



Between Friends

A publication for the Friends of the Society of

the Little Flower, Darien, Illinois, and Canada

Fall 2015 | www.littleflower.org

FAITH & FAMILY



>> Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm., Director

Family and Faith

from the director

Beloved Family and Friends of St. Thérèse,

We are *Between Friends* because we are among *Family*. Our faith has called us together in our love for St. Thérèse to fulfill her mission "to make God known and loved to the ends of the earth."

Thérèse grew up in a family of deep faith. Hopefully we all have.

Family is the heart of the human experience. We are all born into a family. These are the people God chose for us. Friends are the people we choose. Our very identity is tied up with the family we were born into. Family is the home where we grow up to learn and believe our true identity as God's beloved. Family and faith are tied together – this is the focus of this edition of *Between Friends*.

Please enjoy reading this edition of *Between Friends*, as we reflect on the connection of Faith and Family, our Church's strong recent focus on Family, and the canonization of St. Thérèse's parents, who created a family where holiness was an essential part of the life process and relationships. There are some wonderful articles you will really enjoy and be inspired by.

We are more than friends – we really are a faith family as the Society of the Little Flower, the Friends of St. Thérèse.

The Carmelites are very blessed to have you as part of each other's lives and ministries. You really are family to us. Please remember that each day you are in our prayers and hearts. With gratitude. 🌹

Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.
Director

IN THIS ISSUE



- 2 From the director
Family and Faith
- 3 From the editor
Giving Thanks for All
- 4 Local news
Faith: Reaching out in Witness
and Service to the Family
- 7 Saints of the month
Louis and Marie-Zélie Martin
- 8 Planning tips:
Special Planning Tips for Those
Who Live Alone
- 9 Charitable Gift Annuities:
The Gift that Keeps on Giving
- 10 Feature story
Faith and Family
- 12 St. Thérèse in our Lives.
- 13 My Friend Denise
- 15 From the director of
planned and major giving
We Are Family.



Between Friends

A publication for the
friends of the Society of
the Little Flower

FALL 2015

Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.
DIRECTOR/PUBLISHER

Mary Lambert
**EDITOR/DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTOR**

Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.
Father William Harry, O. Carm.

Mary Lambert
Dan Pritchard
Joe Voss
Mary Zacharias

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Dan Pritchard
PLANNED AND MAJOR GIFTS

Society of the Little Flower
1313 N. Frontage Rd.
Darien, Illinois 60561-5340
800.621.2806
www.littleflower.org

The Monastery of Mt. Carmel
Society of the Little Flower
7020 Stanley Ave.
Niagara Falls, Ontario L2G
7B7

800.922.7622

FAITH CATHOLIC
Patrick Dally
GRAPHIC DESIGNER





© DollarPhotoClub.com/fotomaximum



Giving Thanks for All

>> **Mary Therese Lambert**, Editor of *Between Friends*

You make us so grateful! Through your donations, the Carmelites are able to provide clean water, schools, food, and spiritual nourishment to people who have so little in their lives. In this issue, we explore the many reasons we have to thank God and let our gratitude flower in our every action.

Here are some thoughts from our Carmelite Provincial on gratitude:

Most of us live in a world of abundance. We have transportation and warm beds to sleep in. During this harvest time of year, we enjoy enough, perhaps too much, to eat. We are moved to be grateful for God's blessings up on us.

But we should realize that God's love for us is all around us, in all seasons, and at all times. It is easy to face adversity and feel that God has abandoned us. St. Thérèse certainly experienced that feeling when her illness overwhelmed her near the end of her life. But ultimately we come to realize that even in adversity, God is showing us His Grace. When we find gratitude for all of life's

experiences, then God's Grace flows freely into our lives.

One need only look through the Gospels to find many stories about gratitude. Remember the 10 lepers are cured, but only one, a Samaritan, returned to thank Jesus for being healed. The other nine were healed, but, we might say, seemed to expect the cure. Such a marvelous act on God's part did not seem to change their hearts or touch their souls. Jesus' response tells us that when we are grateful to God, we discover the presence of God in our lives and we actively respond to God.

