

Pierre Descouvemont Helmuth Nils Loose

THERESE

and LISIEUX



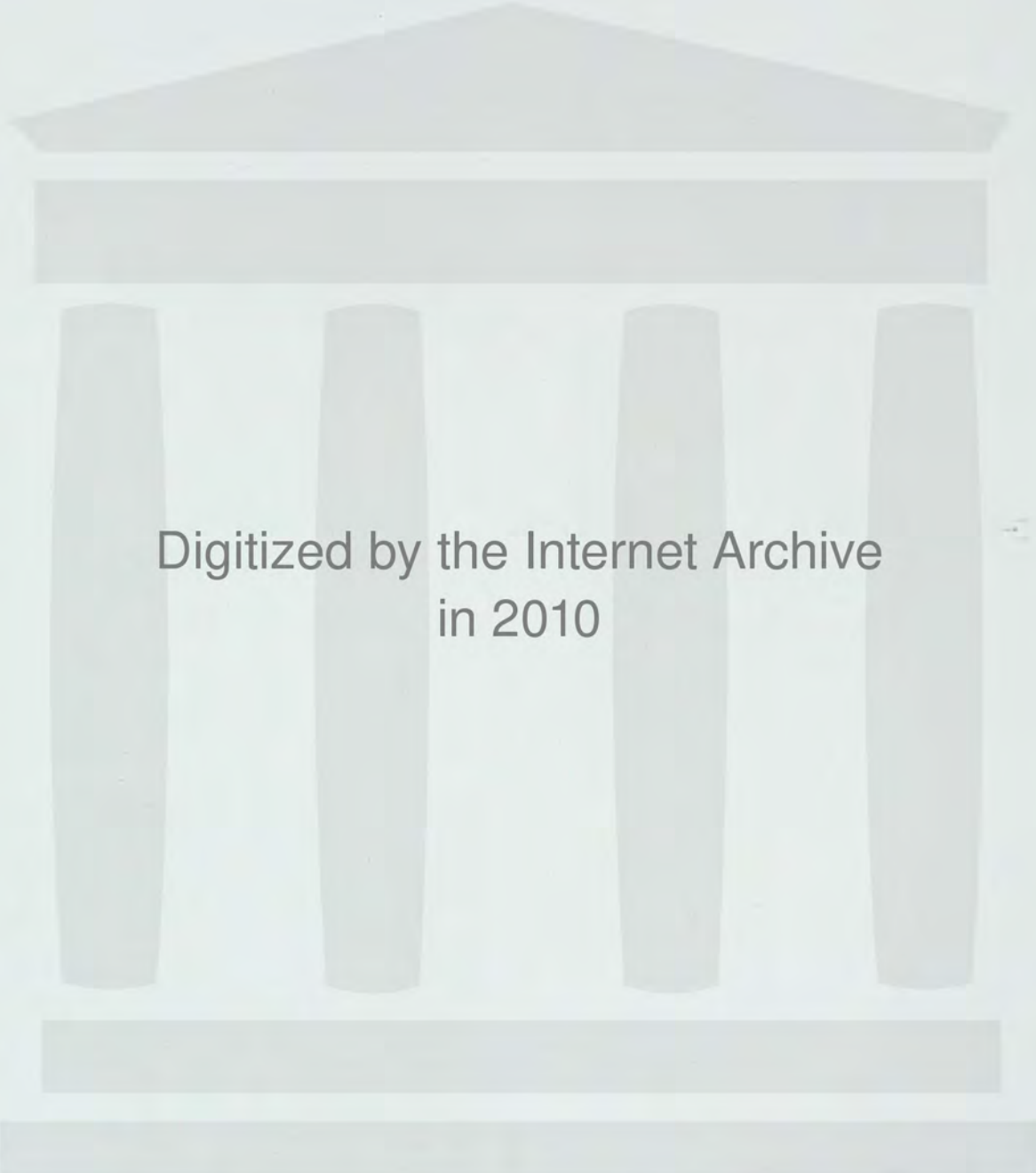


Lisieux and Les Buissonnets

Therese's childhood her world in Lisieux and in Normandy

600 photo-documents
by Helmuth Nils Loose
commentary by Pierre Descouvemont





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The publisher, the photographer and the author wish to express their profound gratitude to the prioress of Carmel, to the sister-archivist and to the Carmelites of Lisieux for the generous and attentive support they contributed to the realization of this memorial album in honour of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face.

