

# *St. Thérèse Feast Day*



**SPECIAL FEAST DAY  
PRAYERS ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE  
RELIC VISIT**

# Day One

## Our Family Prayer

Youngest child of the Martin family, God placed you in an established large family. Four children had died very early, leaving you with four older sisters. You were bathed in their attention and love, as they all tried to attend to their youngest sister. Your strong will and determination even frustrated them trying to please you. Like all families, at times there were unspoken tensions.

We experienced the great love and delightful companionship of brothers and sisters growing up. We played with them. Their embrace and insights helped us grow and mature. But, as our personalities developed and emerged, we each wanted our own independence. Help save us from unmet expectations and sibling rivalries that can haunt us even today. You learned to love who and what God gave you, Little Flower. Free us from the wounds of unmet expectations and grace us to understand with merciful eyes that they loved, did, and gave the best they knew how. Heavenly sister and friend, teach us to count our blessings with gratitude, and not curse the unmet. Teach us to forgive.

Amen.

*“Soon we will have the intimate happiness of the family, and it’s this beauty that brings us closer to Him.”*

~ St. Louis

## Day Two

### Communion with God Prayer

Prayerful Thérèse, you experienced prayer as visiting with God or the heavenly Communion of Saints. You knew that spending time, listening, and talking is the way to build and deepen a relationship. Prayer became the source of your strength because you experienced God's presence. You learned that silence was often more powerful than words. You taught us: "For me, prayer is a burst from my heart; it is a simple glance thrown toward heaven, a cry of thanksgiving and love in times of trial as well as in times of joy. Frequently, only silence can express my prayer."

Help us to be prayerful like you. Quiet us to not ramble on to God with our endless petitions and words, but rather to listen more so that it actually be a mutual conversation with friends. Make us comfortable with silence because it is God's language. When you were so sick at the end, the Nuns asked you what you prayed to Jesus, and you simply answered: "Nothing — I simply love Him!" Help us to be still and experience the Divine Love always and already present within us.

Amen.

*"For me, prayer is a burst from my heart; it is a simple glance thrown towards heaven..."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

## Day Three

### Climbing in Grace Prayer

**W**ith childlike wonder and dependence, you saw Jesus as the elevator to lift you up through challenging times. Life presented you many challenges of health, hypersensitivity that made you easily hurt, criticism of others, being misunderstood, not noticed or appreciated, deaths, disappointments, and dark nights of senses and spirit.

You had to walk many stairways to get the bigger picture of what was really happening. Yes, you wanted to be carried, as we often want God to fix things, but you learned to take each step, knowing that the energy came from God's presence deep within you. Teach us how to trust the presence of Jesus' Spirit deep within enabling us to walk through challenging times, with humble gratitude that Jesus is carrying and sustaining us. Awaken us to know we are not alone, but unconditionally befriended by Jesus Who never leaves us and walks with and within us. As you teach "everything is grace," help us trust that we are riding a hidden escalator of grace.

Amen.

*"It is your arms, Jesus, which are the elevator  
to carry me to heaven."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux



## Day Four

### Big Expectations Prayer

**B**eloved St. Thérèse, with childlike wonder, you were born with big dreams. Your curiosity wanted to embrace everyone and everything with wholehearted love. When your older sister, Leonie, was leaving to join the convent, she brought her basket of girlish treasures of ribbons, dolls, and pretty materials, etc. to share with her sisters. She was emptying herself for God. As your sisters were all reaching to get some of these treasures, you grabbed the whole basket and announced, "I want it all!" No one was surprised. This action symbolized your wholehearted approach to life and all it offers. You were not half-hearted in anything, and paid the price of that.

Help us not to compromise ourselves and our dreams. Sometimes, we become protective and guard our choices and generosity. We also want it all, Little Flower, but disappointment hurts and so we harden our hearts. Enliven in us your generous heart and childlike wonder which embraces and gives all with enthusiasm. Energize our "inner child" which is God's Spirit. Give us your wholehearted spirit which expands the tight, protective boundaries which limit our soul and attitude.

Amen.

*"Jesus has chosen to show me the only way which leads to the Divine Furnace of love; it is the way of childlike self-surrender, the way of a child who sleeps, afraid of nothing, in its father's arms."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

## Day Five

### Our Life Vocation Prayer

Sweet Carmelite Sister, you wanted everything as you searched for your meaning in life. Your sensitive soul was at times confused about what was going on. You felt called to be a warrior, priest, apostle, missionary, doctor, and martyr, but none of that happened. The Carmelite Monastery you had so idealized was not all you imagined it to be. Rather than to despair and get depressed, you continued to watch, listen, and pray. You believed that Jesus never left you and had a purpose for you, even if it seemed elusive. You had to learn to accept your limits and longings so that God could bring out your heroic vocation. You listened to Jesus reveal, "My vocation is Love!" You realized that "Love would descend into your nothingness and transform you into living fire."

