

Reflection Thursday Week 26 – St Thérèse of the Child Jesus 2020

Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin was born in Alençon, France, in 1873. She became a Carmelite nun in Lisieux at 15 and died of tuberculosis at 24. Believed to be holy, she was initially considered to be nothing to write home about, yet, she was canonized in 1925, and her parents, Louis and Zélie Martin, were canonized in 2015. When Thérèse was 17, she confided to a visiting Jesuit her hope of becoming a great saint and loving God as much as the Carmelite, Saint Teresa of Ávila. The Jesuit advised her to moderate her desires. “*Why, Father?*” asked Thérèse, “since our Lord has said, *Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*” 100 years after her death, Pope John Paul II declared her a Doctor of the Church. What makes St Thérèse so special was her physical weakness and psychological vulnerability. For her, the great saints were giants, inaccessible mountains, and she was only an “*obscure grain of sand;*” but she was not discouraged. St John of the Cross taught her that God never inspires desires that cannot be fulfilled. The Book of Proverbs told her, “If anyone is *a very little one*, let him come to me.” Scripture is permeated with images of our littleness and weakness with respect to God, and of his care for us in our smallness. Thérèse’s “*Little Way*” invites us to take God at his word and let his love wash away our sins and imperfections. When a priest told her that her falling asleep during prayer was due to a want of fervour and fidelity and she should be desolate over it, she wrote: “*I am not desolate. I remember that little children are just as pleasing to their parents when they are asleep as when they are awake.*” We can’t all hug lepers or become missionaries and martyrs. But we all have daily opportunities of grace. Some of them may be too small to see, but the more we love God, the more we will see them. If we can’t advance to Heaven in giant strides, we can do it in tiny little steps. Weakness is no excuse for mediocrity. *(Universalis)*

FLOWERS

They have no mouth, but seem to speak
a thousand words so mild and meek.

They have no eyes, but seem to see
and bury good thoughts into me.

They have no ears, but seem to hear
all my cries, my every tear.

They have no arms, but gently hold
the worries that make my heart grow cold.

They have no feet, but seem to walk
along with me in my dreams and talk.

They, I believe, are flowers with style
that spread their fragrance a million miles.

Grow a few and then you'll know
how your life is fresh and all aglow.

I thank my God with a smile so broad,
and, with the flowers, praise my Lord.

Flower Joke . . .

There was once a big cat that loved flowers so much, he became one. His name was **Dan de lion.**