Gratitude: It is only when we have a sense of gratitude, a gratitude that flows over into giving, that we truly meet God and experience His Grace in our lives. When I am grateful to God, I discover God in my life! – Fr. William J. Harry, O. Carm.



I hope you find this issue filled with family, faith and gratitude to carry into your own lives. 🌹

FAITH:

Reaching out in Witness and Service to the Family

AS MEMBERS OF the larger human family of God, Carmelites invite people we minister to and with to serve the larger community as an integral part of our faith.



➤ Earlier this year, 24 seniors at Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein, Ill., along with faculty, staff, parent and volunteers, participated in the four-day March for Life Rally in Washington, D.C., giving witness to the sacredness of all life from conception to natural death.

» Junior students from Mount Carmel High School in Chicago participated in a week-long service learning program, IMPACT, to experience ways to express their faith in action. This excursion was to focus on the dignity of the human person, and students learned about agencies and programs that help homeless shelters, veterans centers, and nursing homes.



NEW PRIORY IN TORREON, MEXICO

» Our Carmelite Province was called to Mexico to help in a very poor and undeveloped area more than 20 years ago. Addressing the many needs of the people, our men have helped build a home for children whose parents are imprisoned, developed programs to help with food and health care needs, are building a large Church for them to worship in, and just recently built and dedicated a Carmelite Priory where the six men will live and pray. The Carmelite presence in Mexico is growing. 🌹



PILGRIMAGES

Led by Fr. Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.

2016 Pilgrimages with Fr. Bob



April 2016
Jubilee Year
of Mercy in Italy



September 2016
Castles and Cathedrals of
England and Scotland



November 2016
Holy
Land

For further more information, full brochure or registration form, please contact:
Darlene Jindra • Carmelite Spiritual Center • 8419 Bailey Road, Darien, IL 60561
630-969-4141 • retreats@carmelitespiritualcenter.org

The Sword

A Journal of Historical, Spiritual, and
Contemporary Carmelite Issues



For over 70 years, The Sword has been a window into Carmelite life. It remains a valuable resource for private reflection on, as well as discussion of, issues important to all Carmelites and those interested in Carmelite spirituality and history.

This journal continues to be a valuable resource for all Carmelites and those interested in learning more about the men and women and events who have been part of the story of Carmel. Each reader will find many hours of enjoyment as you explore this 800 year tradition which continues to be an important part of spirituality in today's world.

to subscribe, visit carmelites.info/publications

ONE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION
US\$15.00 in USA/Canada
US\$18.00 outside USA/Canada

THREE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION
US\$40.00 in USA/Canada
US\$48.00 outside USA/Canada

SAINTS OF THE MONTH: LOUIS AND MARIE-ZÉLIE MARTIN

This October 18, 2015, Pope Francis will canonize the parents of St. Thérèse, as part of the Extraordinary Synod on the Family. This is an extraordinary event in the history of our Church. Rarely have married couples been canonized, especially parents who had children. As ordinary as they seemed, Louis and Zélie are extraordinary people who deserve to be emulated.

It is important to note that Louis and Zélie are not being canonized because they are parents of a canonized saint. Their heroic virtue and love are the lesson and reason. Amid trials and challenges, they remained faithful to God's will, and handed on to their children a sense of God's presence in every experience of life, especially the disappointments and deaths. Serious of faith, their home was a place of laughter, joy, warmth, and inner security.

I have a special affection for Zélie Martin, born Marie-Azélie Guerin. We share the same birth date, 110 years apart – both Capricorns, we are mountain goats who push our way through life with determination and faith in a vision bigger than us. All obstacles can be overcome by faith. In reading her many letters, (Zélie was a prolific letter writer) we see deep insights into her strong faith, despite her less-than-happy childhood, many disappointments, high anxiety, and the death of four of her children. She never lost trust in God's presence. She was a very practical person. The woundedness of life did not define her, even though they weighed heavy. Her faith carried her to heroic heights.

