

PARISH LIFE IN ISO

This past week we celebrated the feast day of our Patron Saint Therèse of Lisieux. Sadly, this year we were unable to celebrate together and with our school community. Instead we can perhaps find some time to reacquaint ourselves with our 'Little Flower'.

"I have always wanted to be a saint," she wrote, "Unfortunately when I have compared myself with the saints, I have always found that there is the same difference between the saints and me as there is between a mountain whose summit is lost in the clouds and a humble grain of sand trodden underfoot by passers-by. Instead of being discouraged, I told myself: God would not make me wish for something impossible and so, in spite of my littleness, I can aim at being a saint. It is impossible for me to grow bigger, so I put up with myself as I am, with all my countless faults. But I will look for some means of going to heaven by a little way which is very short and very straight, a little way that is quite new."



What a wonderful parish patroness for us to have on our personal and communal journeys of growth, healing and transformation. What a realistic saint for Australia to have during a time when we seem to prefer the cult of the celebrity and pseudo glamour to things/people of substance. Therèse was someone whose very ordinariness, her 'interpersonal non-violence' makes her so generously lovable "MY VOCATION IS LOVE".

Therèse saw herself as a child of God. She liked to keep things simple and focused as a child does. Trust, especially trust in God, is a childlike virtue. Some spiritualities have stressed complicated practices and extraordinary journeys of the soul as it responds to God's grace and love. Therèse's spirituality is simple and she calls it her "little way". She believed and teaches

us that life presents enough challenges and opportunities for grace. She teaches us that God is everywhere – in every situation and person – and in the ordinary, simple details of life.

"Everything is grace" is probably the theme song of her spirituality. Her "Little Way" teaches us to do the ordinary things of life with extraordinary love. A smile, a note of encouragement, a phone call, suffering in silence, always having a positive word, a simple unnoticed task to brighten the life of another, and so many other simple deeds, done with love – these are the examples of her spirituality. The smallest action, done with love, is more important than great deeds done for personal glory, gratification or simply out of obedience. Therèse teaches us that Jesus is everywhere and is the power for love and goodness operating within us. Such is the power and presence of grace. Therèse's life was hidden. To many even in the convent, she seemed like such an average, ordinary person. Her greatness showed in the constancy of her love for others in the most simple ways.

Even in prayer, Therèse teaches simplicity – talking to God and Jesus in direct, personal and heartfelt ways. She did not like long prayers. She fell asleep during community prayer. Because she had such great devotion to Our Lady, she was ashamed and frustrated that she did not like praying the Rosary.

She prayed from her heart as a child speaks honestly and trustingly to a parent they love. God calls us to respond to Divine Love in a childlike relationship of love, trust and bold confidence to "Abba" (which literally means 'Dad'), and by doing the simple things for others, well and with love.

LET US PRAY

Lord, You have said: "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven"; grant us, we ask You, that we may follow in humility and simplicity of heart in the footsteps of our patron St Therèse, and that we may obtain her assistance through life.

AMEN

To read the full article visit our website <https://www.stthereses.org.au/our-parish/our-patron-saint/>

We'd love to hear what you've been up to in ISO. Email jac.radcliffe@cam.org.au to contribute to Parish Life in ISO