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Thérèse of Lisieux

feastday october 1st



Catechesis,
color- &
info booklet

Introduction

This booklet introduces you to one of the many saints of the Church: St. Therese of Lisieux. In this booklet you will learn more about her life and what we can learn from her.

At the beginning of the booklet you'll first find some more background info about what saints are. Also included are games, coloring pages and links to podcasts and more material.

We sometimes also refer to Therese of Lisieux as "the little Therese" or "Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face"

Lisieux is a town in Normandy, France

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In this booklet you will already find all kinds of material about Saint Therese of Lisieux, but on the website you will also find material about many more saints! Including coloring pages, crafts, podcasts and more.



There is quite a lot in this booklet. There are also things to think or talk about. You don't have to read it all the way through in one sitting! Will you color the images in it as nicely as possible? This is a book to keep and cherish!

About saints

Together one family.

The church does not only consist of us, God's people on earth, but also the saints in heaven. We do not see them, yet we belong together.

Together we are 1 family, 1 Church, 1 people of God.

The saints are all the people who are with God in heaven.

So they are ordinary people who have died and are now with God in heaven.

In the church we know many saints by name, but there are also many unknown saints.



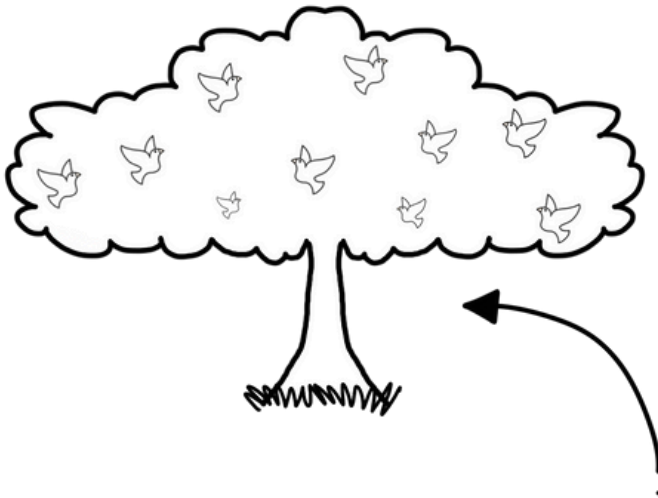
There are many saints in heaven; so many that no one can count them. They come from all over the world (from all races and tribes and peoples and languages). They stand before the throne of God. They are wearing white robes. And they have palm branches in their hands. (Revelations 7, 9-14).

Example and intercession

Jesus is our great example. But we can also look to the saints and take them as examples. We can try to imitate them a little. We may also ask saints for help (intercession) so that we ourselves become holy.

Everyone can become holy.

The main goal in our lives is to go to heaven, to God. We can become holy if we try to do good, if we try to do what God asks of us. These don't have to be spectacularly big things; all the little good things help: God makes those small things great (remember the story of the mustard seed).



Small good deeds

Jesus says (Mark 4, 26-34) that the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed; a tiny seed. When you put it in the ground it becomes a big plant. That is how it's also with the Kingdom of God. It starts with tiny things that God grows into something big. The mustard seeds of the Kingdom of God are the good things we do for others. Even though they are so small.

The life story of Therese of Lisieux

In this booklet you will become acquainted with Saint Therese of Lisieux. We know a lot about her because she loved to write. She wrote down her own life story. Read about it here or listen to the podcast:

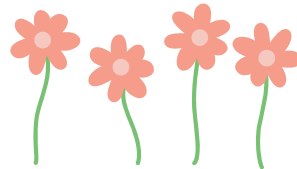


The first sunny years

Her last name is Martin. Therese Martin was born on Jan. 2nd, 1873, in the town of Alençon, France. Her mother's name is Zélie and her father's name is Louis. She has four sisters: Marie, Pauline, Léonie and Céline. At Therese's home, they often go to church and they also pray. Therese loves Jesus very much from a young age. Therese is very happy. She is a cheerful child, but she can get a bit angry sometimes. She is very attached to her mother; she prefers to be close to her, she follows her mother everywhere. She is a bit fond of her father. When her father comes home from work he lifts her on his shoulders. He calls her his queen.

Her mother dies

Therese is only four years old when something bad happens. Her mother becomes very ill and she dies. This gives Therese a lot of grief. She misses her mother terribly. She is no longer as cheerful and carefree as she used to be. Fortunately, her oldest sister Pauline wants to be a kind of second mother for her.