Louis Martin is a harder person to wrap our minds around. He was gentle and tender, but a strong man in his love for family and his faith. A man of few words, but one who loved action. He loved his wife intensely, even giving up his successful business to help her with her Alençon lace cottage industry. He worried about her and tried to soften the anxiety she lived with. He was a man of great prayer and patience. He doted on his daughters. Despite the loss of his wife and four children, he never despaired. He kept on living and

sharing that faith and love of God which he and Zélie handed on to their surviving five daughters. He wept as

he experienced God calling them to religious life, but freely invited them to follow God's invitation. He never complained about the sacrifice, but carried on with gentle and affirming love.

The fact that the five Martin women – Marie, Pauline, Leonie, Celine and Thérèse – all offered their lives in service to God speaks volumes of what they learned from their parents. They were generous in their response to God's love, as Zélie and Louis were generous in pouring out their lives for them. They taught their children that their comfortable, privileged upbringing should not disconnect them from the poor and less fortunate. Parents help form our image of God. Mom and Dad Martin did that very well, despite growing up and living in a Jansenistic Church and world that stressed an angry and judgmental God, not the gentle God of love.

One area of sanctity that strikes me as important is that they remained close as a couple even as they became parents. Many husbands and wives quickly become fathers and mothers, and lose their identity as a couple. Louis and Zélie worked on their relationship as husband and wife, their sacrament of intimacy, knowing somehow that the best gift parents can their children is their love for each other, which overflows.

So, as friends of St. Thérèse and the Carmelites, we rejoice that Zélie and Louis are properly recognized by the universal Church as saints whose holiness

and struggles with life are a positive, grace-filled model for us. 🌹





Dan Pritchard



Janice Rutecki

WHEN THE TIME COMES

>> The Society of the Little Flower is offering our friends a new publication, *When the Time Comes*. We hope you will feel, as we did, that this booklet is an important and thoughtful presentation that can help one prepare for the years when you will be living on your own. Take a moment now to request your copy of *When the Time Comes*. As you prepare for the years ahead, we pray that you will consider including the Society of the Little Flower in your plans. To order your copy of our booklet, call our Planned Giving Office at 1.888.996.1212.

Special Planning Tips for Those Who Live Alone

DID YOU KNOW THAT, according to one estimate, 25 percent of the population of North America lives alone? Women form the majority of this group, since they have longer life expectancies than men. Nonetheless, many men also live by themselves.

People who live alone have special planning needs, relating primarily to the challenges of aging, end-of-life care, and estate planning. Special attention may have to be paid to providing for assisted living, nursing home care, and medical expenses.

Here are some strategies that singles and survivors should implement to ensure their future security:

- **Improve your financial “IQ.”** Ask a librarian about books on personal finance and investing. Take a class or attend seminars that will educate you on annuities, retirement accounts, life insurance, and long-term care insurance. The price of a lack of knowledge can be quite high.
- **Seek out a trusted adviser.** If you do not have a will, start by contacting an estate planning attorney. You may also need the help of a financial planner or tax adviser.
- **Plan for someone to handle financial matters if you become disabled.** A general durable power of attorney enables a person you trust to take over the job of paying your bills, monitoring your savings and investments, and making financial decisions. Another option is a revocable living trust in which a trustee would provide these services if you become incapacitated. Your trustee may also need a power of attorney to deal with assets that are not in the trust.
- **Plan ahead for the time when you may no longer be able to live independently.** Plan some “field trips” to local assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities. Ask home health care providers about services that may enable you stay in your home even if you require help with daily activities.
- **Get your will and other estate plans in order now, while you are still mentally sharp.** Older people sometimes come under pressure from family members to make unwarranted estate distributions. Having your estate plans already in place may protect against any “undue influence.”
- **Gain an extra measure of satisfaction today by including the Society of the Little Flower in your estate plan.** This act of generosity will help ensure that the spirituality of St. Thérèse will continue to inspire future generations and help the Carmelites as well! By doing so, you may even improve your health and live longer (there are studies that prove it!). 🌹

Charitable Gift Annuities: The Gift that Keeps on Giving

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES are remarkable creatures. The gift annuity program here at the Society of the Little Flower is one of the most successful in the nation. Our rates are some of the best you can find, and our mission is second to none. And that is to say nothing of the top-notch service our annuitants receive from Dan Pritchard and Janice Rutecki in our Planned Giving Office.

