

St. Therese of Lisieux Bio

Basic information:

Born: January 2 1873. Died: September 30 1897 (24 years old)

Religious name: Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face O.C.D.

Canonized May 17 1925

Feast day: October 1

Reflection:

One of St. Therese of Lisieux's titles is The Little Flower. This title along with the name given to her spiritual life, the Little Way, reflect for us her immense humility. St Therese never viewed herself as a great Saint but rather viewed herself as a little flower in God's garden surrounded by magnificent roses who she viewed as the Saints. Yet, she reflects that though she is only a little flower in such a magnificent garden, God looks down upon her with utter delight at her simplicity. She writes in her auto biography *Story of a Soul*, that "nothing is small in the eyes of God. Do all you do with love."

Now how do we work towards having our works done in love? Such an acts are completely impossible on our own. It requires that we ask grace from God because if any act is going to be done in love, it must be directed and order towards God who is Love itself. Love requires humility on our part as we must be willing to love even our enemies. In this pursuit, it's not great works which will make us grow in holiness but simple acts done each day. As St Therese says: "The Lord needs from us neither great deeds nor profound thoughts, neither intelligence or talents. He cherishes simplicity."

This may very well cut against the grain of how we tend to view our worth in God's eyes. Our value to God is not in what we do or who we are in relationship with but rather in our simple desire to love Him and draw close to Him. Pridefulness will not bring us to Heaven. The moment we start to believe that we by our own strength can provide for what we need or what we desire, we have gone astray. Instead of pride, humble ourselves like The Little Flower acknowledging everything as a gift from God given out of Love for us. If we seek to humble ourselves and love God above all else earnestly, then as Our Lord says "You are not far from the Kingdom of God" (Mark 12:34).