The Buissonnets

The Martin family moves to Lisieux. The house where they are going to live is called: "the Buissonnets." This means something like "the groves". The house has a beautiful garden. Therese loves the garden very much. She likes to make tea from seeds and tree bark from the garden. She also grows flowers. In the garden, she makes several altars of her own. She also enjoys just sitting in the grass and listening to the wind; she often finds herself praying. She also enjoys going out with her father. She calls him "my sweet king" and he takes her fishing.

Mary's smile

When Therese was nine years old, her sister Pauline left home to enter the convent. This convent is called the Carmel. So now Therese loses a mother for the second time. One day Therese becomes very ill. When she is in bed, something very special happens. From her bed she can see a statue of Mary. What happens? Mary smiles at Therese. This makes Therese incredibly happy. She understands that she has a mother in heaven who loves her! She is also instantly better.



The Christmas Day grace

We jump in time: Therese is now 13 years old. She is a very sensitive girl. She cries easily, even over things that are not so important. At Christmas Midnight Mass, she experiences something special. She experiences the newly born Child Jesus entering her heart as streams of Light. Therese realizes, "Because God makes Himself small and weak out of love for me, He makes me strong and courageous." This moment on Christmas night completely changes her life. She is no longer the same; Jesus has changed her heart. From that moment she feels very strong and she no longer cries over things that are not important. She herself calls this the Christmas Day Grace.

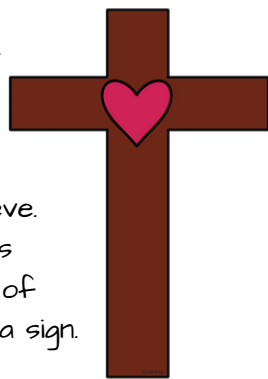


Grace means that God helps you extra. It is something you cannot earn; God gives it just like that. You can only ask for it. By God's grace you become a better person, then faith, hope and love grow in your heart.

From the Christmas Day grace on, she felt the love of Jesus enter her heart. Since then, she has always been happy. She no longer wants to live for herself, but for Jesus.

When you love someone, you want to show it. For example, by giving a hug or saying or doing something sweet. This is also how it is with Therese. She has noticed how much Jesus loves her. Because of this, she also loves Him a lot. Therefore, she wants to make Him happy. She loves Jesus so much that she considers Him more important than herself.

Therese wants to make Jesus happy by loving others. She wants to pray especially for people who do not believe in Jesus. She prays that they will also believe so that they will go to heaven. For example, she decides to pray for a criminal who does not believe. He gets the death penalty. In the newspaper, she reads that just before he dies, this criminal gives a crucifix of Jesus a kiss. Therese now knows: Jesus is giving her a sign. He hears her prayers. Therese now feels even more motivated to pray for people.



Entering the Carmel convent

Meanwhile, Therese wants nothing more than, like her sister Pauline, enter in the convent too. But she is too young; she must be 21. Therefore, she goes with her father on a trip to Rome. When she gets to the pope, she kneels down before him and asks him if she can already enter when she is 15. The pope says neither yes nor no. He says: listen to the bishop and God willing it will work out.

Therese would have preferred the Pope's permission; that would have been easier. Still, she continues to trust. And what happens? The night before Therese turns 15, the bishop gives permission!

Therese leaves her father's house to live in the Carmel convent. She is given a "habit," which is special clothing that convent sisters wear. At the convent, she chooses a new name: Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face.

The Holy Face is the face of Jesus. Therese chooses this because Jesus always looks lovingly at her.

Life in the monastery

Life in the monastery is not easy. They live in a fixed rhythm and with other convent sisters. Not everyone is nice though! Therese also has to work in the convent: for example, sweeping the floor or repairing (mending) clothes.

She also gets comments that she is not doing well. In the convent, obedience is important. Life in the convent is not easy, but Therese wants to be there anyway. She also tries her best to always have a happy face and not to complain. Even to sisters who are not so nice, she always tries to have a smile and be helpful.

Therese has an important wish: she wants nothing more than to become a saint.

Holy means that you like to do what God wants. You do your best to do that. Not everything has to go perfectly to be holy. It's mostly about things like being honest, kind, listening to God's voice in your heart and forgiving others, loving God and people.

That is the way to God's Kingdom, to heaven.