Supporters of the Society who choose to give in this fashion receive charitable deductions for the current year, as well as the satisfaction of knowing that their gifts will assist the many Carmelite ministries and missions well into the future. But what makes gift annuities unique is their ability also to give back to donors (or other recipients that they select) – in the form of payments for the lifetimes of one or two persons.

This stream of income will continue for as long as a beneficiary is alive – at attractive payout rates. Based on a gift of \$10,000 (our minimum is \$1,000), see the chart that follows for a few examples of how the program works. Don't hesitate to call our office at 888.996.1212 for more details.



© DollarPhotoClub.com / yureh10108

Age	Payout Rate	Annual Income
65	7.1%	\$710
70	7.4%	\$740
75	8.1%	\$810
80	9.3%	\$930
85	11.0%	\$1,100
90+	13.8%	\$1,380

Summing up, a gift annuity starts by providing the donor with a charitable deduction (and capital gains tax savings if stocks are contributed), followed by generous payments for life. Ultimately, and most importantly, your gift annuity benefits our mission in a way that might not otherwise have been possible. It's truly "the gift that keeps on giving."

We encourage you to contact Dan or Janice at 1.888.996.1212 for a personal illustration of how a charitable gift annuity can help you and the Society of the Little Flower.



LEAVING A LEGACY FROM RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

>> A retirement account may be your very best resource for making a bequest to the Society of the Little Flower. Here are some common questions:

Q: I understand that if I leave my IRA to family members, they will have to pay income taxes on future withdrawals. Would it save taxes to leave part or all of my IRA to the Society?

A: Yes. For example, you can name us as a beneficiary of all or part of your IRA and any amount we receive will be free of all income taxes, and state and federal estate taxes, as well.

Q: Do I need to change my will to make an IRA gift?

A: No. The best practice is to ask the trustee or custodian of your account for a new IRA beneficiary form. Most forms provide language for charitable distributions. And, by the way, our correct legal name is "Society of the Little Flower."

Q: I have a 401(k) plan, not an IRA. Can I leave something to the Society of the Little Flower from that account?

A: Yes, friends can name us as a beneficiary of 401(k) plans and 403(b) plans, as well, with the same tax advantages as an IRA bequest. Note that married donors will need a spousal consent form for gifts from retirement accounts.

Q: Can I make gifts from my IRA during my lifetime?

A: The law permitting IRA owners over age 70½ to make gifts directly to charities from their IRAs, up to \$100,000, without owing any tax expired at the end of 2014, but it may be renewed prior to year's end. A direct gift from an IRA does not qualify for a charitable deduction, but because distributions to the Society satisfy the minimum distributions required of those over age 70½, it can reduce taxable income.

>> Dan or Janice in our Planned Giving Office would be happy to help guide you in making a gift to the Society from your IRA. If you are interested in making an IRA gift during life or through your estate plan, or if you want to check the status of legislation renewing direct gifts to charity by those age 70½ or older, Dan or Janice can answer all your questions.

Faith & Family



FAMILY IS THE HEART of the human experience. We are all born into a family. These are the people God chose for us. Friends are the people we choose. Our very identity is tied up with the family we were born into.

Our faith tells us that God is a community of persons – a Blessed Trinity so totally united that “They” are One. We, human beings, created in the image and likeness of God, long for that family connection and unity of belonging. It is our nature. We want and need to belong in a community of persons.

Our Church is celebrating family these days, as the cornerstone of God’s plan and a healthy society. Our Judeo-Christian tradition has always seen the family as the domestic church – the place where holiness and real presence happens. So often today people think of Church as the place where we gather on Sundays to celebrate the presence of God within and among us – celebrate Eucharist and let God’s word transform

us. But this liturgical worship presumes that the Eucharist and celebration of word and sacrament is first happening around our family tables – in our hearts and homes. That love, faith, hope, sharing the stories of life and eating of the love that binds us together celebrate God’s gift of life. No wonder there is sometimes a real disconnection between Sunday Mass and our daily lives.

Family is intended to be our home, where we feel safe, secure, and loved. Family creates the boundaries of our identity. Family is a school of humanity, the best and first place to learn about love, respect, responsibility, loyalty, acceptance of others, and solidarity with the larger family. In the context of family is handed on our heritage, life, identity, values, and hope. Family is the womb of faith – faith in God, faith in others, and faith in ourselves as beloved.