For the first time, photographs taken at Carmel by Celine (Sister Genevieve), Therese's sister, have been faithfully reproduced, from the originals developed by Celine herself (p. 24, 95, 176, 211, 219, 220, 221, 242-243, 289). The same holds true for the series of photographs depicting a day in the life of a novice (p. 102-113). The other photographs of Therese were drawn from the antique glass negatives and developed on paper of the colour in use at the time, without manipulation, thus obtaining the sepia tone. H.N.L.

Photo credits: Musée de Loigny-la-Bataille, p. 9-10. Roger-Viollet, p. 11, 182, 290. Therese's birthplace (Alençon), p. 14-17, 21, 24. David Loose, p. 32-33, 68. Carmel (Avila), p. 50. Bibliothèque nationale (France), p. 94. Visitation (Chartres), p. 163. Bibliothèque municipale (Lisieux), p. 183-185, 217, 259, 291. Musée des Collections historiques de la Préfecture de Police (Paris), p. 78-79. Gilbert Guillotin, p. 327.

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The publication of this book evokes, first of all, a profound joy. It is the outcome of a long, sometimes patient, sometimes anxious, wait for we found it difficult to understand how a saint of the stature of Therese of Lisieux could not offer her millions of friends throughout the world a book worthy of her, a book showing her in her surroundings, from Alençon to the infirmary of the Carmel. Certainly we have not forgotten the excitement provoked in 1961 by *Le Visage de Thérèse de Lisieux* [*The Face of Therese of Lisieux*], faultlessly edited by Carmelite Father François de Sainte-Marie who gave us forty-seven authentic photographs — taken, for the most part, by Celine Martin. What a shock it was to compare the originals to the portraits ‘arranged’ according to the fashion of the times! This book, which appeared a few years after the *Autobiographical Manuscripts* (1956), took a huge step towards restoring Therese to us “as she really was” (Ms A, 31v).

And yet, even though the publication of *Derniers entretiens de sainte Thérèse de l'Enfant-Jésus* [*Last Conversations of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus*] (Cerf-DDB, 1971), the final volume of the so-called Centenary Edition, was underway, we were left unsatisfied in the realm of iconography. Even more so since the Carmel of Lisieux, spared from the Allied bombings of 1944, contained a mass of treasures that would permit us to discern better, even in the most minute details, the reality of this young Carmelite's life, in its historic, cultural and religious context. Places that have remained unchanged, objects that have been preserved, handwritten manuscripts that have been kept, books used by Therese, images made by her, sketches, paintings, statues, the faces of the sisters who were her contemporaries, mementos piously preserved right after the publication of *Histoire d'une âme* [*The Story of a Soul*] (1898), various works carried out by Therese, objects that surrounded her in the infirmary of the Carmel, what have you... we go from discovery to discovery. Therese's texts, written with a transparent truth, come to life before our eyes. And we understand even better the originality of Therese who rediscovered the gospel despite being surrounded by an iconography which somewhat obscured it.

Therese was from Normandy — she was realistic, concrete, visual. Her cultural universe was infinitely poorer than ours, but it marked her profoundly. “I have not spoken to you about my love of pictures and reading [...] and yet, dear Mother, I owe to the beautiful pictures you showed me as a reward one of the sweetest joys and strongest impressions that moved me to the practice of virtue” (Ms A, 31v). The gap between the iconography at the end of the 19th century and our own is wide, yet current historians and sociologists do not hesitate to group, in various exhibitions, the images of our grandparents, who were bearers, in their own way, of a theology. In Therese's case, it is not primarily a question of ‘piety,’ but of an impregnation that would deeply touch her heart.

To see Therese in her Carmel, in the concrete reality of daily life, in this poor little universe, is to get a better sense of the mystery of her hidden — we could say ‘pathetic’ — life and of the “storm of glory” of her worldwide influence. Yes, six little notebooks, costing about two cents each, formed Manuscript A, and Therese wrote with a poor pen dipped in a minuscule inkwell. The most prestigious texts of “the greatest saint of modern times” (in the opinion of Saint Pius X) sprang from this poverty.

The long wait to contemplate this memorabilia at leisure was surely providential, for this book — and the even thicker one that follows — is an admirable illustration of the Centenary Edition and much more.

