



# Between Friends

A publication for the Friends of the Society of

the Little Flower, Darien, Illinois, and Canada

FRAGRANCE OF

hope

# Loyalty and Devotion

Dear Friends of St. Thérèse,

Every day we are moved by the steadfast loyalty and devotion of the friends of the Little Flower. People from around the world are still being brought to a greater love of Jesus because of St. Thérèse. I am feeling pleased about the plans in place here at the Society of the Little Flower as we prepare to welcome pilgrims to visit the reliquaries of St. Thérèse and her parents Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin.

I hope you will be able to join us in person for their visit, from September 17–October 1, 2023. They will be here waiting for you and your prayers. I will be here too and look forward to seeing you all. Until then, may God bless you with great graces.

Your Friend in the Little Way,  
Father Tom Schrader, O. Carm. 



Rev. Thomas Schrader, O. Carm.  
Director

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Father Thomas  
Schrader, O. Carm.  
**DIRECTOR/PUBLISHER**

Mary Lambert  
**EDITOR/DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTOR**

Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.  
Kevin Keller  
Mary Lambert  
Father Gerard Power, O. Carm.  
Daniel Pritchard  
Mary Zacharias  
**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

**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**  
ca.littleflower.org

**FAITH CATHOLIC**  
Abby Feldpausch  
**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**





## **I** T IS GOOD TO BE WITH YOU AGAIN!

This issue of *Between Friends*, “Fragrance of Hope,” will bring you some uplifting and inspiring stories and maybe even tug at your heart strings. There is something about the Fragrance of Hope that moved each of our contributors in a very unique way.

One thing rings true in my heart, and I’m sure it will in yours: there is always room for Hope!

Reading letters you send in and even getting to speak with some of you, I am always impressed and amazed how much the Little Flower is at work in small and powerful ways in all our lives. Your confidence, resilience, devotion, and kindness are clear signs to me of the Fragrance of Hope.

We also hope that you will be joining us, whether in person or virtually, for this once-in-a-lifetime event when St. Thérèse and her parents’ relics will be here this fall at her National Shrine and Museum of St. Thérèse here in Darien, Illinois. To receive updates, please visit us at [www.littleflower.org/relicsvisit](http://www.littleflower.org/relicsvisit) or call us at 800-621-2806.

Your Friend in St. Thérèse,  
Mary Therese Lambert 🌸

“

*I am always impressed and amazed by how much the Little Flower is at work in small and powerful ways in all our lives. Your confidence, resilience, devotion, and kindness are clear signs to me of the Fragrance of Hope.”*



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

# *Carmelites* YOU SHOULD KNOW



**FATHER DAVID LYNN SIMPSON, O. CARM.**

Hope is so necessary to a life of faith. Father David Simpson enfleashes such hope in our Church and world. A native of Port Huron, Michigan, he is the second child in a family of four children. His parents made sure that the Catholic faith was practiced faithfully. David and his brother were altar servers.

Right after high school, he joined the Carmelite formation program, influenced by his two older cousins who had joined the Carmelites. When visiting them, David was impressed by the people and experience of the Carmelites he met.

After solemn vows and ordination to the Priesthood, Father David was assigned to Joliet Catholic High School, in Illinois, for eight years and then served 12 years of the Novice Master for the Province. This is a very significant responsibility as young men are taught the inner spiritual life of Carmelite spirituality, living in community and service to others. "Only men of perceived deep spirituality and honesty are placed in these significant formation positions," commented one of his superiors. He served parishes in Scipio, Kansas and retreat centers in Mahwah, New Jersey, Niagara Falls, Ontario, and Darien, Illinois. He was elected Midwest Regional Provincial, 2005 – 2011, and then returned to Scipio, Kansas leading retreats and doing spiritual direction.

He mentions that "moments of hope have been consistent in my Carmelite life. In my high school teaching years, it was

my personal growth in how to teach and breakthroughs with students learning. As Novice-Master, I found the deepening spiritual journey in myself and my novices very hopeful. Here in Scipio, I attend a younger man's spiritual growth group. We have met for about eight years, I find these men's dedication and desire to deepen their relationship with God very hopeful."

Father David is sought after as a spiritual director and companion because he gently leads people to that deeper space within where God dwells and reveals. "I have learned that my greatest God-given gift is the ability to listen well, with compassion and some wisdom," he humbly explains. "I am a disciplined person which serves me well for a balanced Carmelite life."