In his recent challenging encyclical, *Laudato Si, On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis emphasizes the social aspect of our faith: that mother earth is the common home of God’s family, reflecting on our responsibility to take care of this home we all share. He issues a wake-up call to all people, especially people of faith, of how our lifestyles are helping to destroy our family home. He speaks to the unequal distribution of resources and wealth – the hoarding by some members of the family to the detriment of many others. It is real world spirituality, that Jesus speaks of – not some “other world” focus. Given God’s preferential option for the poor, which is so strong in our biblical tradition, Pope Francis stresses the impact that pollution, climate changes, toxic waste, dependence on fossil fuels, etc., disproportionately have on the poor and disadvantaged, and which threaten the future of our human family – God’s family. It is a challenging wake-up call about our family home. It has not been well-received in some circles because it is a challenge to our consumerist lifestyles and prosperity Gospel profit society.

All wake-up calls to a family’s dysfunction are not easily received. As our Scriptures and the Pope point out, individualism and greed lead us to believe that this is our world, not God’s world on loan to us as our home. God gifts and wants to share His world with everyone, not just a privileged few. This is what the justice of God is all about.

Just as the misuse of nature’s resources by a few deeply and negatively affects huge communities of the human family, we all know that when our individual family is not working well, society suffers. Something unnatural and violent happens to the children of God. Walking in lonely, empty disconnection and insecurity, we strike out in destructive ways and self-destruct. Family life is a gift and a challenge. We say that blood is thicker than water to affirm the bonding connection, but we always know that sometimes blood is spilled because of the intensity of relationships. Isn’t this true in our family relationships? The joys and affection are intensified, as well as the pains, angers, misunderstandings, and resentments.

I know in my own Italian, half-Sicilian family, the relationships were and are intense and confusing. When we all gathered every Sunday at Grandma’s house for an incredibly, heavenly meal, there was fun, banter, playfulness, tenderness, love, and passion – and sometimes explosive arguments of historic unresolved hurts and wounds. As a kid, it was always confusing to me. With the passion flying, I sometimes did not know whether they were making love or fighting each other to the death.

Our Roman Catholic tradition has even established Marriage as one of the seven sacraments: the union of a wife and husband is one of the primary images and signs of God's faithfulness and love. Marriage is a union of persons who love each other in a self-emptying way that is life-giving. Married people are called to love in good times and bad, in sickness and health, all the days of their lives. And I've heard married couples speak of how that love is intensified when they have a child – how they are expanded by the new life God created through them. Married people are the most influential role models for their kids, and probably deeply influence their understanding of who God is.

At every Baptism, we pray that these parents be the first and best teachers of faith. And we know from experience that young children who are deeply loved, cared for, and challenged to be their best come to understand that they are the beloved of God!

As beloved, we know we must be like God in Christ – and therefore belong to the whole universe and be responsible for and connected to the whole human family that is God's family. Love never collapses upon itself in a protective and isolating way. Love, like God, pours itself out in self-emptying generosity, without condition, without boundaries.

This is the challenge of our faith. And the challenge and gift of family life.

In September, Pope Francis is coming to highlight the World Meeting of Families Congress, in Philadelphia, as we celebrate Family Life as gift, challenge, and grace. This eighth World Congress is an international event of prayer, catechesis, and celebration that draws participants from around the globe. It seeks to strengthen the bonds between families and to witness to the crucial importance of marriage and family to all of society. This event highlights the connection of Faith and Family.

October 5-19, there is Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, popularly referred to as the Synod on the Family, being held in the Vatican, as our Church reflects on and celebrates Family Life, as well as the challenges it faces today. The breakdown of family life has such a devastating effect on our world: domestic violence, divorce, alienation, polygamy, remarriage, broken families, war, immigration, etc. It is a complex world we live in. And family life seems to have become more complex than the simple world I grew up in. Of special importance is reflecting on ways that we as Church can minister to wounded families and persons. The unconditional mercy of God is the heart of the Gospel, and we want to be more pastoral and merciful in the way we walk with wounded people.

