Father Hyacinthe Loyson, a famous preacher, who had publicly broken his Order, she had prayed a lot for his return to the Church. At the end of August, Thérèse is emaciated, has difficulty breathing, the disease is throughout her body. She feels almost losing her mind, she is exhausted. She keeps the faith, she knows that God helps her. At the end of August, Thérèse experienced an unexpected remission, she seemed to no longer suffer, but she only breathed with half a lung until mid-September. During these little moments of grace, Thérèse plucked the petals from roses for Jesus, inviting the Carmelites to pick the petals that could be of pleasure later. She liked to observe the garden of Carmel.

During these few days of respite, Mother Agnès always collected the words of Thérèse, who was always joking. Her fraternal charity, which was dear to her, did not leave her in her last moments of life. She was in her terrible ordeal, but also in a certain peace. Thérèse spoke less and less. She had difficulty making the sign of the cross. She had difficulty breathing.

At the end of September, the community was with Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face, a prayer for the dying was recited. Thérèse lives her agony, her last moments. She lives a night of nightmares, she prays to the Virgin Mary. Thérèse is suffocating, but a certain strength is with her, God has never abandoned her. Despite the trying pain, she manages to speak to her sisters and Mother Marie de Gonzague. It is a moving fight that little Thérèse leads. Mother Agnès goes to pray for her sister in front of the statue of the Sacred Heart to help her little sister in her fight. Thérèse holds her crucifix, despite everything she has a smile.

Mother Marie de Gonzague is at her bedside, Thérèse speaks to her, seeking comfort, but Thérèse knows that she is going to die at that moment, turning towards her crucifix she addresses God by affirming her love. Her last words while looking at her crucifix were "Oh! I love him... My God, I love you".



Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face has a peaceful face, her shining eyes fixed slightly on the Virgin of the Smile. She seems in ecstasy. This moment lasts an instant, then she closes her eyes and expires, it is around seven twenty p.m. this Thursday, September 30, 1897 at the Carmel of Lisieux.

Thérèse has a mysterious smile on her lips, she looks very beautiful as in the photograph taken by her sister Céline. Thérèse is exposed in the heart of the gate of the Carmel according to custom, then she is buried on October 4, 1897 in the cemetery of Lisieux, in complete privacy. Life in the Carmel resumes its rhythm with prayers, silence, work... A young woman of twenty-four years has died, with her unique desire to accomplish her mission with God with trust and love.

Nine years spent in this Carmel of Lisieux, for Thérèse who returned only at the age of fifteen, the age when a young girl discovers and searches for herself. Thérèse had already found her way, this hidden experience is not insignificant, it forged her future destiny.

On June 9, 1897, Thérèse wrote to her missionary brother, Father Bellière: "I am not dying, I am entering life and everything that I cannot tell you here below, I will make you understand from Heaven."

*Let us not tire of praying. Trust works miracles.*

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face

**M**other Agnes is at work after Thérèse's death, a destiny is needed for Sister Thérèse's writings, three precious manuscripts, manuscript A written at the request of Mother Agnes of Jesus (Pauline), Thérèse's sister, mainly containing her childhood memories that she wrote in 1895. Manuscript B is a set of correspondences to her sister Marie du Sacré-Cœur (Marie), Thérèse's older sister, she also addresses Jesus and Thérèse discovers her vocation, love. Manuscript C is written on the orders of Mother Marie de Gonzague, at the request of Mother Agnes, who feels that her sister is going to die, it is necessary to give a continuation to the story of her life. Thérèse speaks of the graces she has received and her spiritual discoveries. The latter will be interrupted because of the worsening of Thérèse's illness. Letters and poems will be added.

Under the responsibility of Mother Marie de Gonzague, a team was created. Mother Agnès corrected Thérèse's writings, whose spelling was not her strong point, which she reworked in the form of chapters to make a volume, knowing that Thérèse trusted her sister Pauline for this type of exercise. The document was prefaced by Mother Marie de Gonzague and bore the title: "A Song of Love or the Passage of an Angel." A new correction was made by Godefroid Madelaine of the Fathers of Mondaye, in whom the Carmelites had confidence.

In March 1898, the whole was presented to Mgr Hugonin, the bishop of Thérèse, who approved this document for printing. In April 1898, the book had a new title, following a correspondence between Godefroid Madelaine and Mother Marie de Gonzague, "Story of a Soul Written by Itself." Uncle Isidore Guérin took part financially in the publication project.

The obituary circular, promised to Thérèse, became a future 475-page book, published and printed by the Saint-Paul printing house in Bar-le-Duc. On September 30, 1898, to the day, one year after Thérèse's death, the book entitled "Histoire d'une âme" was being finalized. Its initial print run was two thousand copies at a price of four francs. The book was sent to all the Carmelites in France as well as to ecclesiastical figures. The Carmel of Lisieux received admiration in return, apart from a few who objected to the age and experience of the young Carmelite.

From 1898, Sister Geneviève, Céline, would draw and paint a series of paintings evoking Thérèse, on earth as in heaven. After the death of her little sister, she imagines (or senses) that she has already begun her mission. Céline is gifted at painting, she is the artist of the family. Her painting Thérèse aux Roses seems so alive to her that she cannot hold back her tears when she sees that she has painted her little sister with such realism. She also wanted to represent "the invisible".

On January 28, 1899, Thérèse's third sister, Léonie, thirty-five years old, re-enters religion at the Visitation of Caen, this entry will be definitive. Léonie will become Sister Françoise-Thérèse, she who has had a different journey from her sisters at the Carmel of Lisieux.

In May 1899, a second edition of "L'Histoire d'une âme" is planned. Uncle Isidore Guérin takes care of carefully correcting the proofs, he is surprised by this success. A new agreement is given by Mgr Amette on this new edition. In 1900, a new printing of "The Story of a Soul" of six thousand copies, with a first translation into English in 1901, then others will be added from 1902 (Polish, Dutch, German, Portuguese, Spanish, Japanese, Russian...).

Thousands of readers are touched by the grace and simplicity of Thérèse, which brings spiritual comfort. Testimonies arrive at the Carmel of Lisieux, answered prayers, healings, graces, protections, apparitions... Pilgrimages follow one another to her tomb in Lisieux. Relics, souvenirs of Sister Thérèse are requested from the Carmel. It seems that Thérèse has begun the mission that she had set for herself during her time on earth.

A young Scottish priest, Thomas Nimmo Taylor, ordained in 1897, came to visit Mother Marie de Gonzague and the Martin sisters. He read “The little flower of Jesus” English version of “The Story of a Soul”. Deeply touched by the writings of the young Carmelite, he spoke to the Carmelites about a possible canonization of Thérèse, the latter at that time were not in favor. Sister Thérèse’s book also inspired vocations to Carmel and religious orders. Little Thérèse was prayed to well before her canonization, testimonies of prayers from all over the world, answered by Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face, continued to arrive at the Carmel of Lisieux. Faithful from all over the world asked that she be recognized as a Saint.

In July 1906, François Veillot revealed in the newspaper *l’Univers* that Father Prevost was preparing the cause of the Carmelite in Rome. In March 1907, Pius X wanted her glorification, which he already called “the greatest saint of modern times”.

As for the Carmelite sisters of Lisieux, they had preserved everything concerning Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face, already called by the people “the little saint”. In the meantime, the Carmel decided to publish a new document concerning the stories of miracles or interventions of Thérèse, entitled “Rain of Roses”. Testimonies received at the Carmel of Lisieux since the ascension of Thérèse’s book.