Because he is a careful and soulful listener, he attributes so much to the people he serves. "People have taught me to be discerning in my listening skills, understanding the frailness of humanity, sensitive to pain as part of the human condition, patient with people's differences and how to love and respect the other as a beloved daughter or son of God."

Many Carmelites and lay people who have been moved by Father David would agree that God's compassion, mercy, acceptance, and understanding are the ways Father David Simpson images God in our world. As a faith-filled Carmelite, this is also the way he invites us to find the profound ways God dwells and works in and through us.

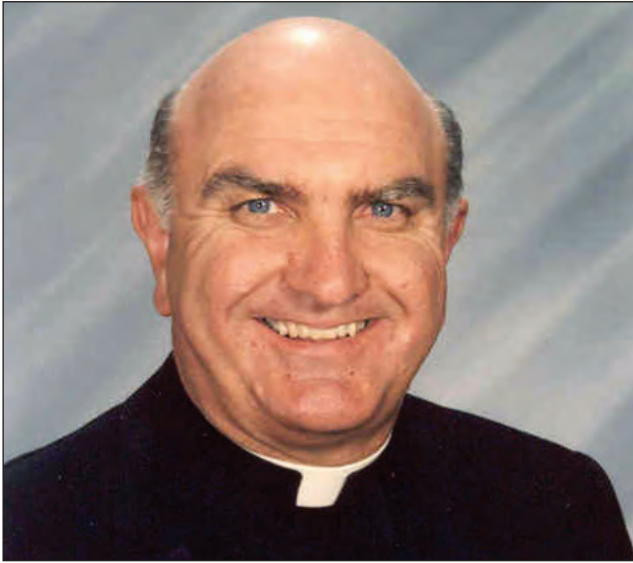
During his initial Carmelite formation, he was impacted by St. Thérèse and her powerful intercession. In community prayer, they often said: "Little Flower, in this hour, show your power!" "I used that prayer often especially when challenges in studies or relationships emerged – and have done so all my life," explains Father Dave. "She gives me hope!"

"When I entered Carmel in 1962, St. Thérèse's Feast Day was on October 3rd. But after the Vatican Council renewal and update it was moved to October 1st, my birthday! I am thrilled to have my birthday on her feast day. "People who know Father David can sense his lived experience of the little way of simplicity, confidence, and holiness.

Father David is glad that every Carmelite community he has lived with has faithfully prayed for the members of the Society of the Little Flower every day. We all know how the generosity of the members of the Society of the Little Flower have sustained our life and ministries.

"Most significant moments of Carmelite priesthood for me are the times when I am speaking one to one with a person about her/his spiritual life. I find the sacrament of another person's life story and journey fascinating and inspiring"

Yes, David is a man of hope. His name in Hebrew means "beloved" – and that is how he lives and treats everyone. He is a Carmelite you should know as a friend of St. Thérèse.



### FATHER DANIEL O'NEILL, O. CARM.

Father Daniel O'Neill's hope comes from his heritage. He believes he was conceived to be a Carmelite! Father Dan's parents were Irish born, and he was brought up in Englewood, New Jersey, one block from St. Cecilia's Carmelite Catholic Church. He went to grammar school there, never missed weekday Mass serving assignments, and served countless Tuesday evening Novena Services in honor of St. Thérèse, as the Church was and still is the Eastern Shrine of the Little Flower.

God kept intervening in his life. In eighth grade, Father Quentin Duncan urged him to go to the Carmelite Minor (HS) Seminary. Young Dan's response was "no," because he wanted to play high school football. Father Quentin told him: "you are too small to play football!" Dan admits he cried, but off he went to the minor seminary in Hamilton, Massachusetts in 1957 and has been a Carmelite ever since. As Father Dan says: "being a Carmelite is in my DNA!"

Father O'Neill has faithfully and wholeheartedly served in many ministries of our Carmelite Province. He went where he was needed, not just where he wanted. He taught in our high schools in Los Angeles and Chicago, served as Treasurer of our Province, spent six years on the Carmelite Mission Band, and served in parishes in Demarest, Closter, and Tenafly New Jersey, while also serving as our Vocation Director for many years. "Because Dan is such a solid and faithful person who projects a good image of a Carmelite who cares, we wanted him to be our spokesperson," explained one Carmelite.

One significant assignment stands out: St. Gelasius in the south side of Chicago. It originally was St. Clara's parish in an Irish neighborhood. In 1925, when St. Thérèse was canonized, it became the National Shrine of the Little Flower. For the next few decades, thousands of her devotees attended the Masses and Tuesday Novenas there, including a young Kathleen Clarke, a young woman from County Mayo, who had come to America for a new life. Working as a domestic in a grand home a few blocks from St. Clara's, she often attended Masses and the Tuesday Novenas there. Kathleen became Father Dan's mother. The novenas Dan

served in his youth paralleled his mother's devotion of St. Thérèse – grace always works and connects.