Our beloved St. Thérèse certainly has a special interest in these events: 1) she always gave credit to her parents and family

for the faith they instilled in her; 2) her parents Louis and Zélie Martin are being canonized on October 18 toward the end of this synod; and 3) her understanding of the unconditional and non-judgmental mercy of God is at the heart of her spirituality. I suspect she is cheering and smiling! And helping our beloved Church as we struggle to be more faithful to Christ and His Risen Body, the Church.

It is especially significant that Pope Francis reached out to the entire body of the Church for feedback, so that these deliberations include the faith of the rich variety of people, including married people, who are the Church. Since Vatican Council II, we have come to a deeper awareness of the primary role of the laity as the People, the Family of God. Pope Francis knows that family is made up of real people living in a real world, which is why he often gives down-to-earth advice. So many of us love that he doesn't speak from idealized or textbook concepts. He knows, as we all do, that family is a real life institution made up of very human and, therefore, limited members, who need real help. There isn't some magic that makes us a perfect family. It takes work and love – respect, forgiveness, humility, and grace!

We, the Friends of St. Thérèse, rejoice at the canonization of Zélie Guerin and Louis Martin, as a married couple. They created a family environment where their children sensed and experienced God's presence in everything – the joys, satisfactions, and fulfillments, as well as the disappointments, deaths, and struggles. They had

their share of all this. Their Martin family was a place where the children, especially the five who lived into adulthood, learned to trust God, even when it seemed like a challenge. No wonder they all dedicated their lives to God's love and others in a most generous way.

I have lately been reading *A Call to a Deeper Love*, which contains the family correspondence of the parents of St. Thérèse. It gives us insight into the everyday lives of her parents, Zélie and Louis. Her faith, her challenging honesty, her frustrations all ring so true. They are not some iconic ideal, but real-life flesh and blood people, like you and me. It gives us such hope – and understanding of living grace. The letters are translated by Ann Connors Hess, and edited by Dr. Frances Renda, who also has a deeply insightful introduction into the context of their lives. I would encourage you to get it at your local religious goods store, or it can be purchased or ordered from the Carmelite Gift Shop here in Darien – www.CarmeliteGiftShop.org.

We celebrate now Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin as a model of marriage and family life that most of us can emulate. They lived their faith in a very real way – with each other, with their children, and, now, with us. 🌹



“Family creates the boundaries of our identity. Family is a school of humanity, **the best and first place to learn about love, respect, responsibility, loyalty, acceptance of others, and solidarity with the larger family.**”

St. Thérèse in our Lives

I RECENTLY HAD THE PRIVILEGE of visiting with two wonderful friends of the Little Flower, France and Jean. During the course of our conversation, France proceeded to tell me about one of the experiences she had while praying to St. Thérèse. The following is the story in France's own words. I hope you are as inspired as I was with her deep devotion to our beloved saint.

I was born in a family devoted to St. Thérèse. My parents named their first child, my sister, Marie-Thérèse, and when I came along 10 years later, they named me after St. Francis of Assisi, but added Therese as a baptism name.

For many years I was not particularly devoted to St. Thérèse.

One day, as I was visiting a chapel in the small Swiss town where my mother lived, I spotted a card in the vestibule with a novena to St. Thérèse. It was the only copy on the table. Feeling it was meant for me, I took it – and I have been reciting the novena ever since. At that time, my mother's health was declining. During my mother's last years, my husband and I were taking turns visiting her from the United States. Jean-Louis had planned a visit in early July 2005. I had told my mother to expect him.

On his departure from the U.S., Jean-Louis' plane took flight and was in the air for about 30 minutes when the left-wing engine exploded. The pilot managed to turn the plane around and make an emergency landing. Unfortunately, Jean-Louis was stranded overnight and arrived one day later than my mother expected him.

When he entered my mother's room in the retirement home, she was in bed. He greeted her and leaned over to her. She opened her eyes, looked at him intensely, nodded, and passed away. He was deeply moved at the thought that she had waited all this time for him, with the little strength she had left.

I immediately booked a plane ticket to attend the funeral. I felt

my mother's presence during Mass and was filled with peace. I prayed, "Please give me a sign that you are now in heaven."