The ordinary process of beatification opened in August 1910, thirteen years after her death. More than thirty-five people testified about the life of Thérèse, including nine Carmelites who had lived with her. It would take one hundred and nine study sessions for her future beatification. On August 26, 1910, born Agnès Gonxha Bojaxhui took the name of Mother Teresa at the age of eighteen in homage to the future Saint Thérèse of Lisieux.

On September 6, 1910, Thérèse's body was exhumed in the presence of Bishop Lemonnier with more than one hundred people. A strong smell of violets was noted by the gravediggers among the debris, the palm had remained intact. The remains of Thérèse's body were placed in a new coffin, then in a new vault. Testimonies continued to arrive at Carmel, which carefully guarded and preserved the proof that something supernatural was happening from Heaven. Thérèse had said it, had written it. She did not intend to remain inactive.

In June 1914, Pius X in Rome signed the introduction of the cause for Thérèse's beatification. But the First World War would delay this very first recognition within the Church. During this time, the war broke out and claimed many victims. Requests for soldiers to cross over multiplied. The fame of little Thérèse continued, even on the German side. Despite the situation, the Carmel received letters, sometimes more than five hundred a day.

Testimonies that added a special dimension to Sister Thérèse.

She intervened on the front in a spiritual way. In March 1915, the apostolic trial opened in Bayeux under the order of the new Pope Benedict XV, but with difficulty, the war raged. On December 19, 1915, Édith Giovanna Gassion was born. She was miraculously healed as a child by Thérèse, Édith (Piaf) would have a special devotion all her life for little Thérèse.

In 1917, a new photograph of Thérèse was given to the Carmel by the Poupet family, photographers in Alençon. It was retouched by her sister Céline in gouache and pencil and then restored by laboratory work.

In October 1917, the apostolic process was completed in the cathedral of Bayeux, it would take ninety-one sessions. A sanctuary was needed in Lisieux to welcome visitors coming to Lisieux to be as close as possible to their protector. On January 1, 1921, born Ali Alain Mimoun Ould Kacha, in Algeria, would become a fervent believer in Thérèse.

In August 1921, Benedict XV announced the decree on the heroicity of the Venerable Servant of God, and gave a speech on spiritual childhood. On March 26, 1923, the relics of Thérèse were transported to the Carmel, under a reliquary. Two miracles are necessary for the cause of beatification, two cures will be submitted and recognized by the doctors, selected from hundreds.



The sanctuary prepares the beatification of Sister Thérèse, a magazine "Thérèse de Lisieux" is created, with the organization of different festivities.

Pope Pius XI makes Sister Thérèse "the star of his pontificate", he is close to Thérèse. On April 29, 1923, Pope Pius XI presides over the beatification of Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face, in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Pope Pius XI sees in Thérèse "a word of God" for our century. Father Brottier, who took over the management of the Orphelins Apprentis d'Auteuil, was the first to dedicate a chapel in Paris XVIe, to the blessed Thérèse of the Child Jesus, he had chosen Thérèse to protect "his" orphans. The first mass was celebrated on December 25, 1925. The images of Thérèse and her little path cross the world. Testimonies continue to flow to Carmel. The mystery of God is immense. Thérèse continues her posthumous journey with fervor.

On May 17, 1925, the solemn canonization of Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face took place in Saint Peter's in Rome, with a homily by Pius XI in the presence of sixty thousand people. In the evening, five hundred thousand pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

On September 30, 1925, for the first time, the universal Church celebrated Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face, but also known simply as Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. In December 1927,

she was proclaimed Patron Saint of the Missions, equal to Saint Francis Xavier. Since her beatification, more than six hundred thousand pilgrims to the Norman land of the young Thérèse. To access the chapel of Carmel and Les Buissonnets, you have to be patient.

Millions of portraits of Thérèse distributed throughout the world. Books and studies are written on Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. The spiritual heritage of Thérèse fascinates, she who dreamed of becoming a saint and a missionary, destiny is fulfilled and continues its path. Thérèse, who wanted to spend her heaven doing good on earth, continues her destiny in a "supernatural" way.

*"The science of love, oh yes! this word resounds  
softly in the ear of my soul, I desire only this science."*

*In the Heart of the Church, my Mother, I will be  
Love...  
thus I will be everything...  
thus my dream will be realized!!!... "*

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face

**A**s early as 1926, it was necessary to think of a place to welcome pilgrims in Lisieux. It was a major project that was announced. Thousands of donations poured in from all over the world to thank Saint Therese, the one who, through her simplicity and her love to soothe souls in their suffering or their worries, through prayer, gave strength, courage and hope. From the beginning of the work, a significant number of people participated in the future construction of the basilica, to give thanks to God and to Saint Therese. The project was large-scale, and a place was selected, a hill overlooking Lisieux.

Pope Pius XI wanted the most beautiful basilica, the largest, as quickly as possible for the most beloved saint in the world. Bishop Germain, rector of the sanctuary, enthusiastically followed the project for Therese who continued to work tirelessly from the heights of Heaven. The appeal for funds was a real success. On September 30, 1929, Cardinal Charost, Archbishop of Rennes, laid the first stone of the basilica. Built by French architects from father to son L-M Cordonnier, sculptor, R. Coin, mosaicists, master glassmaker, J. and P. Gaudin. A majority of Norman and foreign workers of Italian, Spanish and Polish origin participated in the construction.

Surface area of the future basilica one of the largest of the 20th century, four thousand five hundred square meters. In 1930, Mother Agnès proposed to Father Martin new missions for the Oblate Sisters of Saint Therese. Pilgrims had to be welcomed in Lisieux and Alençon. Opening the same year of a reception house,

called "L'Ermitage Sainte Thérèse" with a capacity of two hundred and fifty beds.

On May 17, 1932, inauguration of the crypt. In April 1933, birth of the congregation of the Oblate Sisters of Saint Therese, following the meeting of its two founders Father Gabriel Martin and Therese of Mercy, Marie Béatrix Douillard with joy and confidence under the benevolence of Saint Therese of Lisieux. On April 2, 1934, inauguration of the Stations of the Cross near the basilica.

On July 11, 1937, blessing of the basilica by Cardinal Paccelli, future Pope Pius XII. The basilica is inspired by Norman and Italian architecture with Byzantine forms. A style between the East and the West. In July 1939, Cardinal Piazza blessed the cross of the dome made of stone from the battlefield of Verdun in homage to the Poilus. On January 19, 1940, Marie, eighty years old, died at the Carmel of Lisieux, elder sister of Thérèse, and to whom manuscript B of "The Story of a Soul" is partly dedicated where Thérèse discovers her vocation, Love. Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart was also Thérèse's godmother. Marie had cared for little Thérèse during her strange illness.

On June 16, 1941, Léonie, seventy-eight years old, died at the Visitation of Caen, servant of God, Sister Françoise-Thérèse was the first to take the little path of love and abandonment of her little sister Thérèse. Her childhood was difficult and she did not experience the same life path as her sisters. Léonie was the godmother of Thérèse's confirmation on June 14, 1884. She also worked for Thérèse's influence with humility. She was also a witness during the apostolic process of Thérèse's cause for beatification. On May 3, 1944, Pope PIUS XI named her secondary patron saint of France, like Saint Joan of Arc.

