



*From the Pastor
27th Sunday
in Ordinary Time - B
October 7, 2018*

So many Saints have been so sugar-coated with silly stories and pious pleasantries that they serve little, if any, useful purpose for us who live in the 'real world!' That was my image of *The Little Flower,*

honored last Monday on her feast day: October 1. Why was *Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor of the Church*, a privileged child who died at just 24 [01/02/1873 - 09/30/1897], a Carmelite contemplative, removed from life's everyday rigors, canonized a mere 28 years after her death from tuberculosis and declared the 33rd of the Church's 36 'Doctors' [Latin for 'Teacher' from which we get the term doctorate] - the 3rd of only 4 women honored with this title? Once I read her 'real' story I knew the answer; here are *Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus'* Mass orations and my thoughts.

Collect - St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin/Doctor

O God, who open your Kingdom to those who are humble and to little ones, lead us to follow trustingly in the little way of Saint Thérèse, so that through her intercession we may see your eternal glory revealed. Through our Lord Jesus ... forever and ever. Amen.

THE LITTLE WAY. Some snub *Saint Thérèse's 'Little Way'* as a simplistic, starry-eyed ideal, unfit and useless for serious adult Christians. However, as Jesus said: *"I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike."* [Matthew 11:25] Nor did the 'Little Way' of bearing all things patiently, positively, and as a welcomed penance, come naturally to *'The Little Flower'* as her life story reveals.

The 5th daughter of wealthy parents who doted on their 'little princess,' she was a bratty, spoiled, self-centered child, who took every infraction as a personal insult! Others did not describe her this way; she herself wrote these self-accusations! That she entered a monastery at such a young age is proof of her stubborn, self-seeking streak: while on a 'parish pilgrimage' to

Rome, the 15-year-old teenager boldly approached Pope Leo XIII during a private audience - and asked him to let her enter the convent ... which he did! But she would pay a price for this, as her story shows.

Prayer over the Offerings - St. Thérèse, Virgin/Doctor

As we proclaim your wonders in Saint Thérèse, O Lord, we humbly implore your majesty, that, as her merits were pleasing to you, so, too, our dutiful service may find favor in your sight. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DUTIFUL SERVICE. Monastery life is not all prayer and rest; as *Saint Thérèse* learned, it is just like 'real life.' Her mother had died when she was just four; eventually she and her three sisters entered the same monastery. When her sister Pauline became Prioress, the community feared a 'takeover' by the four sisters, so they kept *Saint Thérèse* a novice [she was never a fully professed nun] and gave her the *least* desirable jobs; she was not allowed to visit her father after he had a stroke that left him deranged. But in all her woes, *Saint Thérèse chose* to be pleasantly patient and trusting in God's will. Hers was no candy-coated, charming, easy faith; it was perfected by fire and by *choosing* to be lovingly charitable *at all times*. Do we choose to do the same?

Prayer after Communion - St. Thérèse, Virgin/Doctor

May the Sacrament we have received, O Lord, kindle in us the force of that love with which Saint Thérèse dedicated herself to you and longed to obtain your mercy for all. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU. We must tap into the great source of grace: the *Eucharist* in order to live the 'Little Way.' Even *Saint Thérèse* found it difficult; when she experienced dryness in prayer, she wrote: *"Jesus isn't doing much to keep the conversation going."* When found asleep *during* prayer, she quipped: *"if mothers love children when they lie asleep in their arms ... God must love us when we fall asleep during prayer."* We certainly hope so! *Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, pray for us!*

With God's love and my prayers,

Father Mike

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