We must warmly thank the Carmelites of Lisieux who permitted the environment of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face to be revealed to the host of her friends. These inheritors of a long tradition, laden with archives of all kinds, agreed that these treasures should not remain concealed. They sometimes had the surprise of making more discoveries! There are probably few saints in history who have had so many of their mementos kept like Saint Therese's since the first miracle in 1899. Their little sister became the universal sister and her influence throughout the world is ever more and more astonishing. Let us not forget that she is not merely a more or less aesthetic statue that decorates thousands of churches, but that she is the bearer of a doctrine which has not yet revealed all its transparent depth. The future surely reserves some surprises for us in this regard.

The reader will soon realize that this book is more than a magnificent collection of over 600 illustrations or a book of art.

Father Pierre Descouvemont's work did not consist merely in putting captions under these photos. In 330 pages we find ourselves before a text that is very rich in information of all kinds. It is the fruit of years of work by this diocesan priest from Cambrai, Therese's devotee. I watched him work enthusiastically. The only thing that made him sad was that he had to sacrifice this or that picture in order to respect the agreed-upon format. We have to realize that an exhaustive work — truly almost impossible — would have called for several volumes. Even though Theresians are insatiable, it was necessary, nonetheless, to set limits.

I have delayed to the end mentioning the exceptional debt of thanks we owe to Helmuth Loose, the German photographer of international fame. He is responsible for numerous books on the saints. But what happened with Therese of Lisieux? For months, with the most modern technology and the astuteness of a great professional skilled at resolving the most complicated cases, Helmuth Loose put all his art at Therese's service. To the point that, while working day in and day out in her service, he himself became a Theresian and entered into the private world of the little saint. He lived an unexpected adventure and a true friendship developed between the artist and the Carmelite community. Need we add that the photographer's work, far from being published in its entirety, constitutes a reserve of the highest value? Surely history will one day be grateful for his discreet collaboration with the Carmelites.

In the end, "all is grace." We had to wait years for Saint Therese of the Child Jesus to be more effectively revealed to the world. Everything blossoms in its own time. This work would have been impossible several years ago. Finally, this book, in association with Therese's published texts, will no doubt be a revelation to many readers, so true is it that Therese remains inexhaustible and that her human roots, far from cutting her off from other civilizations, open doors for her on the five continents. We do not understand why. We simply point it out and note that the influx to Lisieux of people from every country proves it.

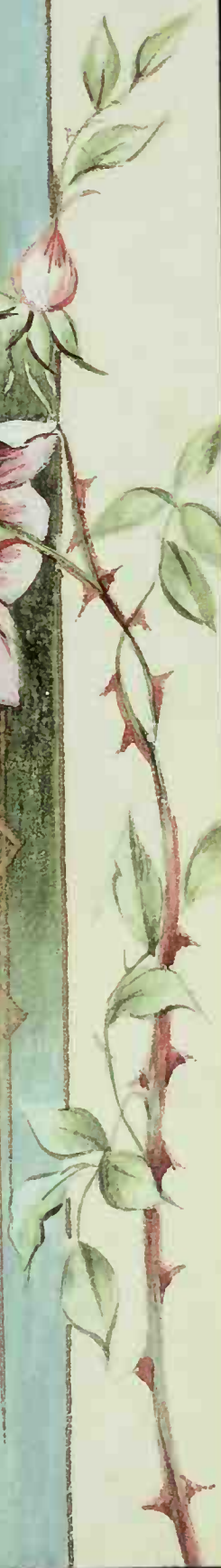
I like Emmanuel Mounier's saying, "Therese is a ruse of the Holy Spirit." Let him understand who can. I am certain that the contemplation of this book — and of the sequel — will not leave readers indifferent and that the cultural gap will not hinder them from entering into the mystery.