Like you, St. Thérèse, we sometimes wonder what is happening in our lives and world and search for life's meaning. The passion and fire of life seems diminished. It seems confusing and frustrating at times. Choices we made turned out very different than expected. Please reintroduce me to my own inner truth that we are created in the image of God and that the more we love, the more we are like God! Help us embrace with enthusiasm our vocation in life: to be God's loving presence and light in this world. Give us your missionary spirit to make God known and loved by reaching out in love, especially those who fall through the cracks of society and do not share the privilege and plenty we have. Renew God's "divine spark" in us. Help each of us find ourselves in God's mercy and generosity!

Amen. *"I can only offer very little things to God."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

## Day Six

### Bend, Not Break Prayer

**S**t. Thérèse, you loved, absorbed, meditated and lived God's Word in the Scriptures. We admire the biblical symbol you adopted for all your personal items. Instead of name tags we use on things, you used the symbol of a reed from the Prophet Isaiah: "A bruised reed that bends but does not break" (IS 42:3) amid the storms of life. Isaiah was speaking of the suffering servant of God who was the chosen one and Messiah (anointed one) who would establish God's reign.

Fulfilled in Jesus, it was made even clearer by your "Little Way" of confidence and trust, that you were chosen to help reveal God's reign in our world. You were overwhelmed with challenges of health, hurts, disappointments, being judged too simple and childish, which bruised you, but while you bent before them, you did not let them break you. We often want to give up when life seems unmanageable. You trusted that the presence of Jesus within you strengthened you to endure all and stand tall. Instill your brave spirit of trust and hope within us.

Amen.

*"We are too little to be able always to rise above difficulties. Well, then, let us pass beneath them quite simply."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

# Day Seven

## Attentive Living Prayer

**T**hérèse, your mystical heart learned to be sensitive to God's presence in everything. As a child of God, you had great and heroic dreams to embrace everything. You learned your limits and to focus the divine energy of love into the ordinary details and routines of life. We want to do big things to make a big difference. Inspirit us with your "Little Way" to focus our attention and energy on the little things. God's presence is more subtle and missed if we are not attentive. We miss so much when we are inattentive, distracted, or preoccupied.

Teach me the importance of simple smiles, words of encouragement, frequent affirmations, kind eyes, and peaceful judgments. Let great dreams not distract us from your hungering presence within every person who comes into our lives. Give me your mystical spirit which frees my gifts to affirm and reverence every moment, person, and opportunity in life. Clarify my attentive vision that I might see the fingerprints of God everywhere.

Amen.

*"Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word, always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

## Day Eight

### Social Action Prayer

**E**ngaging St. Thérèse, your parents taught you and your sisters that an integral aspect of their Catholic faith was that they must take care of the poor, especially the homeless gathered near the city hall near your home. You were challenged to give some food or money. Your Dad often brought homeless men in your house, fed them a meal, and had them bathe. Those were not always comfortable moments, but God's love challenges us to see the face of Jesus in the poor and disenfranchised.

We can often think that faith is about prayers and rituals in a Church or community. You learned in your contemplative heart that: "When charity is deeply rooted in the soul, it shows itself on the outside." God's love and presence are not just for me as an individual, but must be shared, especially with those in need. Piety without justice is empty. Teach us not to make moral judgments that diminish the poor and those who fall through the cracks and actively work for justice in our society. God's love moved you to want to go to Vietnam to help people in great need. Give us your missionary heart.

Amen.

*"When charity is deeply rooted in the soul,  
it shows itself on the outside."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux



## Day Nine

### Unconditional Mercy Prayer

**T**hérèse, you are a prophet of Mercy. Being brought up in a Church infiltrated with Jansenism which stressed an angry and judgmental God we had to please. It made us fearful and anxious, afraid we could never please God despite our best efforts. God's love seemed distant with all the conditions imposed. Religion became so serious, and we knew that we could never allow ourselves to be intimate with anyone we feared.

Responding to God's seductive love and reading the message of Jesus, you broke through and experienced and proclaimed God's unconditional love. We tried to make it all about ourselves and what we could do to merit grace. You learned that God's love is unconditional and freely given. Give us the freedom to accept that God does not love us because we are good, but because God is good. Overwhelm our hearts, souls, and spirits to accept the free love that is always alive and seducing us. Awaken us to not try to merit or achieve what God has already given us.

Amen.

*"He guides and inspires me every moment  
of the day. Just when I need it,  
a new light shines on my problems."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

## Day Ten

### Prayer for Loving Others

**T**ender Thérèse, people were attracted to you. God lived within you. There was an innocence and simplicity that made you so lovable. God is love, and the more we love, we image God. Yet you had to deal with people who irritated or repulsed you. You explained that there was one Sister in the Carmel who made you feel uncomfortable. You always smiled at her to make her feel you were delighted to see her when your paths crossed, but otherwise you ran the other way to avoid her.