During the Second World War in June 1944, the city of Lisieux was bombed, the basilica was spared despite bomb impacts, as well as the Carmel, Les Buissonnets, and Saint-Pierre Cathedral. The sisters had taken refuge in the crypt of the basilica with Thérèse's relics and the most important archive pieces. Thanks to the English major Georges Warren (1/6 Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment), born in 1915, who indicated on August 23, 1944, to the commander of the British tanks, that the basilica was empty of German soldiers. His intervention saved the building. On August 25, 1944, solemn mass brought together soldiers to celebrate the liberation of Lisieux in the presence of General de Gaulle. After the Second World War, Thérèse's relics traveled to the major cities of France. Testimonies continued to arrive at Carmel.

On July 28, 1951, Pauline passed away at the age of ninety. Mother Agnès of Jesus experienced the extraordinary rise of her beloved little sister, the one who wanted to do good on earth after her death and accomplish the mission that Thérèse had given herself on earth. Pauline had been a mother to Thérèse. She had encouraged Thérèse to write down her childhood memories and to write in general. Texts that became testaments reflecting the spiritual, thus traveling around the world in record time to the point of erecting a colossal basilica paying homage to all the love of the divine mystery.

A multitude of books are published on Saint Therese of Lisieux. A particular request is often mentioned, to read the original notebooks of "The Story of a Soul". On July 11, 1954, consecration of the basilica by Mgr Martin, Archbishop of Rouen under the presidency of Cardinal Feltin. In 1956, under the order of Pope Pius XII, Father François de Sainte Marie, Carmelite, printed the facsimile version of the original autobiographical manuscripts of Saint Therese.

On February 25, 1959, the last living Martin sister, Céline died at the age of ninety, Sister Geneviève de Sainte Thérèse, the artist of the Martin family, leaving all her precious iconographies: her paintings, her drawings, and especially her unique photographs of Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face. All her dedication to the service of God for her beloved little sister, whom she had imagined as an angel fulfilling her mission.

A spiritual correspondence was established between the two sisters between 1888 and 1894. Céline remained with her sick father Louis until his death before returning to the Carmel of Lisieux in 1894 where she introduced to the Carmel the family statue "The Virgin of the Smile", which would be with Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face until her death and which had cured her of her "strange illness" when Thérèse was ten years old.

An album containing photographs of Thérèse was published in 1961, it brought to life the true face of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. Various publications of her works followed. As well as studies, books, plays, and a few films. A film "Thérèse" by Alain Cavalier released in 1986, with Catherine Mouchet in the role of Thérèse, won great success at the Cannes Film Festival with the Jury Prize and at the Césars in 1987, awarded best film. Millions of people have read "The Story of a Soul" around the world. There is no longer any need to count the number of reissues of "The Story of a Soul", the first printing of which was financed by Thérèse's benevolent uncle, Isidore Guérin in 1898.



Thousands of churches bear the name of Saint Thérèse, in her honor, and she is present in many churches throughout the world, so people can meditate. Thérèse's relics have been traveling the world since 1994, bringing together thousands of people from different backgrounds, she mobilizes her energy from her Heaven, she who had said "I would like to travel the earth", her desire was realized, and charity is accomplished in the experience. Everyone lives their own intimate journey with Thérèse and God.

*I have never sought anything but the truth.*

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face

**M**illions of visitors of all categories have passed and will pass through Lisieux every year. It is a true pilgrimage to discover little Thérèse, from her childhood home in Les Buissonnets to the basilica, passing by the Carmelite chapel and Saint-Pierre Cathedral. Everything is done in silence, in experience. Each person has their own intimate story with little Thérèse without calculation, everything is a mystery, everything is simply in the heart.

On June 2, 1980, Pope John Paul II was in Lisieux, a fervent admirer of little Thérèse and her spiritual journey. He meditated in the infirmary where Thérèse entered the second half of her life after suffering. The Holy Father spoke on the esplanade of the basilica in front of more than a hundred thousand people. It was Pope John Paul II again, seventeen years later, one hundred years after Thérèse's death, on October 19, 1997, who proclaimed her the thirty-third Doctor of the Church, Thérèse was the third woman to obtain the title. At the time, Bishop Guy Gaucher, auxiliary bishop of Bayeux-Lisieux, worked hard to obtain this title for Thérèse. His many writings and his involvement on Thérèse are part of an enlightening work on Thérèse's life and her spirituality.

Many people work every day to make Saint Thérèse and her influence known throughout the world. A remarkable work that is done in silence and trust and love. In her writings, Thérèse had expressed this desire to also be a Doctor and God had inspired her, she had felt it so well. Trust and love led her to a universal faith enlightened by God. A small, simple path, which she has taken since her early childhood. Charity also gave her the key to her vocation. Thérèse's path continues in the love and mystery of God.

Entering the Basilica of Lisieux, which is immense; walking around it and discovering the chapels from different countries around the world as a way of thanking you; you only have to look up at the sky of the basilica to see the full spiritual dimension of Thérèse, and the impressive work that has been done since its construction. When a ray of sunshine penetrates the stained glass windows of the basilica, a divine light illuminates the interior of the building.

The basilica is always adorned with a thousand and one flowers, often roses in homage to the little Saint of modern times. Hundreds of candles from visitors light up the reliquary of Thérèse, offered by Pope Pius XI. Here, thousands of people of different nationalities and religions gather, praying with hope. Beautiful masses or organizations are celebrated in the basilica, songs, music, in order to honor God and Therese who give us. Sometimes for a moment, pilgrims sing in front of the reliquary.

Each one lives a path of intimate love with the Divine.

But the beauty of this place is also the crypt. The mosaic is radiant, it attaches importance to the beauty of creation as Thérèse loved to observe. At the altar, a magnificent mosaic of Thérèse with angels under a rainbow, a statue that represents her with her arms raised to the sky with the last words she spoke before dying. Twelve altars are dedicated to her favorite Saints. It is a very peaceful place that recalls the simplicity of Thérèse, the smallest detail is important and invites reflection. On September 7, 2011, the Basilica of Lisieux was classified as a historic monument.

On March 26, 1994, Pope John Paul II declared Thérèse's parents, Louis and Zélie Martin, Venerable. Thérèse has always been marked since her early childhood by the deep faith and religious fervor of her beloved parents. On July 3, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI recognized the healing of a young child in Italy attributed to Louis and Zélie Martin. On October 19, 2008, the Martin couple was proclaimed Blessed in Lisieux. The reliquary of the Martin couple is currently in the crypt, a chapel within the basilica will be dedicated to them.

Pope Francis, who also has confidence in Thérèse, also recognized a miracle granted to the Martin couple. In July 2015, the Cause for beatification of Sister Françoise-Thérèse, Léonie, who had an atypical spiritual journey, was opened. On October 18, 2015, the Church allowed for the first time in its history the

canonization of a couple, Louis and Zélie Martin. The Martin family has gone through great trials, but they have always kept the faith in the face of difficulties. Love and trust in God that led them to have an exemplary destiny despite an ordinary life guided by God.

The exterior of the basilica is also remarkable and welcoming with symbols dear to Therese. An immense bell tower built in the 1960s, donated by Belgium and the Netherlands, houses fifty-one bells including the nine-ton bourdon named "Therese, protectress of peoples". The carillon is among the most beautiful in Europe.