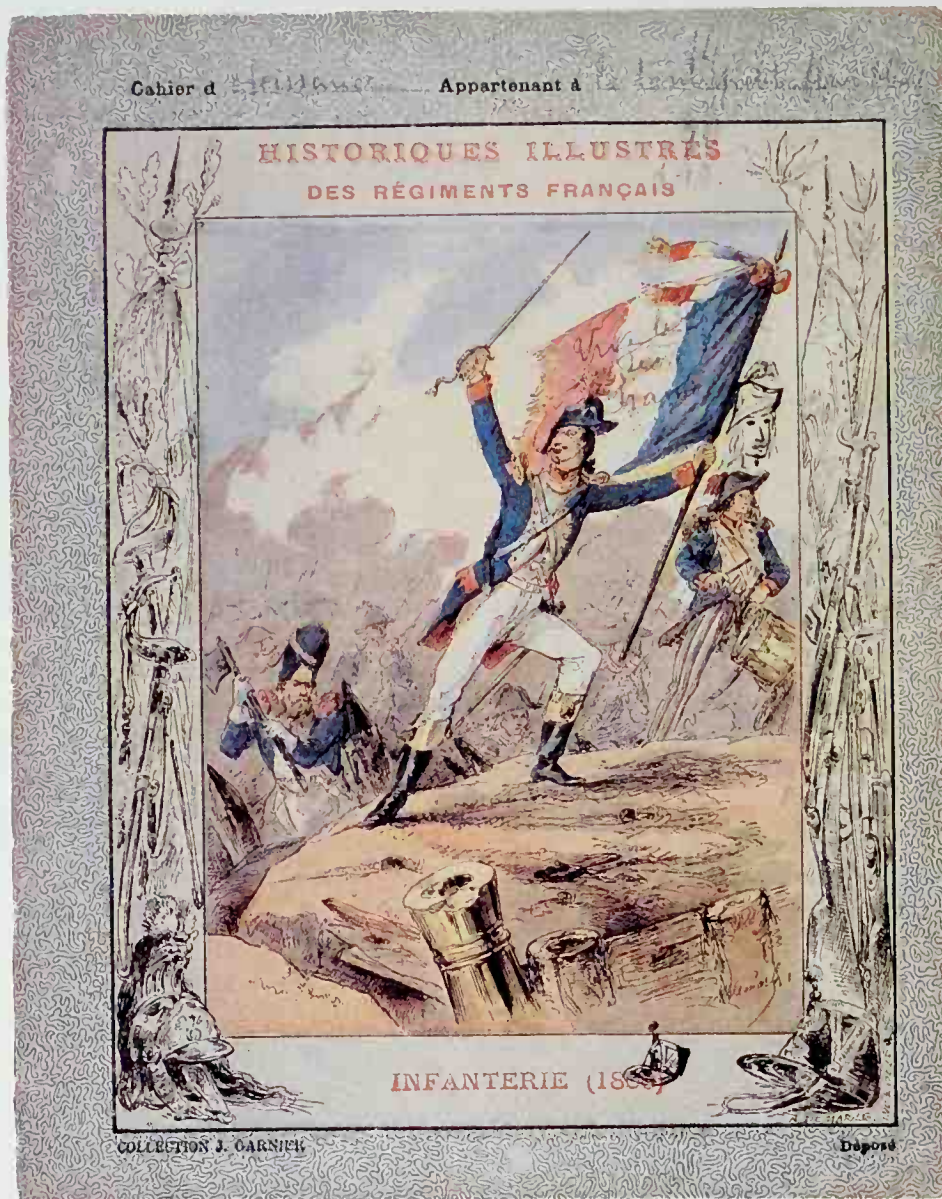


Guy Gaucher, Carmelite
Auxiliary Bishop of Bayeux-Lisieux



Je veux
passer mon Ciel
à faire du bien
sur la terre.
Après ma mort,
je ferai
tomber une pluie
de roses.
(Sainte Thérèse à l'Enfant Jésus.)





Long live the God of the Franks

The cover of the first 30-page school notebook in which Therese recorded her childhood memories in 1895. She used six of them and stopped at page 172. The notebook cost 10 sous or about two cents

The other side of the notebook cover evokes the military feats inscribed on the flag of the 102nd line regiment: Valmy, Zurich, Wagram, and Forts du Pei Ho. In reading them, Therese probably thought about her maternal grandfather who enlisted in the 96th infantry regiment at the age of 19. He participated in the Napoleonic wars, in particular in the battle of Wagram.

In a more peaceful fashion, she compared herself to a little white flower whose story she would write in obedience to Mother Agnes, who was her sister Pauline. Mother Agnes had become the prioress of the Carmel two years earlier. On the symbolism of this little flower, see page 76.

Long live the God of the Franks!
 A cry from the heart that reflects well the revanchist ambiance in which Therese Martin, like the other young people of her generation, was raised. After the triumph of Bismarck's armies, the French dreamed of only one thing: to take revenge against the Prussians and recover Alsace-Lorraine. In January 1871, the penetration of the Prussian armies into Normandy sowed panic. Some parents of Carmelites feared for their daughters. Monsieur and Madame de Virville, for example, asked the prioress of the Carmel of Lisieux to permit their daughter to leave the convent. Thus Sister Marie de Gonzague, then subprioress, had rejoined her parents in Caen. On March 19th, once the alert was over, she returned to Lisieux.