When she finally asked you what you so loved about her, you gave her a positive affirmation that there was something good about her that brightened your soul when you saw her. You made her feel good, even though you told her that the experience was truly spiritual, not promising a deepening friendship. You believed that God is the Artist of us all, and likes His artwork to be enjoyed. Help us to love those people who rub us the wrong way — treating them as God's beloved, even if we don't love the artwork.

Amen.

*“Our Lord’s love shines out just as much through a little soul who yields completely to His Grace as it does through the greatest...”*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

## Day Eleven

### Sufferings' Wisdom Prayer

Close Friend of Jesus and us, you knew and felt compassion with the struggles and sufferings of Jesus, especially as he gave his life for us. You recalled how deeply He pleaded with God “to let this chalice pass from me!”— in His humanity, He was scared and hurt, but He learned to accept it all with wholehearted love because it was the will of His Father.

As you absorbed the Spirit of Jesus in surrender amid suffering, instill in us your heart and spirit. As tender and precious as you are, St. Thérèse, you learned the wisdom that alone we are helpless, but in God we are powerful. Help us learn the lesson of trust and surrender. We get fearful that we cannot take any more suffering of body, mind, relationships, and spirit. Give us your generous trust which places our sufferings, social issues, hurts, divisions, and hopes in the hands of Jesus. Help us believe we are not abandoned, but that God is always with us and will sustain us. Your childlike trust is the gift we need.

Amen.

*“The good Lord does not do things by halves;  
He always gives what we need.  
Let us then carry on bravely.”*

~ St. Zélie

# Day Twelve

## Nature as Teacher Prayer

In a world trying to narrow God's presence where we can wrap our heads around it, Thérèse, at a young age you learned what mystical Christianity teaches us. Creation is God's first revelation as the Divine exploded and overflowed into beautiful matter so He could love and be loved. Nature is the first Bible. You always loved flowers and nature. They always calmed your spirit. Your curiosity led you off a beaten path, while your Dad was fishing. You discovered a most beautiful flower and stood in awe. Being someone who only felt valued when noticed, you initially thought the beautiful flower was wasted. No one would see and appreciate its beauty.

Your curious soul watched it carefully, imagining what to do. The God Who permeates all creation and nature revealed to you through that fascinating flower that it gave glory to God by just being — not by doing or being seen. This awesome awakening was your mystical experience of God's permeating presence. Help us be still and silent enough to look to nature and other places where we can learn who we are, not just what we do!

By God's ever-present grace, we are God's beloved daughters and sons. Teach us what you learned about being holy because God is the center of who we are.

Amen.

*"A word or a smile is often enough to put  
fresh life in a despondent soul."*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux

# Day Thirteen

## Healing Core Wounds Prayer

**G**entle Little Flower, you suffered a major trauma in your life when you lost your loving mother Zélie, your wet nurse Rose Taille, whom you had intensely bonded with, and then Pauline, whom you adopted as your mother, mentor, and teacher, when she left to be a Carmelite Nun. This triple mother wound traumatized you and caused you great grief and pain which squeezed your beautiful soul and spirit. Your pain cried out in heartrending ways. Everyone turned in prayer to the Virgin Mary, knowing that God comes to us with healing where we need it. You trusted the smile of Mary and allowed the Divine Feminine to heal your wounded soul.

Help us when life disappoints or crushes us to look carefully for the ways God is healing us; not to fly away or fight it, but to let the pain become our teacher and open us to the ways God is healing us in the depth of who we are. Even when no one initially believed you, when you looked for confirmation, you trusted Divine surprises and held firm to believing the experience of God's smile and let Her transform you. Open us to be aware of where we need to be healed and allow the God of Love and Surprises to work wonders in and through us.

Amen.

*“Kindness is my only guiding star...”*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux



## Day Fourteen

### Our Parents and Family Prayer

Beloved St. Thérèse, you were blessed to be born into a family of deep love and devoted faith. Your Father and Mother, Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin, loved you with intense dedication. You were enveloped by love from your first breath. They overcame the painful loss of four other children and therefore were especially solicitous for all their five daughters, and especially you as the youngest one.

Help us to honor our father and mother and the family God placed us in. Family are the people God has chosen for us. Help us understand that our holiness and wholeness depend on how well we deal with these chosen people, even when they are challenging and difficult. Inspire us with the grace to appreciate the sacrifices they made for us.

Amen.

*“God gave me a Father and a Mother more worthy of heaven than of earth.”*

~ St. Thérèse of Lisieux



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The mission of the Society of the Little Flower is to promote devotion to St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, the Carmelite Nun and Doctor of the Church. Through prayers and donations, friends of St. Thérèse enable Carmelites throughout the world to make a difference in people's lives through Gospel ministries and the education of seminarians, fulfilling her mission to "make God known and loved to the ends of the earth" in the most concrete ways of charity and justice.



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