

## LITTLE WAY WEEK LESSON PLAN KEY STAGE 5

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To reflect on how St Thérèse's Little Way of doing small actions with love can make a big difference.
2. To consider how, through the 'little way' of love and service, the Church fulfils its mission to share God's life and love with everyone, including the poorest, most oppressed people in the world.
3. Explore ways in which everyone can follow a 'little way' to fulfil the mission of the Church.
4. Consider how a 'little way' of love and service often requires making difficult choices which can only be achieved with Jesus' help.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. **All will:**

Understand that St Thérèse's Little Way is one of ordinary actions done with great love. See that in love and service the Church fulfils its mission to share God's life and love with people all over the world. Appreciate the big difference the Church can make in its 'little way' to the lives of those it loves and serves, particularly to the world's poorest, vulnerable and marginalised people.

2. **Most will:**

Make connections between following their own 'little way' and the mission of the Church.

3. **Some will:**

Appreciate how everyone may follow a 'little way' like St Thérèse but it requires diligence and closeness to Jesus.

### RE CURRICULUM FOCUS

#### The Church 2.5 Vocation to Mission

Our teaching is of Christ as Head of the Church; the ultimate knowledge and understanding that the purpose of this mission is to enable all of us to share in the communion of life and love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our pupils are called to share with the whole People of God in expressing this mission through serving contemporary society as priest, prophet and king. Together we are called to worship God through our every action for the common good. Through our actions the Church is to continue as the sign and source of reconciliation and hope in the victory of Christ to present our goodness to God.



**TIME** 60 minutes

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### INTRODUCTION

Read this story to the class

*Fr Liam Durrant, a Mill Hill Missionary, tells how, as a young missionary in his twenties, he was sent to Uganda in East Africa. The country was on the brink of civil war after years of turmoil as the rebels fought the military government. As Fr. Liam celebrated his first mass in the rural outpost, gunfire was heard in the distance, and later that day three armed soldiers arrived at the presbytery, searching for a motorcycle. After much heated discussion and a search of his home, they eventually accepted that he was telling the truth when he said he did not own a bike. They left him shaken but unharmed.*

*Fr Liam admits that he was frightened when these young, armed hot heads arrived at the door and if he had owned a motorbike he would have handed it over willingly. He also recalls thinking, "Maybe my dad was right and I should have got a proper job, like my brothers."*

*A few days later, Fr Liam went down to the river, where the local women washed their clothes. An elderly lady dressed in traditional costume and a headscarf, put down her washing and approached him. It seemed to him, she was shouting at him in the local language, which, at that time, he did not understand. He wondered what he had done to upset her. But a younger woman translated for him. "Father," the translator said, "she is telling you, 'Thank you, thank you. You stay with us in our troubles when the world has forgotten us. For this, we are grateful.'"*

### ASK THE CLASS

- 1. What had Fr Liam done?** Elicit that he stood side by side with the villagers, enduring their struggles, hardship and suffering. He had given up his home, family and friends back in England to live among them and to **serve** them. He celebrated the sacraments with them and willingly stayed with them and he showed them respect.
- 2. Why was the woman so grateful?** Indicate that by his actions Fr. Liam brought **hope** to the villagers. He had not run away at the first sign of trouble. He showed **love** for them by staying with them. By his example, he demonstrated his **trust** in God and he brought them the **joy** of knowing that God loves each and every one of us unconditionally.
- 3. What do they think life was like for Fr Liam, once he had settled down in the village?** Ascertain that there were times when he was lonely and life was harsh compared to the life he had left behind in England. Do they think he ever considered returning home to find a 'proper job', like his brothers?
- 4. Ask why they think he stayed?** Consider how he wanted to help fulfil the mission of the Church to make God known so that everyone may share in God's life and love.

Ascertain that it was through love and service that Fr Liam was witnessing to the love of God. By sharing in the ordinary, everyday hardships of their lives he was living out a quiet, humble 'little way' of love and service. Explain that we do not have to go overseas like Fr Liam to be witnesses of God's love. We can do this in our everyday lives by the small actions we do and by what we say.

*'Father, thank you, thank you. You stay with us in our troubles when the world has forgotten us. For this, we are grateful.'*

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### ST THÉRÈSE

**Tell the class how St Thérèse lived out her Little Way by doing her ordinary daily chores with love.**

St Thérèse spent many years wondering what her vocation might be. In her youth she dreamt of becoming a saint and doing great works for God, like going overseas to share God's life and love with the poor and oppressed. She said to Jesus, **'I would travel to every land to preach Thy Name ...I would be a missionary... from the beginning of the world until the end of time.'** But she soon realised that this was not God's plan for her. Instead, she chose to become a religious sister and, aged fifteen, entered the confines of the Carmelite convent in Lisieux, France where she remained until her death nine years later.

It was after reading St Paul's Letter to the Corinthians (Paul 1 Cor: 13) that St Thérèse realised what she had to do. She appreciated that **good works rely on actions** and not feelings. She would have to put aside her own emotions if she were to put others first. This was hard for her as she was stubborn, she liked to get her own way.