In writing "Long Live the God of the Franks" on the flag on the cover of her notebook, Therese certainly was thinking of the banner of the Sacred Heart unfurled on December 2nd 1870 at Loigny by Sergeant Henri de Verthamon during a heroic charge led against the Prussian army by the Pontifical Zouaves. This banner, embroidered by the nuns of the Order of the Visitation of Paray-le-Monial, was sent to Monsieur Dupont, the "holy man of Tours" (see p. 137), who was responsible for banding it over to Lieutenant Colonel de Charette, commander of the Pontifical Zouaves. On the banner around the emblem of the Sacred Heart could be read: "Heart of Jesus, save France!" When the banner was unfurled on the battlefield, the soldiers acclaimed it with the cry "Long live France! Long live the Sacred Heart!"

Certainly Therese also thought about the standard that Joan of Arc brandished in her battles. In this year of 1895, she identified more and more with Joan. She played the role at the beginning of the year and she prepared another play to recall Joan's trial (see p. 215). For Therese, France was truly the oldest daughter of the Church and Joan was to help the



General de Sonis (1825-1887)

Born in Guadelupe where his father was an officer, Gaston de Sonis studied in France. After completing his training at Saint-Cyr and Saumur, the young second lieutenant was transferred to the 5th Hussars. Stationed in Castres, he married Mademoiselle Anais Roger. They had twelve children.

After distinguishing himself by his victories in Algeria, under the Second Empire, he was named general in 1870 and was given command of the 17th Army Corps that included a detachment of 294 "volunteers from the west" under the command of Lieutenant Colonel de Charette, grandnephew of the famous man from the Vendee. These soldiers were "Pontifical Zouaves" who, after the Piedmontese took Rome on September 20th 1870, returned to France to defend their country.

On December 2nd 1870, in order to prevent the French army from being surrounded by the enemy cavalry, General de Sonis ordered de Charette to take the village of Loigny, 30 kilometres northwest of Orleans. The Zouaves charged with fixed bayonets in the direction of a little

grove located 300 metres from the village. There they rushed 1,200 Prussians and Bavarians. Disaster was avoided.

On the morning of December 3rd, de Charette's companions numbered only 88! Two hundred and seven Zouaves lay dead on the field. Wounded, General de Sonis underwent the amputation of a leg, but this did not prevent him from continuing to ride horseback for years to come.

In 1880, he offered his services to protest the expulsion of religious. In 1883, he became a member of a commission of the Ministry of War. On August 15th 1887, he died in Paris with a reputation for sanctity. A Christian with a great heart, General de Sonis composed a prayer which Therese appreciated, especially this passage: "May I be to the building, not like the worked, hand-polished stone of the worker, but like the obscure grain of sand, hidden in the dust of the road."

Given the importance of the banner of Loigny in the plan to erect a basilica in honour of the Sacred Heart, he was represented in the cupola of the apse (1910).

French become aware of this again. On January 21st, incarnating the shepherdess of Domremy addressing her country, Therese sang:

*"The God of the Francs
in his clemency
Has resolved to save you,
But it is through me,
Joan of France,
That he wants to redeem you
once again."*

This much said, we do not find even a minimal trace of nationalism or xenophobia in any of Therese's works.

In the second half of the 19th century, devotion to the Sacred Heart reached its highest point. In 1856, at the request of the French hierarchy, Pope Pius IX extended the feast of the Sacred Heart to the whole world. The Apostolate of Prayer, created by the Jesuits in 1861, spread the cult everywhere. In 1864, Marguerite-Marie Alacoque was proclaimed blessed. The success of the litanies to the Sacred Heart, the growing participation in the "first Friday of the month" masses, the proliferation of religious congregations under the sign of the Sacred Heart in France — then in the rest of the world — attest to the growth of the devotion. Soon the ultramontane movement undertook a campaign so that the sovereignty of the Sacred Heart over society would be recognized: the consecration of individuals, families and dioceses to the Sacred Heart developed; then came the consecration of countries, beginning with Belgium in 1869.

