Thérèse and the Little Way

Ages 4 to 9 · About 10 minutes to read aloud · Feast day October 1

Virtue: Doing small things with great love

The story in a nutshell

Thérèse, the youngest in a loving family in France, longs to give her whole heart to God, and even asks the Pope to let her become a sister at fourteen. Inside the quiet convent she discovers her Little Way: becoming a saint by doing small, ordinary things with great love.

Before reading

- Who is the youngest in your family? What is it like to be little?
- Can a child do something great for God? Let's find out.

While reading

- When Thérèse is ill and sees Mary smile: who is Mary? *Listen for: The mother of Jesus, and our mother too.*
- When she asks the Pope: was that easy or hard? Why did she do it? *Listen for: Hard; she loved God so much.*
- When she discovers her Little Way: what is it? *Listen for: Doing small things with great love.*

After reading

- What small things did Thérèse do with great love? *Listen for: She was extra kind to a grumpy sister, smiled when tired, did dull jobs without complaining.*
- What small thing could you do with great love today? *Listen for: Help without being asked, share, smile, say a kind word.*
- Why do we call her the Little Flower? *Listen for: She promised to let kindnesses fall like a shower of roses.*
- *Older children*: Thérèse never did big, famous things. Why is she a great saint? *Listen for: Because of the great love in her small things.*

Words to explain

- **convent**: a home where sisters live together and give their lives to God
- **Carmel**: the quiet convent where Thérèse's sisters prayed; its sisters are called Carmelites
- **the Pope**: the leader of the whole Catholic Church, who lives in Rome
- **Little Way**: Thérèse's way to holiness: small things, done with great love

Be a Little Saint this week

The book ends with three challenges. Choose one to try together, or send all three home:

1. Do a small chore without being asked and without expecting anything in return.
2. Be especially kind to everyone this week.
3. Do everything this week with a happy heart and great love.

Pray together

Dear God, I am small, but my love can be big. Help me to do the little things today, a kind word, a helping hand, a happy smile, all with great love, the way Saint Thérèse did. Amen.

A note for the leader

Loss. The book tells gently that Thérèse's mama died when she was little, and that Thérèse died young. If a child in your group has lost someone, read those pages ahead of time. Dwell on how her sisters held her close, and on her promise to do good from heaven.

Go further

Our free **Shower of Roses pack** has a pocket for every child and rose cards, so the class makes sure every pocket fills with kind notes. More ideas for the feast day are at littlesaintsbighearts.com/saint-therese-feast-day, and every free printable is at littlesaintsbighearts.com/printables.

Thérèse and the Little Way by Joseph Glazier. Free to copy for your class or program.