A few steps from the basilica, pilgrims and visitors can go to the Carmelite chapel enlarged in 1923, a very peaceful place, a scent of flowers welcomes the visitor, it is here that a marble representation of Therese during her last breath is surrounded by fresh flowers. Above the shrine is the original of the statue of the Virgin of Smiles who healed her at the age of ten, on May 13, 1883. Without forgetting in Paris, the Notre-Dame des Victoires basilica, refuge of sinners, the Martin family requested masses and prayed a lot, it is a high Theresian spiritual place. Great graces were granted to the Martin family, thus testifying their love for God and the Virgin Mary. A chapel is dedicated to them. It is a peaceful place full of history.

The Carmel of Lisieux, which cannot be visited, the Carmelite monastery founded in 1838, welcomed a fifteen-year-old girl in 1888 with a very particular ambition, to make God loved as she loved Him. From her experience at Carmel, she wrote her spiritual inspiration, her humble testament, her desire to do good, her simplicity of small things, her merciful love, missionary at heart. Thérèse lived nine years at Carmel where she found her way. She wrote her precious manuscripts with intuition and determination. But Thérèse also left behind correspondence rich in teaching, she who put her soul on paper, without any ulterior motive that these letters would one day be revealed to the eyes of the world.

Thérèse giving herself through her heart, which today reveals its brilliance because it is pure. Prayers, magnificent poems, short plays, the passion for her favorite Saints, which fueled her life as a young Carmelite. Since then, the sisters have never stopped working for their little sister Thérèse, they carefully guard the archives, they pray daily, they receive testimonies from all over the world on the interventions of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux since the ascension of little Thérèse. There is a whole environment around Thérèse, which works for the knowledge of the spirituality of Thérèse and the Love of God.

In the city center of Lisieux, the Saint-Pierre cathedral, a jewel of Norman Gothic art is worth visiting. Located outside the city of Lisieux on the road to Pont-l'Évêque, the house of Buissonnets where the Martin family came to settle in 1877; rented by Louis Martin and acquired in 1909 by Thérèse's cousin, became a place of pilgrimage in 1911, in 1922 it was bought by the real estate company of pilgrimages. It is a peaceful place that awaits the visitor, this pretty bourgeois house does not leave one indifferent. The warm welcome has been given since 1931, inviting visitors in small groups to enter the house and begin the short tour of different rooms and scenes from Thérèse's life, where everything is explained in audio. You have to climb a small staircase to arrive in the room where Thérèse was cured of her "strange illness" on May 13, 1883 by the Virgin of the Smile.

A special atmosphere reigns in this small room, as if beautiful and ineffable. In the last room of the visit, the visitor can find familiar objects of Thérèse from her time on earth. On leaving, the visitor can stroll in the garden and see marvelous flowers, small shelters, birds... and a statue that immortalizes Thérèse and her father Louis, during her request to return to Carmel, testifying to the father and daughter relationship. This house is a reminder that there was indeed the existence of a family life and more particularly of the youngest whose destiny is unique and full of grace.



Ninety-five kilometers from Lisieux is in Alençon, the Notre-Dame basilica and the birthplace of Thérèse, a house of an ordinary, humble couple, who worked and raised their children, with great trust and love in God. In June 1912, Alexander James Grant, a Scot, will become one of the very first guardians of the house, a fervent admirer of Thérèse, he will be a witness at her trial and of Thérèse's rise with the testimonies of the people touched by little Thérèse.

In 2007, visitors could admire Louis's small watercolors and some of Zélie's lace, the house was very simple. The small Sainte Thérèse chapel, next to the house, inaugurated in 1928, is a place full of meaning and symbols, which call for reflection, meditation and prayer. One of the murals represents angels and a main angel above the child's cradle, under the room where Thérèse was born in the Martin couple's bedroom.

The Martin family welcomed their last child, a little girl, named Marie Françoise Thérèse. She was only two days old, Thérèse was baptized at the Notre-Dame church, the very place where her parents were united, elevated to a basilica in December 2009 by Pope Benedict XVI. Baptism is a pure act, enriched with love from the hand of God. And it is this loving hand that will lead little Thérèse to her destiny.

*I understood that Love contained all vocations, that Love was everything, that it embraced all times and all places... In a word, that it is Eternal!*

*Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face*

*Thérèse left on our earth what seems to have become an example of a spiritual path to approach faith and the joy of believing in complete freedom. She is a peace activist. This is no coincidence! Her spiritual power grows day by day, through her message that remains universal, "Love". At a precise moment two souls meet as if God were guiding us towards our destiny, the example of Louis and Zélie Martin shows us with simplicity the path to holiness. Life is precious. On our path of life, the sorrows, the joys, the sacrifices and the acceptance that there is also a divine justice. The human soul is inexplicable, and it keeps all its mystery. God gives us a gift at our birth to accompany us in our life.*

*There is a strong link between heaven and earth, just as between nature and man, visible or invisible. Two months before her death, Thérèse reread a few pages of childhood memories at the request of Mother Agnès of Jesus. Moved, she declared: "What I reread in this notebook is so much my soul! These pages will do much good. Then we will know better the sweetness of the good Lord..." Charity also gave her the key to her vocation. Thérèse's path continues always in the love and mystery of God. Trust and love led her to a universal faith enlightened by God.*

*All the mysteries of eternity and the truth about religion delighted her sensitive young girl's soul. To unite with her beloved Jesus, her only love, through trust and love that will*

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*help and guide her in her vocation. This was undoubtedly what remained most intimate to her, this dialogue between the invisible and love.*

*This spirituality that soothes, there is something supernatural about Thérèse. The story does not end there. Thérèse left behind treasures of singular inspiration. For over a century, Lisieux has witnessed Thérèse's ascension, there is indeed a divine force that surrounds all this mystery. Thérèse is once again faced with an experience of God, inviting us to have confidence in our destiny, thus fulfilling us with our desires that he patiently inspires in us. She teaches her spirituality by going to the essential, living with love in the most humble gestures, without forcing anyone.*

*There is no longer any need to count the number of testimonies on the intervention in the lives of people touched by Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, because it is immense and it is indeed a reality and a wisdom. Each person lives an intimate journey with Thérèse and God and the Saints who accompany them. If we are willing to accept this path of trust and love. She who wanted to be a missionary, her soul sails to the four corners of the world.*

*Her relics continue to travel the world without a sound, and each time it is a real success without making the headlines.*

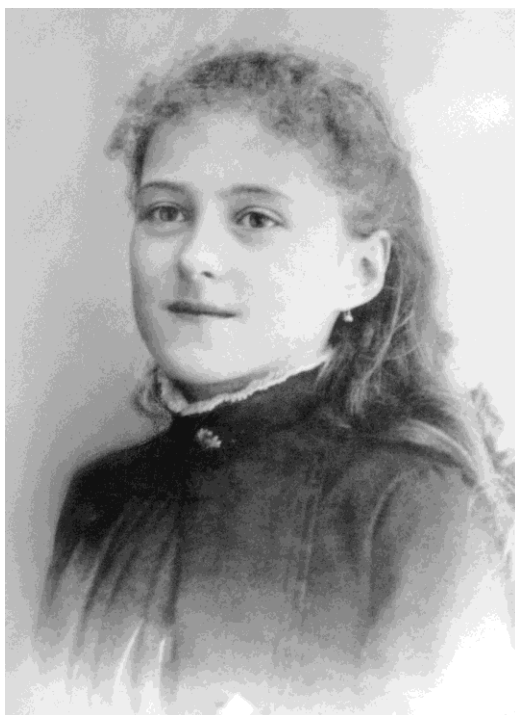
*No matter, Thérèse continues on her path with confidence and abandon, the one who has always believed in the universal love of the divine and the power of the soul.*