The neighborhood had changed, and in the late 1980's the church was renamed St. Gelasius in honor of the African American population that attended there. Small in size and relatively poor, the Carmelites needed a new pastor there. We could not abandon a historic parish. No one stepped up, until Father Dan O'Neill volunteered to go there, because of his heritage from his mother and because he went where the Church needed him. "Dan stands out as one of the giants of our Province, because he went where he was most needed and gave his best in situations which were not always comfortable or easy" explains another Carmelite. "He quietly and attentively went where needed without fanfare, but in humble service."

Father Daniel O'Neill believes that parish ministry has been his truest calling. Sharing the Eucharist and preaching the Word are the essential starting points of priestly ministry in his eyes. A lover of sports and the man who went to the Carmelite seminary because he was too small to play football, he still uses a lot of athletic images and metaphors in his preaching. His most gratifying liturgical day is Holy Thursday, when we celebrate the institution of the Holy Eucharist. He loves the mandatum to wash the feet of the disciples, as Jesus did. In parish work, he had the practice of inviting the entire congregation to participate by coming forth to have one's feet washed and then to do the same to another person. "This symbolic ritual epitomizes the effort to walk in the footsteps of Jesus," he explains. "This is what every Carmelite yearns to do from our earliest years."

"In parish ministry there was time to develop deep relationships that have enriched my life," he shares. "People initially share their many joys and triumphs, and eventually the crosses and challenges they are confronting."

"St. Thérèse has blessed my life from my earliest years," he humbly admits. "From my youth as an altar boy at the Tuesday Novenas, I served her and kissed her relic along with every other person in the Church. In my later years as a priest, I led discussions of her *Story of the Soul* with reading groups at the Theology Roundtable."

Father Dan now lives in retirement back at St. Cecilia's parish in Englewood, New Jersey, where he began. He calls himself a "lifer" because it has been a blessed life. He adds: "Thanks be to God for sending the Lord Jesus Christ to the human family. Thanks be to God for the Carmelites and our 800 years of existence that have enriched so many of us. Thanks be to God for St. Thérèse, the Little Flower, who continues to this day to grace our lives with inspiration and blessing."

And many Carmelites and people whom Father Dan served, give thanks to God for Father Daniel O'Neill for the ways he blessed, inspired, and challenged us to follow Jesus in humility and generous service. He taught us the life of faith is not just an athletic event we must win, but a challenging life of service and surrender after the example of Jesus Christ.

Father Dan is a Carmelite you should know because he lived St. Thérèse "Little Way," not with poetic words, but in self-emptying service. Yes, Carmelite and St. Thérèse are in Father Dan O'Neill's DNA! 🌹



The National Shrine and Museum  
of St. Thérèse in Darien, Ill.

# FAMILIES

## THE BLOSSOM OF HOPE

**P**eople from all around the Midwest, the nation, and the world come to visit St. Thérèse at the National Shrine and Museum in Darien, Illinois. Everybody has a particular reason. Some of us get to come here daily as devotees or workers. Some people come as part of a vacation to Chicago. Others come because they lived here their whole lives and only just heard of us.

Others come here as pilgrims to offer thanksgiving, as an act of penance, or to seek a special favor from the Little Flower. Some days the prayer stations fill up with gifts for our beloved St. Thérèse. Flowers are the most common. Pilgrims also leave religious articles, coins, and prayers of gratitude. Some people seek special graces like healing, financial assistance, repair of family relationship, or even for St. Thérèse to send them a spouse.

During the dark and cold days of January, there were very few visitors here. It is usually the slowest month on campus. So, when I was opening the

Shrine one morning, I was surprised to see a family of four right at the door. This would be unusual even in a busier month. I stopped to greet them and offered to show them around campus briefly. Something was a little different about this family.

It was clear they were here for a special reason. Then I saw the youngest daughter didn't have any hair coming from under her hat. I thought, "this poor child, only about 7, must have some serious health condition." As I showed them around, it was only a matter minutes before her mother confirmed this child of God had cancer.

As we approached the Museum entry and walked through, I could see tears welling up in the girl's eyes. Her mother asked what it was, "is it pain? Do you need medication?" We took her to a side room to rest, dry her tears with a tissue, and have a snack.