St Thérèse learnt that **it is the small things done with love that make a difference** so she set about doing her mundane, daily tasks with **love**. This is what she called her **'Little Way'** and it was so unremarkable that nobody even noticed what she was doing. The chores she was given in the convent were often menial and boring but she **accepted** them uncomplainingly. For example, when one of the religious sisters who worked alongside her to wash the dirty linen splashed the water on her face, she **decided** not to grumble. She **chose** to pray for another sister she found particularly difficult and when the locals chatted about her elderly father's mental health she **offered up** to Jesus what she called 'the pinpricks' of the town gossips.

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*'I would travel to every land to preach Thy Name ... I would be a missionary... from the beginning of the world until the end of time.'*

*St Thérèse to Jesus*

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St Thérèse could not have done this on her own. She realised that she needed Jesus' help to make loving choices. By praying to him every day, she obtained the strength to live out her Little Way. Quietly and humbly, she lived a life of love and service to everyone, even those she found difficult. But she was also mindful of those the world had forgotten. During her long illness from tuberculosis she offered up her pain and suffering for the poor, the weary, the crushed and the hopeless.

She never forgot her youthful dream to make Jesus known around the world. She prayed for the priests and religious sisters who had left their homes to travel the world to fulfil the mission of the Church to make known God's life and love. She was assigned two 'spiritual brothers' – Father Roulland who lived in China, and Father Bellière in Malawi – with whom she kept up correspondence to encourage and support them as well as praying for them. In her own way, Thérèse had become a missionary to those near and far.

It was by these simple actions that Thérèse made **the ordinary become extraordinary** and is her pathway to Heaven. In 1923, only 26 years after her death, the Church made her a saint. Today, she is a popular saint known throughout the world, as well as one of only four women Doctors of the Church. This means that her writings and guidance are acknowledged by the Church to have influenced its teaching. Although she never set foot outside Europe and despite living in a cloistered convent for nine years, she became the patroness of Mission.

### AS A CLASS read St Paul's Letter to the Corinthians

1 Corinthians 13 The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

***If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.***

***Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.***

***Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.***

## LITTLE WAY WEEK LESSON PLAN KEY STAGE 5

### Explain that:

- Religious sisters and priests, like Fr Liam, are fulfilling the mission of the Church by sharing God's life and love in dedicated service to the poorest, most desperate people in the world. They are witnesses of God's love by living out a '**little way**' of small deeds of kindness and sharing in the struggles and hardships of others' lives.
- Through prayer and the generosity of Catholics all over the world charities like Missio are able to train and support men and women like Fr Liam Durrant. St Thérèse shows us how even a small sacrifice made with love can go a long way to helping others.
- Invite suggestions of ways in which pupils may be missionary. By making small sacrifices to raise money for Missio they are helping religious sisters and priests like Fr Liam to fulfil the mission of the Church.
- Pupils may learn more about Missio, the Pope's official charity for overseas mission, working with the world's most vulnerable, regardless of background or belief, by going on its website [missio.org.uk](http://missio.org.uk)

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*'... in Christ, we are embraced by God's mercy and compassion, and ... our lives must bear witness to his love for all our brothers and sisters.'*

*Pope Francis, General Audience, The Vatican August 6th 2014*

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### ACTIVITY

- The case stories attached are examples of where MISSIO, the Pope's official charity for overseas mission, is working.
- Divide the class into groups of three.
- Give each group a case study to read and allocate each pupil to be a character in the story with one as the interviewer. They should write down their interview to report back to the class.
- Suggestions of questions the interviewer might ask of the narrator are: To describe their week, what difference has the work of the missionary made to them? What was life like before? What would have happened if the church/orphanage/clinic did not exist?
- They may ask the missionary: Why do they stay? What hardships do they face? What is a week like? Stress that missionaries are not superheroes. The week will probably be quite ordinary. It is the little things done **with love** that make the difference.
- When everyone is ready, ask as many as there is time for, to report back to the rest of the class.

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### PLENARY

#### Ask pupils to write down or explain:

1. Why following St Thérèse's Little Way is a good model for the Church to adopt in fulfilling its mission.
2. One way in which they may live out the 'little way' to make Jesus known and loved to those near to them.
3. One 'little way' in which they may make Jesus known and loved to the poor and vulnerable living overseas.

### CONCLUDE WITH the Missio Mission Prayer

God of all peoples, you call us  
Together in love and send us out  
In mission to share the gift of  
faith that all may know Christ.  
May we be effective  
Messengers of your Word,  
Bringing the compassion  
Of Christ, the light of the world,  
To all who are poor and  
marginalised.  
We ask this through Jesus  
Christ who lives and reigns with  
You and the holy Spirit, for ever  
And ever. Amen.

Little Way Week is offered in partnership by Missio, Home Mission Desk (Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales) and Wednesday Word. For additional materials please see: [www.catholicnews.org.uk/little-way-week](http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/little-way-week).

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### 1. WHERE: KENYA

**WHO:** My father was a polygamist. My mother was not his favourite wife and hardly helped to bring me and my brother up.

**WHY:** In our tribe girls have no future other than to get married and have children. We are not seen as important and at birth my father promised me to a rich neighbour and in return my father would receive seven good cows.