As we stayed at my mother's house for a week, I kept all the shutters closed. The weather was chilly, gloomy, and rainy. Then one morning, the sun broke out and shone through the louvers in

my mother's kitchen. I was standing by the window and felt compelled to open the shutters: to my amazement, the roses in her back yard, about 50 yards away, were in full bloom, more plentiful and gorgeous than ever, a feast for the eyes! My mother had not been able to care for her rosebushes and hardly any of them had blossomed in the prior years, so this was a total surprise. Although the rosebushes were a good distance away, I could smell their sweet fragrance as if I were smelling a huge bouquet right there in my hands. I felt a warm embrace, profound happiness, and peace. This was the sign that St. Thérèse had sent me! How beautiful!

That grace impressed me so much that I resolved to make a pilgrimage to Lisieux. I was overjoyed to live the wonderful experience of following in the footsteps of St. Thérèse, being immersed in her spirituality, and becoming close friends. A shower of graces, indeed!

When we arrived at Les Buissonnets, the exquisite home of young Thérèse, the roses were in magnificent bloom. As soon as we passed through the gate, we were greeted by their intense fragrance, a moving moment which brought me back to the morning in my mother's home when the same fragrance surrounded me and filled my heart with gratitude. 🌹



Before joining the Society of the Little Flower in 2013, Joe Voss spent his life serving the Church in various capacities. In the coming years, he is determined to meet as many friends of St. Thérèse as he can, learning of their spiritual journeys and sharing stories of the impact of their support. Joe can be reached at **888.996.1212**.



My Friend Denise

WHEN VISITING FACE TO FACE with friends of the Society of the Little Flower, they often share with me their devotion to our dear St. Thérèse. I ask them if they would like to share their journey of friendship, faith, and love with St. Thérèse.

On a recent visit with CeCe, she expressed how St. Thérèse was at the core and center of her friendship with her dear friend, Denise. Below she shares in her own words how St. Thérèse was such an important part of their friendship.

Our friendship began in 1998 when Denise and her husband, Guy, traveled to the United States from France with three other French couples to visit my husband and me. I didn't know Denise and Guy until then, but we hit it off right away. Our friendship grew

stronger over the years. We visited each other frequently in our respective countries and always had marvelous times together.

It wasn't long after we met that we discovered our mutual love for St. Thérèse. Thereafter, we enjoyed sharing everything

we could about the Little Flower. One of Denise's first gifts to me was a French copy of *Story of a Soul*. What a joy it was to read the actual words of St. Thérèse instead of someone's translation of them. I loved it.

She would often send me issues of the wonderful French monthly magazine published by the Pèlerinage de Lisieux, *THÉRÈSE DE LISIEUX*. Every issue was filled with a wide variety of articles by interesting writers showing the worldwide influence of St. Thérèse. I have saved dozens of these magazines that Denise sent me. I enjoy them very much and never grow tired of leafing through them and re-reading certain articles.

Denise and I, along with our husbands, traveled together in France several times. The highlight of our travels was when we met in Lisieux to visit the places where St. Thérèse lived and died. This trip also included Alençon, Thérèse's birthplace and where her parents were married and where her mother and several siblings died. One of the small rooms in the home has been converted into a chapel where we stopped to pray.

Back in Lisieux, we savored every moment, imagining we could see our little saint skipping through the stages of her early life. We enjoyed moments of meditation inside the Carmel chapel in front of St. Thérèse's

coffin, which is topped with a beautiful statue of Thérèse. The huge St. Thérèse Basilica was built shortly after her canonization. The Cathedral of St. Pierre is where Thérèse and her family attended church. We saw the confessional where she made her first confession and the place where she discerned her vocation. Les Buissonnets was special because it is the scene of so much of what she wrote in her autobiography. Retracing her footsteps with Denise was awesome.

In January of this year, Denise came down with the flu and for some reason she couldn't shake it. She continued to have serious breathing problems. Sadly, a few months later, she died. It was Easter Sunday evening.

I was shocked by this sad news. But as I mourned, somehow it seemed comforting to know that she had died on the day of our Lord's Resurrection and that she had died in the way our precious little saint had died. St. Thérèse also died of breathing complications, tuberculosis. I took this as a sign that Denise is safely in heaven with our Lord, climbing the heavenly heights with St. Thérèse as they shower the earth with roses!