Following the disaster of Sedan and of the Commune, French Catholics were in a state of shock. Humiliated in their patriotism, they were also painfully wounded by the tidal wave of anticlericalism that led the Communards to shoot Bishop Darboy and 53 other members of the clergy. On April 29th 1871, ten thousand Freemasons gathered, in ceremonial



The banner unfurled at Loigny
December 2nd 1870

On December 7th, the 88 Pontifical Zouaves who survived the battle regrouped at Poitiers, where a number of Parisians were already taking refuge. Among them was Monsieur Legentil who, along with his brother-in-law Rohault de Fleury, had vowed, the previous December 2nd, to build a basilica in Paris in honour of the Sacred Heart. The account of the heroic charge led at Loigny on this same December 2nd, under the banner of the Sacred Heart, confirmed him in his decision. In January 1871, the idea was put before the public.

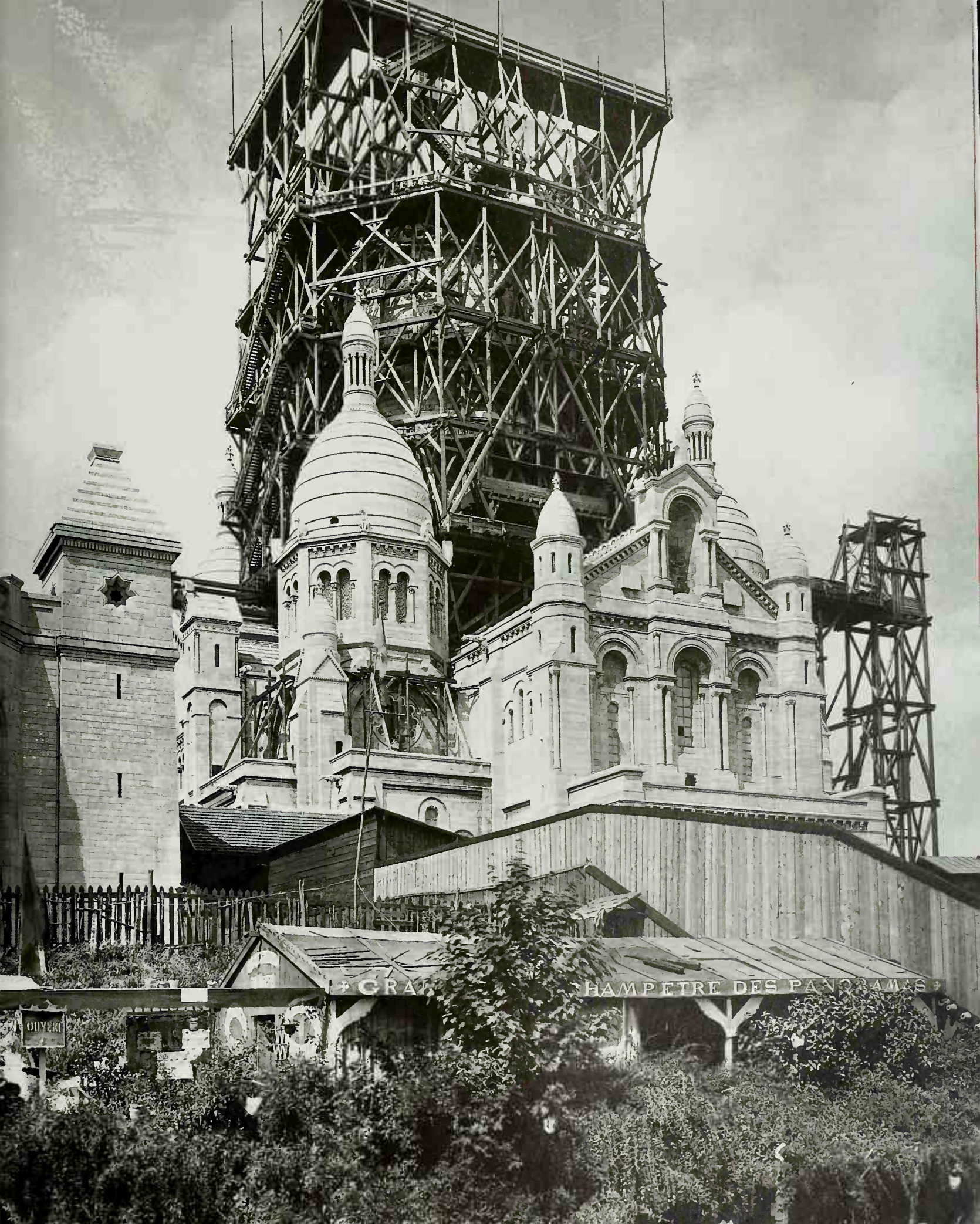
At a memorable session of the National Assembly on July 24th 1873, Cazenoves de Pradines, a veteran of Loigny, made a great impression on the parliamentarians when he recalled this banner. His influence, however, was not pivotal for the vote of the Assembly, which had only to declare the erection of the basilica of Montmartre to be of public benefit. When Therese evoked the heroism of the Pontifical Zouaves in her second manuscript, she was certainly thinking of the charge at Loigny.