This moment wrenched my heart. After a few minutes, we continued to explore the Museum. The girl and her older sister were both interested in the various relics and art work. The father stepped aside with me to share more of their story. His daughter was on and off with the cancer treatments for 18 months and recently given about 3

months to live. They were looking for a miracle. That was certain.

They left with some peace and joy when I saw them driving away a few hours later. I cannot say that they were laughter and smiles. But the contentment I saw in their faces as they started a nearly eight hour drive home proved that they found some rest in the Lord. I pray for this family and so many whom I've met here at the National Shrine and Museum of St. Thérèse. I hope that little girl survived to live a long life. Today is just past her three-month mark.

We never know what happens to people after they visit our Shrine. This is true from people who come and go in our lives as well. But it is the chain links and woven threads of prayer that offer up the fragrance of Hope as petitions, supplications, gratitude, and awe to the Good Lord. 🌹

## THE FRAGRANCE OF HOPE

These shores are filled with new scents  
Smells are all around and my heart is filled with Joy  
Thank you for welcoming me to the coast lines of your soul

The fragrance of hope is an overpowering bent  
It makes even dark nights bright with merry like a kid and toy  
Thank you for sharing with me the fragrance of hope.

I cannot dance or sing, but can watch and listen  
I can enjoy all your special love can give  
I am right here, smiling with cheer.  
You give me hope right now and right here!

Keep on, continue right on,  
Lift high your head and dry your tears  
Thérèse my friend and yours is right here!  
Breath in and smell the roses pure.

**BY KEVIN KELLER**

# *Pilgrimages of Faith*

## led by Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.

**HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE: OCTOBER 8-18, 2023**

**FATHER BOB LEADS HIS 35TH PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND, our spiritual home to reflect on the scriptures.**

Jerusalem, Mt of Olives, Bethlehem, Ein Karem, Way of the Cross, Western Wall, Massada, Judean Wilderness, Ein Gedi, Emmaus, the Galilee, Mt. Carmel, Jaffa, Nazareth, Cana, Caesaria, Sea of Galilee, Capharnaum, Mt. of Beatitudes, and Mt.

Tabor. Mass and Scripture Prayer services daily at holy sites. \$4,750 (double occp) covers air transportation from Chicago/Tel Aviv, and all hotels, dinners and breakfast, guide and private bus and driver - and other benefits listed in the brochure.

# FRAGRANCE OF *hope*

**O**UR BELOVED SAINT AND FRIEND, ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX, CERTAINLY LEARNED A FOUNDATIONAL REALITY OF OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH: That God becoming one of us as a human person in Jesus, and changed the human reality of our lives. Jesus and His Spirit permeated the human reality and made it holy. In trying to find and experience God, we have to look at our lives and reality within and around us. “The “fragrance of Jesus,” as she mentioned, ignites our faith in God’s presence dwelling in our innermost soul and the hope that blossoms from this Divine DNA, for ourselves and our world.

BY FATHER BOB COLARESI, O. CARM. | SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

away almost 30 years, and what first struck me is that it smelled the same. As I sat there, memories of our innocent youth flooded me and instilled faith and hope that God had been blessing me all my life, even from the earliest years.

Scents can also repel us or make us very cautious. Haven't you had an experience where a smell, perfume, or fragrance awakened up memories and hopes – surprises we had forgotten?

When baptizing babies, they often get restless when pouring the baptismal water over them, but often they break into an awakening smile when anointed with sacred Chrism which speaks of their dignity as priest, prophet, and king. They awaken to their true dignity as beloved daughter or son of God – from whence they came! It always brings a smile to people gathered.

Our Scriptures speak of the same experience: *"Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ and employs us to diffuse the fragrance of his knowledge everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ for God among those who are being saved ... fragrance that leads to life."* (2 Corinthians 2:14-16). Because Christ has permeated the universe by His incarnation, life, death, and resurrection, we are fragrant to be the aroma of Christ in the world.

#### **This is the fragrance of Hope!**

Somehow, our world seems to have lost the fragrance and scents of goodness and hope. People seem tense, defensive, despairing, protective, and ready to strike out or be indifferent because of wounds and disappointments. Some people of faith seem to believe that the devil won and has taken over the universe. They project negative energy and darkness, expecting the worse. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Our hope, as followers of Jesus and friends of St. Thérèse, is that we believe that God struck a knockout punch to the demonic when He raised Jesus to life – and transformed the whole creation. The way St. Thérèse experienced and articulated this is her greatest teaching: "Everything is Grace!"