*So I fear nothing, neither iron nor  
flame No, nothing can disturb my  
ineffable peace And the fire of love  
that consumes my soul Will never be  
extinguished!....*

January 21, 1896

Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus  
of the Holy Face  
Born Marie Françoise Thérèse Martin  
(1873-1897)

**T** FOR TESTIMONIALS  
as Thérèse







*Avril 1888*

*For me, prayer is a surge of the heart, It is  
a simple glance cast towards the sky, It is  
a cry of recognition and love,  
In the midst of trials as in the midst of joy,  
Finally it is something great,  
supernatural, Which expands my soul and  
unites me to Jesus.*

*Thérèse*

## TESTIMONIES

At the end of June 1908, Sister Catherine Clarke, then a postulant in the novitiate of the Congregation of the Good Shepherd, in Finchley, London, slipped down two steps of a staircase and seriously sprained her foot. Rest and the various remedies prescribed by the doctor brought no improvement, the foot remained swollen and discolored; the sister could not walk. By means of X-rays the foot was examined at the Royal College Hospital, which was then enclosed in a plaster cast. The surgeon ordered that it remain so for six weeks. At the end of this time, the pain having not diminished, and the sister suffering greatly, a blister was tried to reduce the swelling, but without any more success. Finally, the hospital specialist was called to Finchley. After a consultation with the physician of the convent, he gave a very serious estimate of the disease, and declared that he did not hope to cure it except under his particular and personal supervision.

Having learned that the parents of the novice, at Glasgow, desired her to be treated at home, the specialist spoke of writing to a certain Scottish professor, to give him his advice on the subject of the operation. Moreover, he warned that the greatest precautions would be necessary for the journey, and that the slightest shock would be sufficient to aggravate the disease and render amputation inevitable.

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On the following Tuesday, November 3, the reverend father Clarke, brother of the novice, arrived from the parish of St. Patrick, Schieldmuir (near Wishaw), with the intention of taking her home. He was much distressed at the state of her foot, and seeing it of such a bad color, swollen and completely shapeless, he clearly understood that an operation was urgent. Arrangements were made to have an ambulance ready as soon as the invalid arrived in Glasgow. Until then the necessity of her departure had been concealed from Sister Catherine. She made every effort to remain at the monastery, but the case was too serious and she had to accept the ordeal. She therefore bade farewell to the novitiate very sadly, and the carriage, which was to take her far from the convent she loved and so deeply regretted, was requested for the following morning at half-past eight.

At the time of the accident, a medal of the Sacred Heart had been placed on the injured foot, and Lourdes water had been used for the dressings. Novenas were made to the Sacred Heart, to the Most Holy Virgin, to Saint Gerard Majella, and to the venerable Mother Pelletier, foundress of the Institute of the Good Shepherd. Other saints were also invoked, but heaven seemed deaf to all requests.

On October 30, after the surgeon's decision, Sister Catherine, on the advice of her superior, began a novena to Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus and placed among her bandages a rose petal with which Sister Thérèse had formerly embalmed and caressed her crucifix, on her deathbed. There was, moreover, in the convent a great devotion to this young nun.

On Friday evening, October 30, wrote Sister Catherine, I had begun a novena to the "Little Flower" [name given in England to the Servant of God] with great confidence. I did not lose sight of her, for a single instant, always praying to her to have pity on me and to heal me, to save my vocation. On November 3, the eve of my departure, I went to bed around nine o'clock, feeling an excessive pain in my foot.

I then implored the "Little Flower" to finally obtain for me from Almighty God my healing. Every time I woke up, I made the same entreaties to him. About three o'clock I woke up again, but this time my cell was filled with light. I did not know what to think of this exquisite brightness and I cried out: "Oh, my God! what is this?" I remained in this light for three-quarters of an hour, and I could not fall asleep again, in spite of my efforts. Then I felt as if someone were removing the covers from my bed and urging me to get up. I moved my [80v] foot, and what was my surprise to find the seven yards of bandages, which had been tied very tightly and which I could not have done without, completely

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removed. I looked at my foot, it was entirely healed. I got up, I walked, and feeling no more pain, I fell to my knees, crying out: "Oh, Little Flower of Jesus, what have you done for me this morning? I am healed!"

About the time of Mass, Sister Catherine was fetched to take her to the chapel, but she said that she no longer needed the support of an arm, nor the cane she usually used. She went down the stairs alone and ran to her superior.

The "Little Flower" has cured me, my mother! she said, and immediately the news spread through the community like wildfire. A sort of fear hovered over the house with the feeling that God had passed by. The Mother Provincial soon came and saw for herself the event. To prove that she was indeed cured, the novice walked up and down outside the church, and showed that she was wearing her ordinary shoe, instead of the invalid's shoe that had been prepared for her, because of the swelling. Finally, she remained on her knees throughout the Mass and walked with a firm step to receive Holy Communion from her brother. He was still unaware of the miracle, but he later confessed that never since his first Mass had he received so much divine consolation as at that Mass. Another touching testimony of Sister Thérèse's power of intercession on behalf of priests, for whom she loved to pray so much!

Immediately after Mass, the Mother Prioress went to find him and told him what had happened. Then, very moved, he intoned the Te Deum,

which the novice continued standing with the entire community, in unspeakable joy and emotion.

Examination of the foot showed that the discoloration, swelling, blister marks and points of fire had disappeared and that it had returned to its natural shape. "As will be noted..."

Extract from the archives of the Carmel of Lisieux.

[www.archives-carmel-lisieux.fr](http://www.archives-carmel-lisieux.fr)



\*

*This is how, during your mission, Thérèse, you came to stop where I was baptized, this month of November 2006. You also visited this church, a vestige of the 12th century linked by a past and of a beauty in its construction. The candles sparkled with happiness and the prayers as well. Your mission, to travel the earth, you continued it with this grace so pure which belongs to you, Thérèse. The next day, you arrived in a place of peace and spirituality, inaugurated in 1969, this church named Saint-Jean-Baptiste, in Val Fourré. The same place where I was baptized on September 19, 1971. On the front hung a portrait of you and a dove of peace symbolizing the richness of this neighborhood by its mix of beliefs. My heart has never forgotten what I felt when I opened the door. Bouquets of roses to welcome an angel of God, children singing, people praying and the peace that reigned in this modern church gave a glimpse of the hope of a better world that you were able to give us with your wisdom and your modernity.*



\*

*Alain Mimoun, you have always loved speed, the kind that made you a legend. I met you on April 6, 2006 at your home with one of your admirers. We had something in common, a spiritual bond. I contacted you for a project on Saint Therese of Lisieux. I had no knowledge of your career that we could now call "A giant race". Your welcome was extremely warm, your testimony, a ray of sunshine. You told me that you loved looking at the stars in Corrèze with your grandson, like the simple things in life. At eighty-five years old, what energy! I am not a sports journalist, but it seemed important to me to meet you with your admirer who knows your career perfectly. You fell in love with France in books. You have had an incredible life journey. You were so nice to me during our discussions about little Therese. This common point that we have is ultimately "a little sign", and you have always believed in signs... You know it yourself, life is a fight, with joys and sorrows. You have always had faith. One day in 1955, one of your faithful friends (an atheist) decided to take you to the Basilica of Lisieux to see the reliquary of Saint Therese. From that moment on, she would never leave you...*