dress, to acclaim the Commune and encourage it to "stamp out infamy," in the style of Voltaire. Nothing more was needed for Freemasonry to appear to French Catholics as the principal enemy of the Church. They had a distressing tendency to forget the atrocities committed by the Versaillais against the Communards...

In 1873, on a pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial led by more than 100 elected representatives, thirty thousand people demanded that France be consecrated to the Sacred Heart. Some Catholics began to dream of a three-fold restoration: of the monarchy, of the pope at the head of his states, and of the faith in the country. They chanted in a loud voice, "Save Rome and France in the name of the Sacred Heart." Religion and politics were closely intertwined!

But the Archbishop of Paris, Bishop Guibert, did not want the construction of the Sacred Heart basilica of Montmartre to seem like revenge against the anticlerical atrocities committed during the Commune. Hoping to avoid the allusion to the restoration of the Papal States, he preferred the chant, "Save, save France in the name of the Sacred Heart." A good number of Christians sent their contributions for the construction of the basilica without hoping for the return of the monarchy. They only wanted the Sacred Heart to reign again over Paris and France.

The basilica of the Sacred Heart under construction (about 1895)



GRAND CAMPETRE DES PANORAMAS

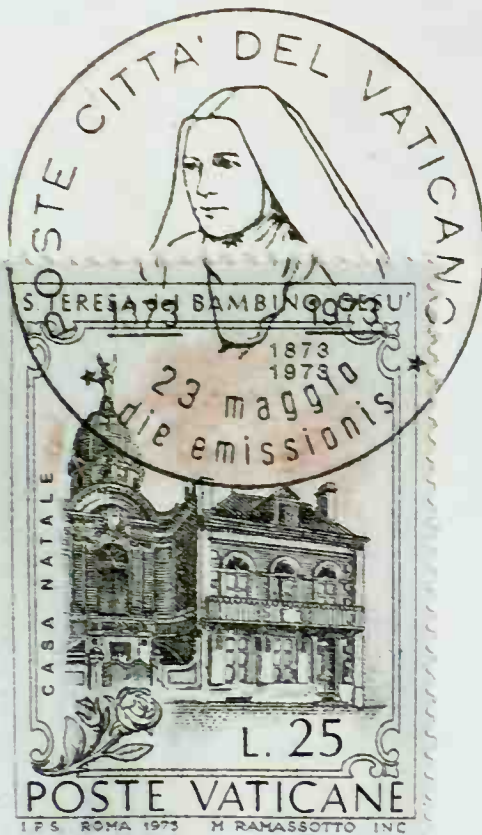
OUVERT

The room where Therese was born

After the death of Madame Martin, the bed was moved to Les Buissonnets and placed in Therese and Celine's bedroom. In her childhood, Therese said her prayers by this bed:

"I would go behind my bed to an empty space that was easy for me to close off with the curtain... and there I used to 'think.'

"I understand now that I was meditating without knowing it and that God was already instructing me in secret."



The house where Therese was born, rue Saint-Blaise in Alençon

Monsieur and Madame Martin lived here from 1871 to 1877. Sold by Monsieur Martin in 1880, it was purchased by the Carmel of Lisieux in 1910. In April 1912, Alexander James Grant, a Scottish pastor who converted to Catholicism after reading *The Story of a Soul*, settled here with his wife. Thus, Mrs. Grant was for many years the guardian of the home where Therese was born.

Therese owes the fact that she was born in Alençon to her two grandfathers. Career military men, they both retired here. Captain Pierre-François Martin moved here in 1830. As for Isidore Guerin, after more than thirty years of service in the police force, he sold his land near Saint-Denis-sur-Sarthon where his children were born and bought the former quartermaster's residence across from the prefecture in Alençon in 1843. Therese would be born here thirty years later.