I am forever thankful to have had such a wonderful and dear friend in Denise. And I am ever grateful for the devotion to and love of St. Thérèse that we shared. 🌹



Mary Zacharias is a member of our Gift Planning Office and has been on staff at the Society of the Little Flower for more than 30 years. She would be honored to visit with you and hear the ways St. Thérèse is a part of your life. Call her anytime at **630.719.2230** to talk or arrange a time to get together.



We Are Family

>> **Daniel Pritchard** is the Director of Planned and Major Gifts for the Society of the Little Flower



Someone told him, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak with you." But he said in reply to the one who told him, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers." – Matthew 12: 47-49

Folks can be very possessive of their families. How many times have you heard the phrase "blood is thicker than water"?

Back in the day, in many cities there were German, Irish, Polish, and Italian neighborhoods (to name just a few). It was not uncommon to have four churches within a couple blocks of each other. And God help the person who crossed the boundary lines!

Families lived on top of one another. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins might all share the same three flat you called home. That environment helped everyone survive, created lasting memories, and gave everyone a sense of belonging and security.

But when it comes to families, Jesus wants us to think bigger. He wants us to throw open the doors of our hearts, even to those who don't share our last name or nationality. To put it simply, we belong to one another. On one level, we all understand that. However, living this message is a much harder proposition than simply understanding it.

Recently, the Society of the Little Flower has taken steps to ensure our Little Flower family stays strong for generations to come. We are "throwing open" the doors of not just our hearts, but also of our Carmelite Campus. We have embarked on an extensive project of expansion and renovation of St. Thérèse's National Shrine.

We took this leap of faith as an effort to reach out to those who are hungry to find direction at a time when so many, quite literally, don't know where to turn. This is a project we knew we had to take on. Ours is a treasure that must be shared.

This treasure, Thérèse's way of spiritual childhood, is one of the surest ways we know of to get our world



back on track. As she said, "It is trust, and nothing but trust, that must bring us to love." How that message must be heard!

The details of this project include:

- A complete renovation of our Shrine Museum, making it interactive in nature and introducing many additional artifacts related to St. Thérèse's life;
- An expansion of the Carmelite Spiritual Center, allowing us to welcome four times as many retreatants and offering several additional programs of spiritual renewal;
- A continued upgrade of the Carmelite Meditation Garden, including the recent introduction of a wildflower garden to complement the outdoor Stations of the Cross and reflection pond; and
- The construction of a new Shrine Chapel which will double our capacity and allow us to welcome many more visitors for Mass and various family and feast day celebrations.

To learn how you can partner with us in completing our vision for the future, please call me at 1.888.996.1212. I hope you will do so. Ours is truly a work of the Lord's. As our favorite saint once said, "When I am charitable, it is Jesus working in me." 🌹

Society of the Little Flower Charitable Gift Annuity

The Gift Of A Lifetime



Provide for your future and touch someone's life.

When you create a charitable gift annuity with the Society of the Little Flower, you will receive a fixed income for the rest of your life and give life-changing help to those in need through Carmelite mission work and education programs.

Why create a gift annuity?

- Lifetime payments - at a rate that will never change
- Charitable tax deduction
- Service that is second to none

Sample One-Life Rates*

<u>Age</u>	<u>Rate of Return</u>
72	7.7%
75	8.1%
80	9.3%
85	11.0%
90+	13.8%



*Rates are subject to change. Minimum age 60. For U.S. residents only.

Please call 1-888-996-1212 for the rate that applies to your age, or if you would like information about two-life or deferred gift annuities.



Society of the Little Flower
Office of Planned Giving
1313 N. Frontage Road
Darien, Illinois 60561

Toll Free: 888-996-1212
www.littleflower.org/plannedgiving

☐ YES! Please send me my personalized gift annuity package.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Amount Being Considered \$ _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Birth Date (For Single Life Annuity) _____

Birth Date (For Joint/Survivorship Annuity) _____

Don't hesitate to request a free illustration for a one-life, two-life or deferred gift annuity.