Isn't this true!?! We come to trust and understand that even our struggles

and annoyances are a gift from God which can bring a peace of heart that is unmatched in this world. **Everything is grace** – everything! Yes, EVERYTHING, is a gift from God Who is totally sovereign in our lives, souls, and world.

No one grasped this like St. Thérèse of Lisieux, who, in the words of Pope St. John Paul II, "rediscovered the gospel." She taught us that we are loved, loved, loved by our God and that there isn't anything else that matters - not our failings, not what others think of us, not even our gifts and talents. All that matters is that we have a God who loves every ounce of our being more than we could ever know or imagine.

As she wrote: "I have only to cast a glance in the Gospels and immediately I breathe in the perfumes of Jesus' life." Why don't the Gospels – the Word of God trigger the olfactory nerves of our soul the same way? Why do we smell frightening and obnoxious odors when the fragrance of God's unconditional love and presence is the Hope of the World? Are we sniffing the odors of others' garbage rather than the perfume of God's goodness in everyone and everything?

*Our hope rests not in ourselves, our good works, pious devotions, or prayers in Church, but in God's presence in us who are made in the Divine Image and likeness.* Proverbs tells us that the human Soul is the Divine Spark. Our New Testament proclaims: *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own."* (1 Corinthians 6: 19) The energy that comes from God within us brings hope, love, reconciliation, transformation, and deep communion in Christ Who unites all creation and especially the whole human family.

Our hope rests in Jesus' presence and identification with us, especially when He says: "whatsoever you do to the least of my brethren, that you do unto me!"

We have the ability to change the world when we allow God to work in and through us. This is the virtue of Hope: trusting a presence already present deep within and Who is the source of all Goodness.

Fragrances, perfumes, and aromas can deeply affect how we experience life. Fragrance can attract us, revive memories, and excite possibilities. The olfactory nerves are closest to our memory. I remember returning to the Italian Catholic Church of my youth in New Britain, Connecticut, after being



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*“Since the Lord is in heaven, I can only follow him by traces full of light and fragrance which he has left behind him.... When I open the Gospels, I breathe the fragrance exalted by the life of Jesus, and I know which way to run... I know well, joy is not in the things which surround us; it dwells in the innermost soul.”*

- ST. THÉRÈSE, THE LITTLE FLOWER

Faith, Hope, and Love are the three great theological virtues. Hope is a conviction, instinct or intuition of something more – a fresh look at things with more possibilities for ourselves and others. Hope is an infused gift from God that promises a better world and fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. Hope finds its origin, motive, and object in God. St. Paul says: “Let us hold unwaveringly to our confession that gives us hope, for he who made the promise is trustworthy.” (Hebrew 10:23)

While infused by God, Hope is an act of our will. We choose to hope, without firm evidence. Because of a presence deep within, we intuitively know that God is planning a better future – a bigger good than we can imagine: for the whole creation, for the whole human race, for ourselves as a people and for myself as an individual. It is an optimism that resurrects us beyond deaths, depressions, disappointments, despair, and darkness. Unknown doors open new, surprising possibilities.

Hope is rooted in Psalm 46:10: “Be still and know that I am God.” We need to calm down and be centered in that immortal diamond and sanctuary that is

our soul – God’s presence and dwelling place within us, where God whispers. We must be focused, attentive, and still to listen – and inhale the presence.

The Holy Spirit, who dwells within us, is referred to as a “Paraclete” – or Defense Attorney – the one who protects and defends our truth – who reveals our truth. Our true prayer has to be mostly listening – not ordering God around telling Him what to do. Rather we should be listening to God reveal, whisper, love, and be in communion with us. At times it is communion beyond words. But just like when we first fell in love and experienced being loved, the world became bigger, safer and more exciting. The Hope enlarges our vision and possibilities because we are sharing in God’s view and will for us all.

Prayer in the best of our Christian mystical tradition has been being present to the here and now of our lives – truly living in the holy land of our life experience – where God is walking, working, and wondering as we make free and hopeful choices in our lives. It is letting God be God, in and through us. It is us being the hands, eyes, arms, feet,

heart, and fragrance of Christ in this world – truly the Body of Christ!

Our Carmelite St. Teresa of Avila teaches that us that God is the Sun in the interior castle of our soul, casting light into every corner of our being and life experience. When we allow ourselves to live from our soul, instead of from the false selves we create about ourselves and others, we have a new joy of living, a zest for life, and an enthusiastic and inclusive embrace of everyone and everything. She loved the image of flowing water as an image of God permeating everything, as it soaks us.

As St. Thérèse expresses it: “When charity is deeply rooted in the soul it shows itself on the outside.”