Searching for the elevator

But how should she do that? When Therese looks at the example of all the great saints she thinks: I can't do that. She compares the great saints to mountains so high that the peaks are in the clouds.

She compares herself to a grain of sand trampled by passersby. Yet she longs to become holy. She becomes discouraged at first. But then she encourages herself: "Jesus is good. He put this desire in my heart.

He wouldn't do this if it were unachievable." She understands, "In my smallness, I can try to become holy. I cannot make myself bigger. I have to take myself as I am, with all my faults." Therese makes a plan for herself: "I am going to find a way to heaven. A small, short and straight road.

A new road." She compares it to an elevator: she is going to look for an elevator that will take her to Jesus. Then she doesn't have to go up the steep stairs and take the huge steps of the great saints; those are too difficult for her. She goes looking and asks Jesus to show her the little short way. Then she reads this in the Bible:

"If anyone is small, let him come to Me"
(free interpretation Thol of Proverbs 9,4)

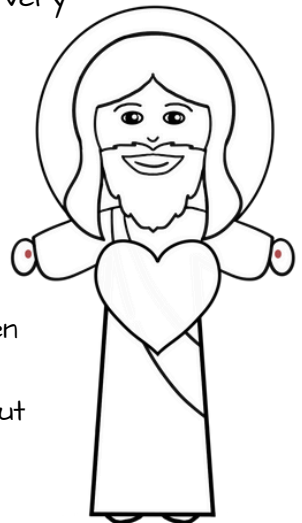
Therese is curious. What would Jesus do with the very small one? She searches further and reads in another passage in the Bible:

"Like a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you. I will carry you at My breast and cradle you on My knees."

Isaiah 66,13

Now she understands what the little way is! She has found the elevator! The elevator to heaven is in the arms of Jesus Himself!

Now she also knows, "I must not become bigger, but rather smaller. If I am small then Jesus will lift me up."



In search of her special calling

Therese has found the short quick way to Jesus: it is the little way. But she is looking for something else. She wonders in what way she can best serve Jesus. She is searching for her vocation.

When we talk about vocation in church, it's about Jesus calling people to follow him, everyone in their own way. Jesus calls us first to be Christians, to be baptized, to be a child of God. That is our calling first. Then he calls people for special things. So it is important to always keep talking to Jesus so that you notice when He is calling you and then you can listen to His voice in your heart. You do that, for example, by praying and by reading in the Bible.

Jesus called Therese to become a nun in a convent. She also feels called to pray for those who do not believe.

But Theresia notices that Jesus also calls her to something else. But what is it? Therese notices in herself so many desires: she wants to be an apostle, a teacher, a missionary, a martyr and a priest.

So what is her special vocation? Again, Therese searches.

In the Bible, in the apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (12:1-31), Paul takes the human body as an example. He says:

All the body parts (limbs) of the human body together form one body. God has assigned the limbs and organs each their place in the body. The eye is for looking, the ear is for hearing, the legs for walking and so on. All parts of the body are indispensable and equally important. The apostle Paul writes: So it is also with the Church. Through our baptism we have become one body together.

Together we are the Body of Jesus. We each have our own talents, but we belong together and we need each other. Therese suddenly discovers what her place in the Body of the Church is. She gets to be the heart! She gets to be a heart that burns with love.



Therese has discovered her special vocation: She may be love. Love in the heart of the Church. Now she has peace and tranquility in her heart. It is love that will bring her close to Jesus.

Roses from Heaven

When Therese is 23 years old, she becomes very ill. She understands that she cannot get better and that she will die. Then she promises the other sisters, "When I am in heaven I will continue to do good on earth and I will make it rain roses."
By roses from heaven she means: moments of grace that she will ask God for us. Therese dies when she is 24 years old. Now Therese is with God in heaven. She is a saint. So when you see or receive a rose, you may think of Therese and pray to her. You may then immediately think; Can I also do something good for others?



Good God,

Thank you for all good things. I would like to help build Your kingdom.

I want to do my best to do small good deeds. Will you help me do that?

And will you let my small good deeds grow?

Amen

Good deeds I can do for others



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With this booklet, children will learn about Saint Therese of
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the) saints and take them as examples. We can try to imitate
them a little. We may also ask saints for help (intercession) so
that we become holy ourselves.

In addition to the story and explanations, this booklet includes
several coloring pages and assignments and a link to more craft,
reading and listening materials on the rkkids.nl website



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