*Your victory in Melbourne in 1956 at the Olympic Games was a unique performance, just like your career and your personality. You ran for a very long time and every day... you sent me some documents during our correspondence, here are some extracts. They are very touching. Thank you very much for this beautiful memory, this visit to your garden where roses bloom, an unforgettable moment during which we talked about the little flower of Lisieux.*

*I deeply love my country, France. Its colors inspire each of my actions. But to win an Olympic marathon, that is not enough, just like having good legs. You also have to know how to transcend yourself. In this regard, personal ambitions and money are incapable of helping you achieve it. Everything is in faith, in the ability to surpass yourself for an ideal, for an idea, for your country. This was happening in my head when I won the Melbourne Marathon. Alain Mimoun*

*Who am I? I received a gift from heaven, that of running, as God gave others a musical talent. Mozart was already Mozart in his mother's womb. Similarly, in my mother's womb, I was already Mimoun. Alain Mimoun*

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*Edith Piaf, the woman and singer of the most beautiful French songs such as L'Hymne à l'amour (1950), saved the legendary Olympia concert hall by performing there in 1961, at the request of Bruno Coquatrix. "Love is the only logic I know; the only verb that I conjugate in all tenses..." she declared when speaking of Théo Sarapo, her last love, with whom she sang a duet À quoi ça sert l'amour? (1962).*

*The Seventh Art invites us to be moved by staging stories, legends... The spectator relives the significant events of a personality for a moment where everything stops and is captured for a moment, forgetting his own life. In 2007, Thérèse will appear in a magical way from the first minutes of the film La Môme, alongside Marion Cotillard. She is mentioned because she had her place in Edith's heart and life. This film is dedicated to this great lady of French song, universally known for her voice and her way of singing about love. It was a dazzling success.*

Edith Piaf had faith in little Thérèse. She had a special devotion to her. This dialogue between the invisible and love that soothes and gives strength. Each time she entered the stage, her thanksgiving was to say, according to legend: "Thérèse, now I sing for you." Beforehand, backstage, she kissed her cross, as reported by Marcel Dumont who participated in the genesis of the song *Non, je ne regrette rien* (1960). A song that was a testament to a life that was hers with its ups and downs, "A sign of providence" she had declared.

Her passion for living from her gift and her love of singing seduced an audience without labels. She sang with her soul and transcended the hearts of the audience, all generations combined. Troubling coincidence, Jean Cocteau, a great friend of hers, learned of her death on October 10, 1963, terribly saddened, and died the next day. Today and in a certain way, Edith Piaf still sings of love, pain, life, death, hope and despair with faith in herself and little Thérèse in her heart, like a guardian angel.

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It was during a meeting in London, near the Notre-Dame de France church, that Jack K. from Coventry and I talked about little Thérèse. He told me about his daily life since the death of his wife. He implored Saint Thérèse to help him find a life partner. Which happened over time. He told me about the symbolism of the rose, dear to Saint Thérèse, which he often offered in thanks. Jack told me about Marcel Van, a young Vietnamese man of thirty-one, who died in July 1959, he was inspired by the “little way” of Thérèse and named “Apostle of Love”. He told me the name of an association, The Little Way Association, created by Miss Mary D., dedicated to Saint Thérèse. I went to the premises to meet Mary, a lady of a certain age, now deceased. At the entrance, a magnificent statuette of Saint Therese seated to welcome visitors, and bags filled with small booklets (about fifty pages) ready to be sent to more than thirty thousand members scattered throughout the United Kingdom. An active association. Missionary volunteers take care of stuffing the said booklets. The latter evoke the appeal for donations, the work of missionaries abroad as well as stories and messages through the spirituality of Saint Therese Following her “Little Way”. My meeting with the founder, a rose of Therese, was very beautiful. The English translation of Story of a Soul was made in 1901.

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In October 2009, Saint Therese experienced an English triumph. Three hundred thousand faithful came from all over England to meditate before her relics in twenty-five sites. The last stop was at Westminster Cathedral. Therese, patron saint of aviators, florists and AIDS patients. The veneration of the relics is considered one of the greatest events for British Catholics since the visit of Pope John Paul II, twenty-seven years ago. Even people who do not believe in God place their trust in Saint Therese. There are many requests for intentions and prayers at the reliquary in Westminster. One hundred thousand candles and fifty thousand roses are ordered for the occasion. Visitors present themselves with a rose in their hand, thus trampling on the simplicity of Therese.

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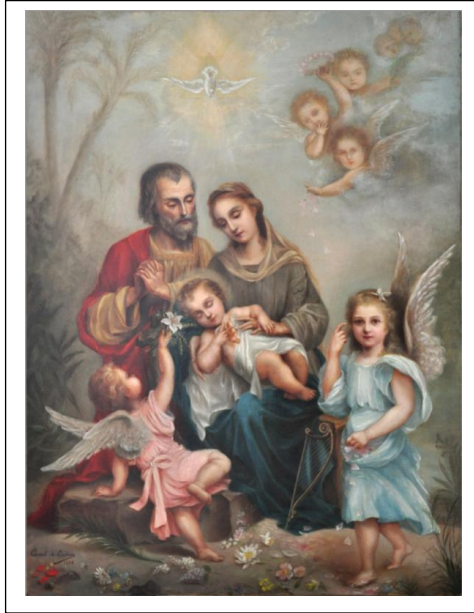
I have had faith in Saint Therese of Lisieux for many years, I have received many graces. Sometimes I go to pray to her in my church, there is a beautiful statue of her and the Virgin Mary, always decorated with flowers. Every time I leave the church after praying and lighting a candle, where I confided and gave thanks, I came out refreshed. One day, I had to pray for a person who was between life and death. It was very serious, so I prayed to my protectors in my church. But also at home by putting a Saint Therese candle that I had bought before, I don't know where. I burned this candle with a prayer, and when it was finished, I noticed that the image of Saint Therese was stuck to another saint, Saint Rita, the saint of "Desperate Causes" and the Saint of "the impossible", I was troubled and I felt that these two saints had joined together in my prayer and for this cause. And indeed, the person was saved.



**Sainte Rita**

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*In my path of God in the midst of this divine light, which illuminates my heart, I met Thérèse. I am a practicing Muslim, I pray morning and evening on our prophet Mohammed. Which means, that only one thing, the path of God is only one path. All the beautiful holy and sincere and believing souls cross paths. Like the soul of Thérèse who gives Love and shares it with all the beautiful souls who worship God, to make them learn charity, sharing and giving without expecting anything in return.*







## Live on love !...

PN 17 – 26 février 1895

On the evening of Love, speaking without a parable  
Jesus said: "If someone wants to love me  
All his life, let him keep my Word  
My father and I will come to visit it.  
And of his heart making our home  
Coming to him, we will always love him!  
Filled with peace, we want him to stay  
In our Love!...»

To live on Love is to keep yourself  
Uncreated Word, Word of my God,  
Ah! you know it, divine Jesus, I love you  
The Spirit of Love sets me ablaze with its fire  
It is by loving you that I attract the Father  
My weak heart keeps it without return.  
O Trinity! you are a prisoner  
Of my Love!.....