Have you ever noticed that people who are optimistic seem to experience good things happening – they find what they are looking for. People who are pessimistic find the darkness they are looking for. It is like self-fulfilling prophecy. Some of us obsess and are paralyzed in fear by risks and dangers. People of faith, who accept hope as the eyeglasses of our soul, allow miracles and new possibilities to happen. Isn’t it interesting that the most frequent

biblical message is "Be not afraid!"

Hope is rooted in our faith and trust that God loves us, is in communication with us, and is reclaiming us in the Divine Image and Likeness, and connecting us with the whole human race and all creation, so that we believe and live from the reality that we are God's beloved and blessed daughters and sons. This is our hope, because this is what God wills.

People who allow Hope to be the guiding energy of our lives and the olfactory fragrance we breathe, live happier, more joyful lives of gratitude and goodness, with an enthusiasm. They inhale the fragrance of Hope, and it changes the way we partake of and interpret our life experiences.

When our beloved St. Thérèse said that she would spend her heaven doing good on earth and that we would be experiencing a shower of roses, she knew the beautiful fragrance of roses would brighten our lives and souls – and our world. She also knew that the different fragrances of the diverse flowers would never overpower or overwhelm each other. They were not competitive but complementary. The fragrance would open us to hope, love, gratitude, and generosity. The aroma of God's love permeating our lives would lift us to new heights and depths of love and justice.

The whole sacramental system of our Church exists to awaken, empower, and energize to that indwelling and transforming Presence Who is our Hope!

Let us continue to inhale the fragrance of Hope that is God's ever-present gift, especially in times of darkness, fear, depression, trauma, despair, and disappointment. Let us be life-giving perfume that attracts, seduces, and uplifts. Let us be hopeful instruments of positive change and transformation in our world.

Everything is grace, because God's love and presence permeates everyone and everything. How loved we are! Our hope is as infinite as God's love and dreams! 🌹

# THE PRAYER

BY TERESA OF CALCUTTA

Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who loved and learned from St. Thérèse's little way, adapted a Fragrance Prayer which she had her Sisters of Charity pray each day after Communion.

*Dear Jesus,*

help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go.

Flood our souls with your spirit and life.  
Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly,  
that our lives may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through us, and be so in us,  
that every person we should come in contact with  
may feel your presence in our soul.  
Let them look up and see no longer us, but only Jesus.

Stay with us, and then we shall begin to shine as you shine;  
so to shine as to be a light to others;  
the light, Jesus, will be all from you.  
None of it will be ours.  
It will be you shining on others through us.

Let us thus praise you in the way you love best,  
by shining on those around us.  
Let us preach you without preaching:  
not by words, but by our example,  
by the catching force,  
the sympathetic influence of what we do,  
the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear for you.  
Amen.

*Fragrance Prayer - adapted by Mother Teresa of Calcutta*



# Rejoice

## AND ABOUND IN HOPE!

**D**uring a recent chat with my cousin Theresa, from Admiral's Beach, Newfoundland, she wrote, "My Mom used to say, 'We either live in hope or die in despair.'" How true that is! The wisdom of our older generation. They had great devotion to St. Thérèse. And I'm sure that's where my cousin Theresa got her name. A strong devotion and faith in St. Thérèse was passed on to our family.

In St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (12:12), he writes, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer." And again in (15:13) he says, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Rejoice and abound in hope! Great instruction and prayer from St. Paul. But how easily can this be lived out in 2023? We look at our families, communities, cities, country, and world, and we can find many reasons for people to lose hope and to fall into despair.

We have the ongoing war in Ukraine, with the global media plastering gut-wrenching images of suffering and death into our living rooms. We have the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria. An increase in refugees fleeing to other countries. The global pandemic may be ebbing, but there are still so many repercussions. The disruption in the global supply chain. Families having difficulty getting medicines for their children from pharmacies in North America. Not to mention inflation and the price of food and gas. And then the real estate prices.

Off the charts in Canada. Families struggling to make ends meet. Children moving back home with their parents in order to survive. Loss of decent jobs. The closing of small businesses. The lack of mental health care. The surge in homelessness and drug problems. And the list goes on.

It's easy to lose hope and so easy to give in to despair. Holding on to hope is so important. Remaining hopeful is easier said than done, especially for those who are facing the most difficult times in their lives.

