

1 October

**St Therese of the Child Jesus, religious**  
*Protector of the Congregation*

**Memorial**



Fifth and youngest daughter of a Christian family, Therese Martin grew up "surrounded by love." She was four years old when her mother died. The father and his five daughters then moved to Lisieux to be closer to their families. A second tragedy shook Thérèse: her sisters Pauline and Marie entered the Carmelite convent.

One Christmas Eve, by a powerful grace, she found the happy balance of her childhood and soared in "a giant race" to the God of Love who seized her. Undaunted, she went to Rome to go at the feet of the Pope and was granted acceptance on 9 April 1888 to enter the Carmelite. She was only fifteen. With heroic fidelity, she continued on to holiness.

During her long illness of tuberculosis, she relied on Christ. In the mystery of his agony, she prayed for the salvation of sinners who had no faith. She was 24 years old when she died on September 30, 1897 at the Carmelite convent of Lisieux, promising to bring on the earth, "a shower of roses" and to spend her time in heaven doing good for this same earth.

By obedience, the story of her life was written a few years later, and received a breathtaking popularity. Many testimonies of graces obtained through her intercession flocked to the monastery. Canonized in 1928, she was proclaimed patroness of the missions of the universal Church.

Therese Martin gave us, in an autobiographical manuscripts, her spiritual journey: through the joys and sorrows, beyond suffering and sacrifice of herself for sinners, she would not deny God, and waited for all of His mercy. She wanted to be the love in the church: a burning love towards the Father, a heroic love of her sisters in community.

Pope John Paul II declared her to be a "Doctor of the Church", on 19 October 1997.

In the 28th General Chapter of the Brothers celebrated in Zandhoven (Belgium) from 1 to 13 September 1953, it was requested for Rome to proclaim St. Therese of the Child Jesus as special Protector of the Institute. The request was granted on December 21, 1954 "according to the desire of the General Chapters of the Fathers and Sisters", specified Fr. Elbee, the Superior General, when he made an announcement to the entire Congregation.

The saint who, as Pius XII said, "went straight to the heart of the Gospel" and who said, "My vocation is love; it is love alone that counts," whose last words on earth were: "My God ... I love you" and something of most prodigious "zealot of Love", in modern times, has given us the spirit of love.

She gives us a burning love for the Eucharist, and her boundless confidence in the merciful love, her humility that made her happy to be small, weak and powerless, her cult of obedience, her abandonment like a child in the arms of Jesus and Mary, in their hearts, her ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, her missionary spirit, she deserved to be Patroness of Missions equal of St. Francis Xavier, her love of the church's spirit of reparation, she who liked to be called: Teresa of Jesus and of the Holy Face, the painful Face of Jesus, the visible reflection of his Heart crushed by the sins of men and who is available as Victim Love to comfort him; may she give us her simplicity which was one of the most characteristic note of her holiness; I say, "May she give us," I should say "may she increase in us all that, because this is what we inherited from our beloved Founders.

Therefore, she is in the right place together with St. Joseph, St. Pachomius, St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Dominic and St. Margaret Mary.

She will be with us until the end of time; she said she would sit to do good on earth when the number of candidates would be complete.

(Father John of the Heart of Jesus ELBEE ss.cc.  
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*« Je suis venue pour sauver les âmes  
et surtout afin de prier pour les prêtres »*