

St Thérèse of the Child Jesus  
Feastday: October 3<sup>rd</sup>

proaches a parent . . . with open arms and a profound trust.

St Therese translated "the little way" in terms of a commitment to the tasks and to the people we meet in our everyday lives. She took her assignments in the convent of Lisieux as ways of manifesting her love for God and for others. She worked as a sacristan by taking care of the altar and the chapel; she served in the refectory and in the laundry room; she wrote plays for the entertainment of the community. Above all, she tried to show a love for all the nuns in the community. She played no favourites; she gave of herself even to the difficult members. Her life sounds so routine and ordinary, but it was steeped in a loving commitment that knew no breakdown. It is called a "little way" precisely by being simple, direct,

yet calling for amazing fortitude and commitment.

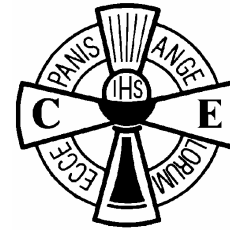
In living out her life of faith she sensed that everything that she was able to accomplish came from the generous love of God in her life. She was convinced that at the end of her life she would go to God with empty hands. Why? Because all was accomplished in union with God.

Catholics are attracted to St Therese's style. Her "little way" puts holiness of life within the reach of ordinary people. Live out your days with confidence in God's love for you. Recognize that each day is a gift in which your life can make a difference by the way you choose to live it. Put hope in a future in which God will be all and love will consume your spirit. Choose life, not the darkness of pettiness and greed. St Therese knew the difference love makes by allowing love to be the statement she made each day of her life.



The Ecstasy of St Teresa of Avila  
Feastday: October 15<sup>th</sup>

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# Handmaids of Christ and Children of Mary

*Supplement to the Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade in Ireland*

October 2007  
Month of the Holy Rosary

**T**his leaflet is intended for high-school girls. Being part of the Eucharistic Crusade, you will receive the bulletin of the Crusade and pray for the intentions of the Crusade. As girls, Our Lady is your special model. Therefore as well as being Crusaders and Handmaids of Christ, you are also Children of Mary. The purpose of these few pages is to help you in your spiritual life.

**AN EASY WAY TO BECOME A SAINT** By Fr Paul O'Sullivan, OP

## Chapter 2 - HOW TO LOVE GOD (3)

HOW CAN WE ACQUIRE THE LOVE OF GOD?

The following incidents show how powerful prayer is in making us know and love God.

An American freethinker was eager to believe in God, but though he listened attentively to Cardinal Gibbons explaining the proofs of God's existence, he could not bring himself to believe. The Cardinal, seeing his good will, suggested that he should frequently say the following short prayer: "Oh, God, if You exist, make me know You."

This the freethinker did conscientiously for some time and received in return the gift of a lively and solid faith and with it the greatest happiness of his life.

Cardinal Newman had a similar experience. For many years he sought earnestly to discover the True Church by reading history, studying the works of the Fathers, discussing the subject with learned friends. In vain.

At last he exclaimed: "What have I been doing? I have sought by study and discussion to find the Truth, but I have not given sufficient time and attention to asking the gift of faith from God in prayer."

He at once changed his method and began to ask God earnestly to help him to find the True Church. His prayers were speedily answered, and he not only saw the light himself but became a shining example to hundreds of others who, following his

lead, joined the Catholic Church.

We too shall receive the gift and consolations of God's blessed love if we earnestly ask for it in our daily prayers.

*Secondly*, to love God we must know Him. Many people have a completely false notion of God. Though they do not say it in so many words, they think of God as a hard, a stern God, a God of justice who punishes sinners. Frequently, the teachers of the young are to blame for this. With the best intentions in the world they instill into the minds of their charges an exaggerated fear of the Almighty in order to deter them from sinning. But they do not teach them to love God.

The result is that boys and girls grow up and live all their lives with a false concept of God; they adore a false God, a God of fear. It is true, the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom----but it must not be only a servile fear, but mainly the *filial fear* of children who grieve to offend and displease their parents. *We too must fear to outrage our loving God, fear to crucify Him again and make a mockery of Him.*

Hardened sinners, of course, who obstinately persist in offending God, know full well that their crimes deserve punishment. They have reason to fear.

But for the ordinary Christian, the all-engrossing concept of God must be clearly a God of infinite sweetness, mercy and love, a God of compassion, Who wishes to lift us up and wipe away the stains of sin from our souls.

Above all, we must look on God as our most loving Father, our dearest Friend, a God in Whom we have unbounded confidence, to Whom we must go in all our troubles and whose help we can seek in all our needs.

We must serve God, not as servants, but as His dear children. We adore God, but with an adoration of love, like the Angels in Heaven, who are burning fires of love. The vision of God as He really is and as they see Him fills them with an ocean of joy and happiness.

Now this God, Whom the Angels and Saints see in Heaven, is the same God Whom we are asked to love. Did we see Him for one instant our souls would be so ravished with delight that they would tear themselves from our poor bodies and fly to Him.

Did the devil see God only for a moment, his whole being would be so inundated with happiness that never again could he feel the pains of Hell.

One may object: But we do not see God as the Angels do. That is true, but we know all about Him by our living faith, as surely as the Angels do by vision. We ought sometimes to place ourselves in spirit amidst the Angels and gaze on God, this especially when we are saying the *Gloria Patri*.

Soon, very soon, we shall see Him as they do, but for the moment let us use and enjoy our faith and thus anticipate the happiness of Heaven.

When one hears that he has inherited a great fortune, the news fills him at once with delight. He does not wait until the fortune is placed in his hands. Let us do likewise and begin to enjoy an anticipation of the immense, unbounded joys that await us in our Father's home.

*(Continues next month)*

## Instruction upon meditation

*Meditation, or mental prayer, is a devout and fruitful consideration of Divine things, and of all that is conducive to the acquirement of virtue and of eternal salvation. Refer to the previous issue of this bulletin to learn how to make meditation properly. Remember that the Handmaids must meditate 15 minutes every day. St Therese of Avila says that he who spends 15mn a day in mental prayer cannot be lost.*

"Jesus Christ will come to you offering His consolation, if you prepare a fit dwelling for Him in your heart, whose beauty and glory, wherein He takes delight, are all from within. His visits with the inward man are frequent, His communion sweet and full of consolation, His peace great, and His intimacy wonderful indeed."

*Imitation of Christ, Book 2, Chapter 1 "On Meditation"*

### 11<sup>th</sup> Meditation – On Death - 2

At the hour of death, the world will also quit you. The great bulk of mankind will be completely unconcerned respecting your death. The few who inherit the spoils of the deceased are easily comforted, perhaps they rejoice. Perhaps on the very day of his burial, his surviving friends seek to recreate themselves, in order to erase the melancholic image of death. Others fills his place; a few months pass away, and he is no longer missed among the living.

## St. Thérèse and the Little Way

What is the meaning of "the little way" of St Therese? It is an image that tries to capture her understanding of being a disciple of Jesus Christ, of seeking holiness of life in the ordinary and the everyday. St Therese based "her little way" on two fundamental convictions: (1) God shows love by mercy and forgiveness, and (2) she could not be "perfect" in following the Lord. St Therese believed that the people of her time lived in too great a fear of God's judgment. The fear was stifling and did not allow people to experience the freedom of the children of God. St Therese knew from her life that God is merciful love; many scripture passages in the Old and New Testaments bore out that truth. She loved the maternal images for God in the Old Testament and the love of God for us in Jesus Christ. In fact, St Therese once wrote that she could not understand how anyone could be afraid of a God who became a child. She also knew that she would never be perfect. Therefore, she went to God as a child ap-