Many prayer requests come in to our parishes, and in particular to the Society of the Little Flower. Grandparents, parents, young adults seeking the help and intercession of St. Thérèse for their particular causes: that mom will get her surgery after two years waiting; that my daughter will be able to finish her degree; that my son will find a job so he can feed his family; that my grandson can beat his drug addiction; that my son can find a decent home to purchase. By contacting us, they're seeking Thérèse's fragrant roses of hope so they don't stay in despair. They know very well her promise to "Let fall from heaven, a shower of roses." Or that "I will spend my heaven doing good upon earth." When I'm feeling down, or in a bad space, I always utter a simple little prayer, "Little Flower in this hour, show your power!" It's my simple way of asking St. Thérèse to help and guide me through difficult times.

There are so many things in this life beyond our control. So seeking divine intervention or the intercession of saints, like St. Thérèse, can give us the strength to hold on to hope. St. Thérèse struggled deeply throughout her life. She had many despairing experiences. She saw her struggles as bitterness. She wrote, "Life is passing, Eternity draws nigh: soon shall we live the very life of God. After having drunk deep at the fount of bitterness, our thirst will be quenched at the very source of all sweetness." What hope she had. She was in total love with the source of all sweetness and fragrance, our God!

St. Thérèse suffered many feelings of abandonment, separation, and loss throughout her life. Her union with

God is what helped her through. She suffered so much agony with tuberculosis, and yet, she offered every pain to God, knowing eventually she would be falling into the arms of a loving God. What a beautiful hope! Even from her mom and dad, Zélie and Louis Martin, we can learn so much about trusting in God. When we are in a crisis, lacking hope, or in the throes of despair, look at the lives of Thérèse' parents. There we can find the drive to keep hoping, to stay with the struggle, and trust God. All shall be well if we do what they did, put our struggles into God's Hands.

Many people have told me over the years about experiencing a scent of roses during times when they really needed it, when they felt lost or down and out. It gave them a new lease on life, a strong hope in dark times. A fragrance of hope from Thérèse! And many have shared about the strength and hope and joy they received from Therese in difficult times. And they experienced no fragrance of roses, nor any physical roses. But these are still Roses, an answer to a prayer, a beautiful fulfillment of her promise.

I can testify to having experienced Thérèse' intercession at several periods in my life. One experience was when I was inside her Carmelite Cloister in Lisieux in August 1997. I was a seminarian at the time. I knelt at the bedside where she had died (Her room is still intact). I sought her intercession. And she never let me down.

It's not surprising that my first Carmelite assignment as a priest, was at St. Thérèse Parish in Cresskill, New Jersey. And that leads to another experience. Her Relics were touring the United States in the autumn of 1999. We had the joy of having the reliquary at St. Thérèse Parish. It was an amazing experience. Thousands came through the parish doors. To witness the devotion and faith of so many people was simply indescribable. That night we secured St. Thérèse' Reliquary in our sacristy! So I had some extra time, private time, to spend with her! And once again, we had a little spiritual chat! Yes, I smelled Roses, because the church was filled with hundreds of roses! But I experienced her intercession again, not only for me, but for two other people. Praise God. Tout est Grace!

My prayer for anyone who is going through a difficult time or lacking hope, is to seek the intercession of one who went through many difficult and despairing times herself, St. Thérèse. May you experience the fragrance and grace of her promise, to let fall from heaven a shower of Roses! St. Thérèse, Little Flower of Carmel, shower on all of us your fragrance of hope. 🌹



**Father Gerard Power, O.Carm.**  
*Director in Canada  
of the Society of  
the Little Flower.*



## FAMILY OF GENERATIONS OF THÉRÈSE

**So many of the donors and friends that Father Tom and I visit speak of the spirituality, devotion, and trust of St. Thérèse that has been passed down for generations. From their grandparents to parents and then on to our donors and their children!**

On a recent visit one of our donors, Rita, shared with Father Tom how her entire life has included praying to St. Thérèse because of her mother teaching her about Thérèse and watching her mother pray. She said her faith and trust in God is ever strong because of the example set by her mother.

Another donor shared that when she was a little girl, her mother had a St. Thérèse statue in her room and that a vigil light candle was continually burning and when her and brother were old enough it was their responsibility to keep the vigil candle in front of Thérèse lit every day. 60 years later, she now has the same statue and still burns a vigil candle in front of it.

We visited with another donor who prays alongside a framed photo of St. Thérèse next to her bed that was given to her by her grandmother that she treasures with the memories of her grandma praying to Thérèse.

