

Reflection Friday Week 26 St Thérèse of the Child Jesus 2021

Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin was born in Alençon, France, 2nd January 1873. Her mother died of breast cancer when she was four and the family moved to Lisieux. Thérèse became a Carmelite aged only 15. She died of tuberculosis aged 24 (1897). In 1895 Mother Agnès of Jesus, prioress, commanded Thérèse to write her memoirs. Thérèse filled six exercise books which were put away unread. A year after Thérèse's death, the memoirs were published then miracles happened: conversions, cures, even apparitions. She was canonized in 1925. Her parents, Louis and Zélie Martin, were canonized by Pope Francis 18th October 2015. Pope John Paul II declared her a Doctor of the Church. Thérèse's "Little Way" that she lived takes God at his word and lets his love for us wash away our sins and imperfections. Thérèse believed we all have daily opportunities of grace, some too small to see. The more we love God, the more we will see them. We journey to Heaven with tiny little steps. Weakness is no excuse for mediocrity.

The simplicity of her life could persuade us that God sent Thérèse to prove the words we read in the Gospel. Living the Gospel is simple but we spend our lives complicating it. Her theology was learned from living, but living inspired by an all-embracing love of God. Thérèse was a child before her time the first one to choose to live simply which we are all attempting to do, and can do today to help save our planet.

Be inspired by her wisdom:

- *Prayer is an aspiration of the heart - a simple glance directed to heaven. It is a cry of gratitude and love in the midst of trial as well as joy.*
- *I am not always faithful to Jesus but I never become discouraged. I cast myself into Your arms, and like a dewdrop, sink deeper and deeper into Your chalice, O divine Flower of the field, and there I find all I have lost and much more besides.*
- *Sometimes, when in such a state of spiritual dryness I can't find a single thought that will bring me close to God. I say an Our Father and a Hail Mary very slowly. How they take me out of myself; what solid satisfaction they give me! Much more than if I'd hurried through them a hundred times over.*
- *The good God does not need years to accomplish His work of love in a soul; one ray from His heart can, in an instant, make His flower bloom for eternity.*