**HOW:** One day, when I was 14, the doctor came to our village to inoculate the children against disease. She told my mother the religious sisters would help to pay for me to go to school. But at this time my father reappeared and tried to make me marry the man he had promised me to as he needed the cows. Luckily, the doctor heard about this and she and the priest went to the District Officer, who threatened to have my father put in prison until he agreed not to force me into the marriage. The Church is keen to promote the education of women here so it opened a secondary school which I now attend. As well as studying, we are taught about polygamy and forced marriage.



### 2. WHERE: THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

**WHO:** I was sent away from my home and my village by my family because my father thought that I brought bad luck on our family. Illiteracy is high in the rural areas where I come from and there is a belief that suffering and misfortune are the results of witchcraft.

**WHY:** There are dishonest people who make a lot of money out of the locals. They claim to find the 'cure' for unhappiness such as the death of a baby or why a child has failed an exam but they are making vulnerable people's lives miserable.

**HOW:** The religious Brothers who live here are not scared to give food and shelter to boys like me. Some of us are teenagers and have nowhere else to go. Much of the work done by governments in other countries – schools, hospitals, transport and banks – is done by the Catholic Church here. People come to the mission station not just for spiritual advice but also to photocopy documents, use the internet, get money to pay for medicine, food or school fees and even to ask for transport!



Image: Copyright Fr Bernard Fox MHM 2014

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### 3. WHERE: UGANDA

**WHO:** Two years ago, when I was 11, I was living on the city streets and collected rubbish to make a living. I never knew my parents as they had died of HIV/AIDS. There were lots of children like me, we were terrified when night time came; especially us girls, who were often targeted by criminals. Some of the children have HIV; others were born on the street and are addicted to drugs from birth.



**WHY:** Although I gathered with the other girls in groups for safety, our security was never guaranteed and for many, it is often just a matter of time before they are forced into prostitution, human trafficking or other forms of abuse.

**HOW:** I am lucky. The religious Sisters of the Good Samaritan provide a home for 139 girls and offer care, guidance and support as we learn skills to improve our job prospects. The Sisters see the strengths in each of us and tailor our education and training around our interests and abilities. They provide us with sewing machines, electric cookers and hairdressing equipment. The centre is the only home I can remember but even with girls sharing beds in the two dormitories of fifty, the centre is still not large enough to house all the girls living on the streets of the city.

### 4 WHERE: MYANMAR

**WHO:** Since 2011 the Burmese Government has been at war with our people, the Kachins. Thousands have been killed by the army and over 100,000 people have fled their homes after the military bombed our villages. My home was razed to the ground and all our livestock died. Some of us who survived, travelled one hundred miles by boat. When we arrived at this camp, we had nothing.



**WHY:** We have been here for two years now and even if peace is made, we cannot go home. There is nothing to go back to – my family is in debt to the money lenders. The Church is running camps for us to alleviate some of the suffering but I don't know how long we have to stay here.

**HOW:** The Catholic Church is providing us with food and shelter. The torrential rain in the monsoon season means that our clothes are permanently damp, yet our children wear them as they have nothing else. Everything here is wet. Only the church building has a proper roof so we use it as a food store and for shelter. Mass is celebrated in a make-shift shrine to Our Lady in the compound. Because it is so wet, the latrines are flooded and there is no end to the squalor.



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### 5. WHERE: INDIA

**WHO:** I was just five when I was sold as a domestic helper to a neighbour, who then, shortly after, sold me again to a businessman in Chennai, south-east India.

**WHY:** I was not allowed to go to school and was forced to work long hours every day, without a break, preparing meals, washing clothes and cleaning the house. One day, exhausted by my work, I fell asleep. As a result, the older son in the family cut my ear with a pair of scissors. One of the neighbours heard my screams and alerted the police who came and rescued me.

**HOW:** Now I am ten and am in the care of the Salesian Sisters in a Children's Home. The police often call the Sisters to help rescue children like me from child trafficking, child labour, prostitution and begging. They provide protection, shelter, food and education to over 125 of Chennai's most vulnerable girls. The sisters are a leading voice against the trafficking of girls for child labour and prostitution in Chennai. Since they started in Marialaya in 1990 the Sisters have helped more than 2000 girls.



Text

### 6. WHERE: CAMBODIA

**WHO:** Our parents came to this city to find work in the factories making clothes. They were lucky – at home in our village there is no work and people live on what they can grow. But my sister and I were very sad when we first came here because our parents couldn't afford to pay for us to go to school. We were left at home all day on our own. We were locked in and told not to answer the door to anyone. It was scary.



**WHY:** Home is one room for all of us, with no windows. It looks a bit like what you would call a garage for your cars. There is no toilet or bathroom and we share the same room for sleeping and cooking. At least, it was safer than being left out on the street. We know some children who used to collect rubbish to make some money for their families.

**HOW:** Luckily Sr Eulie from the Daughters of Charity told us about the Lindalva Centre, which offers children whose parents can't afford school fees a safe place to go when their parents are working. We learn English and Maths as well as traditional Cambodian skills such as crafts and dance. We have lots of friends now and we are not scared anymore.