Thérèse's simple and "Little Way of Spirituality" is deeply powerful and continues to be shared within families. Her legacy will live on forever generation after generation. 🌹

BY MARY ZACHARIAS

# Thérèse,

## A SPIRITUAL MOTHER

*“... she would  
send a shower of  
roses to those who  
turned to her ...”*

St. Thérèse promised that upon her death she would send a shower of roses to those who turned to her; there are countless stories of her literally doing just that. The woman who so frequently called out to her mama has now become a spiritual mother to us, responding to the cries of those who long for her help.

St. Thérèse did not put a time limit on her promise. But one has to wonder how future generations will come to know of the power of our patron saint. With the struggles we are witnessing in the world, the need for her loving care is vitally important. She can help, but it depends on those of us who love her to spread that message. The Society of the Little Flower was meant to do just that. But we cannot do it alone.

I invite you to do your part to spread devotion to St. Thérèse in whatever way you can. Share the life of St. Thérèse with others, especially with the young. Tell them your personal story when you came to know St. Thérèse. Tell them of a particular instance of how she helped you. Give them a prayer card with the Novena Rose Prayer. Bring them to visit our Shrine.

If you are able, please consider including a gift to the Society of the Little Flower in your will or trust. A gift of any size matters. Your gift will help us to unite our efforts, and the work that we do will serve as a lasting legacy to you, in tribute to the saint you have held so close in life.

If you'd like a guide to help you with your estate planning, call our Special Gifts Office at 888-996-1212 to request a free copy of our booklet, *Effective Estate Planning: What You Need to Know*. 🌹

### **“MAMA, MAMA, MAMA, MAMA ... ”**

**Recently, punctuating the silence of our Eucharistic Adoration, the sweet word “mama” rung out as a pleading cry from a little girl to her mother.**

One can only imagine how many times little Thérèse leaned into her mother's chest and uttered those same words. At a very young age, Thérèse was cared for by a wet nurse, but upon her return home at 15 months, one would often hear “mama, mama, mama, mama” coming from every corner of the Martin home. How she loved her dear mother, Zélie!

Sadly, just three years later, Thérèse lost her mother to cancer. The loss of one's mother is one of the most difficult parts of life. That heartbreak often stays with us for a lifetime. As Thérèse approached death just 20 years after Zélie's passing, I believe it is safe to assume that one of Thérèse's last words was “mama.”



# Society of the Little Flower

**Announces** :“St. Thérèse Family Homecoming”™ at  
The National Shrine and Museum of St. Thérèse. 8501 Bailey Road, Darien, Illinois

We are honored to welcome the **relics of St. Thérèse** and her parents,  
**Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin**, from **September 17 through October 1, 2023**  
open to the public from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM, daily.

This special visit is sponsored by the Society of the Little Flower, which is dedicated to promoting the spirituality and message of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, also known as the Little Flower. The relics will be available for public veneration during this time, giving visitors the opportunity to deepen their faith and connect with this holy family.

The Society of the Little Flower spreads devotion to the Little Flower and her spirituality, as well as supports the Carmelite ministries throughout world.

**Visit us at [www.littleflower.org/relicsvisit](http://www.littleflower.org/relicsvisit)  
or call (800) 621-2806.**

For more information, (administrators and press only):  
Mary T. Lambert, International Development Director/Marketing  
[mary.lambert@littleflower.org](mailto:mary.lambert@littleflower.org)

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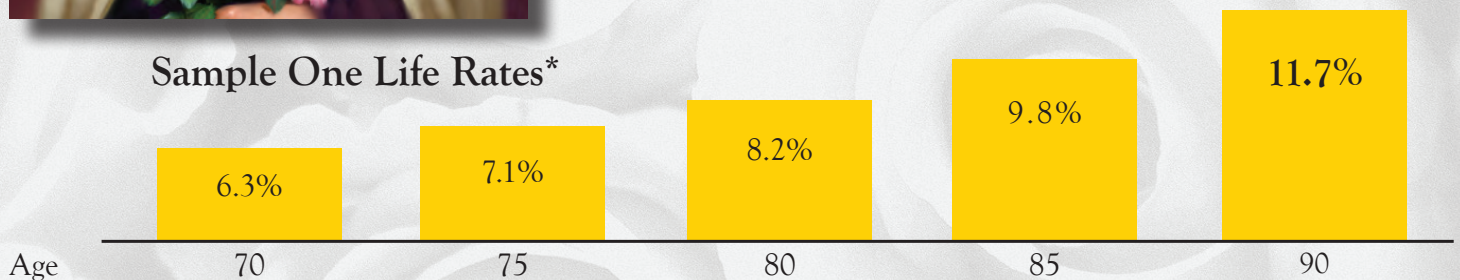


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