To live on Love is to live from your life,  
Glorious King, delight of the elect.  
You live for me, hidden in a host  
I want to hide myself for you, O Jesus!  
Lovers need solitude  
A heart to heart that lasts night and day  
Your only look makes my bliss  
I live on Love!...

Living on Love is not on earth  
Set up your tent at the top of Tabor.  
With Jesus is to climb Calvary,  
It is to regard the Cross as a treasure!...  
In Heaven I must live of enjoyment  
Then the trial will have fled forever  
But exiled I want in suffering  
Live on love.

To live on Love is to give without measure  
Without claiming wages here below  
Ah! without counting, I give being sure  
That when one loves, one does not calculate!...  
To the Divine Heart, overflowing with tenderness  
I gave it my all.... lightly I run  
I have nothing left but my only wealth  
Live on love.

To live on Love is to banish all fear  
Any remembrance of past faults.  
Of my sins I see no trace,  
In an instant love burned everything...  
Divine flame, O most sweet Furnace!  
In your hearth I fix my stay  
It is in your fires that I sing at my ease:  
"I live on Love!"

To live on Love is to keep within oneself  
A great treasure in a mortal vessel  
My Beloved, my weakness is extreme  
Ah, I am far from being an angel from heaven!...  
But if I fall with each passing hour  
Picking me up you come to my aid,  
Every moment you give me your grace  
I live on Love.

To live on Love is to navigate ceaselessly  
Sowing peace, joy in all hearts  
Pilot Aimé, Charity urges me  
Because I see you in the souls my sisters  
Charity is my only star  
In its clarity I sail without detour  
I have my motto written on my sail:  
"Live on love."

Living on Love, when Jesus sleeps  
It's rest on the stormy waves  
Oh ! do not be afraid, Lord, that I will awaken you  
I wait in peace for the shore of heaven....  
Faith will soon tear its veil  
My hope is to see you one day  
Charity swells and pushes my sail  
I live on Love!...

To live on Love is, O my Divine Master  
Begging you to spread your fires  
In the holy and sacred soul of your Priest  
May he be purer than a seraph of heaven!...  
Ah! glorify your Immortal Church  
To my sighs, Jesus, don't be deaf  
Me, her child, I immolate myself for her  
I live on Love.

To live on Love is to wipe your Face  
It is to obtain forgiveness from sinners  
O God of Love! may they come into your grace  
And may they bless your name forever...  
Until my heart resounds blasphemy  
To erase it, I always want to sing:  
"Your Sacred Name, I adore it and I Love it  
I live on Love!..."

To live on Love is to imitate Mary,  
Bathed in tears, in precious perfumes,  
Your divine feet, which she kisses delighted  
Wiping them with her long hair...  
Then rising, she breaks the vase  
Your Sweet Face it embalms in its turn.  
Me, the perfume with which I perfume your Face  
It's my love !....

“To live on Love, what strange madness!”  
The world tells me, “Ah! stop singing,  
Don't waste your perfumes, your life,  
Usefully know how to use them!...»  
To love you, Jesus, what a fruitful loss!...  
All my perfumes are yours without return,  
I want to sing out of this world:  
“I am dying of Love!”

Dying of Love is a very sweet martyrdom  
And it's the one I would like to suffer,  
O Cherubim! tune your lyre,  
Because I feel it, my exile will end!....  
Flame of Love, consume me ceaselessly  
Live for a moment, your burden is very heavy for me!  
Divine Jesus, realize my dream:  
Die of Love!...

To die of love is my hope  
When I see my bonds breaking  
My God will be my Great Reward  
I don't want to own anything else.  
Of his Love I want to be set ablaze  
I want to see Him, unite myself to Him always  
Here is my Heaven... here is my destiny:  
Live on love !!!...



*Vierge du Sourire*  
*Virgin of Smile*





*Little Thérèse, eight years old, with her skipping rope, with her sister Céline (1881)*

*Photograph by Mme Besnier*

## KEY DATES

1873 January 2 Birth of Thérèse Martin, in Alençon.  
January 4 Baptism of Thérèse in Alençon.

1877 August 28 Death of her mother Zélie Martin.  
November 16 Settlement in Les Buissonnets in Lisieux.

1883 March 25 Thérèse falls seriously ill.  
May 13 Healing of Thérèse by the smile of the Virgin.

1884 May 8 First communion of Thérèse.  
June 14 Confirmation of Thérèse.

1886 Noël Thérèse receives the grace to leave “childhood”.

1887 May 29 asks her father to be allowed to return to Carmel.  
July Thérèse prays for the conversion of the assassin Pranzini.  
October 31 Visit to Mgr Hugonnin, the bishop of Bayeux, to  
obtain authorization to enter Carmel.

November 20 Thérèse Pilgrimage to Rome, she made the same  
request to Pope Leo XIII.

1888 April 9 Thérèse enters Carmel.

1889 January 10 Taking of the habit of Thérèse of the Child Jesus of  
the Holy Face.

1890 September 8 Final commitment to Carmel.



1895 February 26 Thérèse spontaneously composes the poem  
“Live On Love”.

Year of writing Manuscript A.

June 9 Thérèse receives the inspiration to offer herself to  
Merciful Love.

1896 April First spitting of blood. She enters her terrible ordeal of the  
“night of faith”. She receives another spiritual brother: Father Adolphe  
Roulland, from the Foreign Missions.

September 8 Writing of Manuscript B (to Jesus).

1897 April Thérèse falls seriously ill.

April 6 Beginning of the last conversations.

June 3 Mother Marie de Gonzague orders Thérèse to continue her  
autobiography. Thérèse writes manuscript C.

September 30 Thérèse dies of tuberculosis.

1898 September 30 First printing of “The Story of a Soul”.

1899-1902 First favors and healings.

1923 April 29 Beatification of Sister Thérèse of the Child  
Jesus by Pope Pius XI.

1925 May 17 Pope Pius XI declares her a Saint.

1927 December 14 Pope Pius XI proclaims her patron saint of missions,  
equal to Saint Francis Xavier.

1929 September 30 Laying of the first stone of the basilica.

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1944 May 3 Pope Pius XII names her secondary patron saint of France, equal to Saint Joan of Arc.

1997 October 19 Pope John Paul II gives him the title of Doctor of the Church.

2008 October 19 Beatification of Louis and Zélie Martin, parents of Thérèse.

2015 July 2 Opening of the Cause of beatification of Sister Françoise-Thérèse, Léonie Martin.

2015 October 18 Canonization of Louis and Zélie Martin.

# GENEALOGY OF THERESE

## *Paternal branch*

Grandfather: Captain Pierre François Martin, born on 04/16/1777, died on 06/26/1865. Marriage on 04/04/1818.

Grandmother: Marie Anne Fanie Boureau, born on 01/12/1800, died on 04/08/1883.

Father Louis Martin, born on 08/22/1823, died on 07/29/1894, he is the third child of Pierre François Martin and Marie Anne Fanie Martin.

## *Maternal branch*

Grandfather: Isidore Guérin, born on 07/06/1789, died on 09/03/1868.

Marriage on 09/05/1828

Grandmother: Louise Jeanne Macé, born on 07/11/1804, died on 09/09/1859

Mother: Azélie Marie (Zélie), born on 12/23/1831, died on 08/28/1877, she is the second child of Isidore and Louise Jeanne Guérin.

