

Primary School Assembly

Saint Therese – The Little Way

Born in Alençon, France on January 2, 1873, Thérèse Martin was the youngest of nine children, four of whom died in childhood. Her father was a watchmaker and her mother ran a small lace-making business. Sadly, her mother developed breast cancer and died on August 28, 1877. After her death the family moved to Lisieux.

When Thérèse felt the call to be a Carmelite nun she was refused permission because she was so young! But she persisted even to the point of asking the pope! She was granted her wish and became a nun when she was just fifteen years old.

Thérèse took to heart the deep spirituality she experienced in her home. From an early age prayer and friendship with God were very important to her. Her father was very loving and this helped her to have a deep trusting relationship with God, her Heavenly Father.

Thérèse loved nature. As a child she remembered a visit to the beach at Deauville and the impact the waves had on her. She loved flowers. It is not surprising that she uses flowers to describe the kingdom of God. She sees herself as one of the small flowers and hence is often referred to as “The Little Flower.”

Yet Thérèse died when she was 24, after having lived as nun for less than ten years. She never went on missions, never founded a religious order, never performed great works. It was her simple ‘little way of serving God and other people’ that helped her become a Saint.

Points to reflect on

Saint Thérèse said her vocation (her call from God) was to love. All of us are called to love God and each other. We can love each other in ‘little ways’ and perhaps we can try and think of one little way in which we can love our friends and family.

The relics of Saint Thérèse are visiting England and Wales in September. Relics are the physical remains of holy men and women. They help us to feel close to the saints who are our friends. Visiting the relics and thinking about the lives of the Saints helps us as we try to become holy ourselves. We pray that the visit of the relics is a success.

Prayer

God our Father, You made Your Kingdom for Your children who are humble. Help us to be like St. Thérèse, so that we may attain the eternal glory which You promised. Amen.