## Thérèse's family

Marie, born on 02/22/1860, died on 01/19/1940 Pauline, born on 09/07/1861, died on 07/28/1951 Léonie, born on 06/03/1863, died on 06/16/1941 Hélène, born on 10/13/1864, died on 02/22/1870 Joseph-Louis, born on 09/20/1866, died on 02/14/1867 Joseph Jean Baptiste, born on 12/19/1867, died on 08/24/1868 Céline, born on 04/28/1869, died on 02/25/1959 Mélanie Thérèse, born on 08/16/1870, died 10/8/1870 Thérèse, born 01/02/1873, died 09/30/1897  
All the Martin children have Marie as their first name.



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### ***INTERNET***

[www.therese-de-lisieux.com](http://www.therese-de-lisieux.com) [www.louissetzelie.com](http://www.louissetzelie.com)  
[www.notredamedesvictoires.com](http://www.notredamedesvictoires.com) [www.carmeldelisieux.fr](http://www.carmeldelisieux.fr)

### ***REPRODUCTION TEXTES ET PHOTOGRAPHIES***

***Extraits textes et photographies de Thérèse***

***tirés des archives du Carmel de Lisieux.***

Couverture Thérèse recadrée à l'âge de huit ans - Photographie Mme Besnier (1881)

Quatrième de couverture Sœur Thérèse de L'Enfant-Jésus de la Sainte-Face au Carmel Juillet (1896) - Photographie Céline Martin

Intérieur : Thérèse photographie retouchée par sa sœur Céline, donation au Carmel en 1917 de la famille Poupet. Thérèse Martin et Céline Martin (1881) Photographie Mme Besnier.

Portrait peinture réalisée par Céline Martin,  
sœur de Thérèse.

**Write a testimony to the Carmel of Lisieux  
or if you wish to make a donation**

Monastère du Carmel de Lisieux  
37 rue du Carmel  
14100 LISIEUX - FRANCE



Collégiale de Mantes la Jolie (France)



Therese holds in her left hand a parchment on which she had written these words of Therese of Avila: I would give a thousand lives to save one soul.





Thérèse aux Roses peinte par Céline  
(1913)

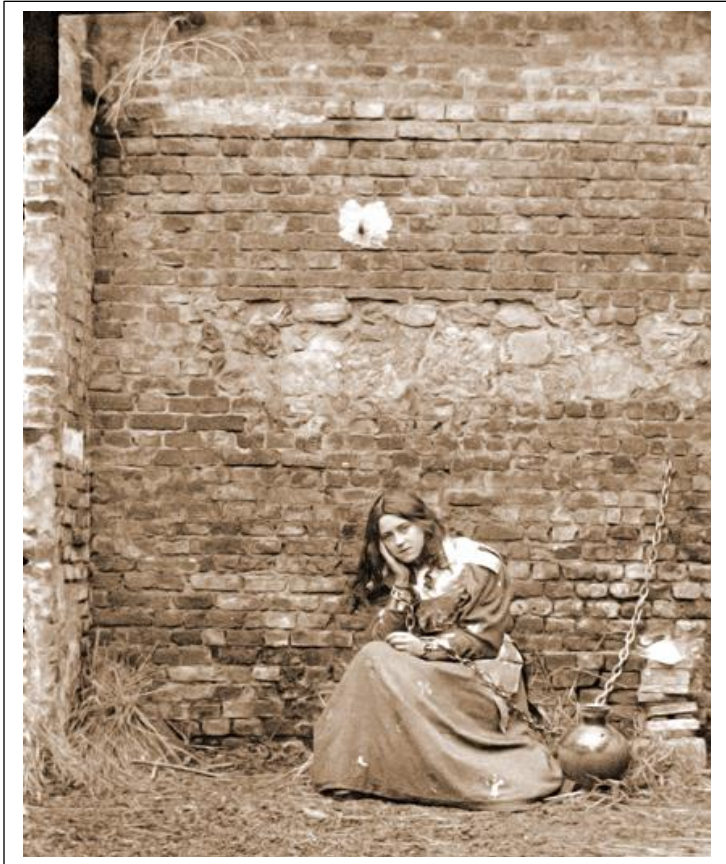
*Notes from Céline: "This little painting is painted on wood. I wanted to symbolize the mercy of the good Lord that our little Saint Thérèse revealed to us so well. Since then, it has been attributed to the thought of war because the Angel puts his sword back in its scabbard. Brother Marie-Bernard says that, in this painting, "Thérèse is well-established." But the resemblance is a little fanciful (it is I who say that)".*



*« To love is to give everything and to give oneself »  
Liefhebben is alles geven en ook zichzelf.*

Sainte Thérèse de Lisieux

Photo Sainte Thérèse de Lisieux – Hartebrugkerk Leiden  
(The Netherlands)



In memory of pious recreations  
"The Mission of Joan of Arc or the  
Shepherdess of Domremy listening to  
her voices.

RP1

# THANKS

Guy Gaucher, Bernard Lagoutte for their beautiful dedications in memory of the missionary congress in Lisieux in 2007.

To Dominique Menvielle for our various meetings and correspondences.

To the Carmel of Lisieux. Central Office of Lisieux.

To the Vincent Van Gogh Foundation and Museum in Amsterdam.

To all the people who helped me during the trials.

To all the people I met during this Theresian adventure.

To my beloved son.

To my love, to the strength he gave me. "Wij moeten de liefde leven. AV"

To all the people who helped me with my first book "Unique". They will recognize themselves. Thanks. In memory to GKP.

To little Angel, Mrs. Glynis Loiseau Wollgar, and her family, special thoughts to Liam and Michael. In memory of Nelson Mandela and Robert.



January 1889, a few days after Thérèse took the habit.



*From left to right: Marthe de Jésus, Thérèse de Saint-Augustin, Saint-Stanislas des Saints-Coeurs who moved, Marie de la Trinité, overlooked by Marie-Emmanuel, Marie de Saint-Joseph, Marie de Gonzague. Behind this whole group, Thérèse and Marie of the Sacred Heart. At the table, Agnès de Jésus (Pauline), then Geneviève de la Sainte-Face (Céline), Marie des Anges, Marie de Jésus on the ground, Hermance of the Heart of Jesus hidden by the spinning wheel, Marie-Philomène de Jésus, behind her Marie de l'Incarnation, Saint-Jean de la Croix pentechée, Marie-Madeleine du Saint-Sacrement, Marguerite-Marie of the Sacred Heart of Jesus who moved, Saint-Vincent de Paul*



*The good Lord cannot give me trials  
that are beyond my strength.*

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus  
of the Holy Face



*Thérèse Martin, better known as Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, has fascinated people since 1898 thanks to her writings. Creation is done in joy as well as in pain and sometimes in silence. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux is represented in many churches around the world with wisdom and modernity. Freedom is to believe in spiritual love with Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face. This mission that she gave herself to help souls. A small, simple path that she followed with complete trust and love. A work of the heart, with the grace of Thérèse chosen by God to accompany us each day in all simplicity. Without love, life is nothing.*

**A book that bears witness to the humility of little Thérèse Martin, recognized as the saint of modern times. The essence of her life with a personal introduction and conclusion and testimonies. A document on faith, hope and love.**

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*Nota : The English version was translated using Google Translate and may contain errors. Please excuse me, but I believe the English translation is readable and accurately reflects the original version of the book released on January 4, 2023, and the manuscript version updated on November 28, 2024. Thank you for your understanding.*