The Guerin family moved here so that their two older children, Marie-Louise and Azelie, could take advantage of the excellent Christian education provided by the Religious of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, also called the Sisters of Picpus [Street].

This "City of Dukes" — sixteen thousand inhabitants at the end of the last century — was most charming with its mansions and residences whose old stones had been polished by the centuries. Vestiges of its opulent past intrigued Balzac, who lingered here in 1828 and made it the background for some of his novels.

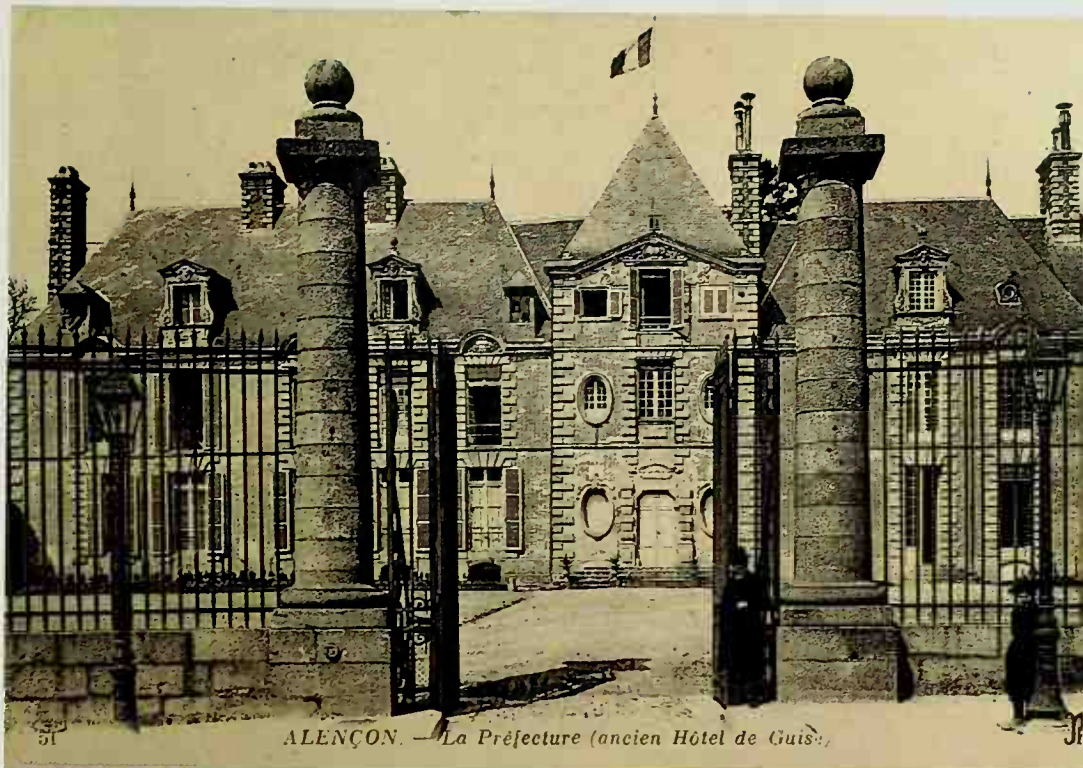
Therese's parents enjoyed the Franciscan atmosphere which animated the Poor Clares, rue de la Demi-Lune, parallel to rue Saint-Blaise, behind the prefecture. Louis Martin saved fish from his catch for them and Zélie, a member of the Third Order, attended conferences intended for Christian mothers.

Later, Leonie, their third child, would make her first attempt at religious life here; it would last only seven weeks.

The Orne Prefecture
(opposite the home
where Therese was born)

One of the most beautiful examples
of the Louis XIII style in Normandy.

Jeanne Bechard, daughter of the
prefect of Orne, was fond of Celine
and sometimes, from her balcony
which overlooked the Martins'
house, she gestured to her little
friends to come play with her.
Therese often climbed on the "little
prefect's" swing. But the Martins
were not invited to the ball at the
prefecture.



Corpus Christi procession
in Alençon

The Martin spouses maintained a
solid eucharistic piety. Every morn-
ing, they rose at 5 o'clock to attend
early mass. As a member of the
Blessed Sacrament Society, Monsieur
Martin took part in the monthly
nocturnal adorations during the
night of the Thursday to the first
Friday of the month. Nor was he
afraid of what others might think.
During one Corpus Christi proces-
sion, Monsieur Martin surprised a
mocking individual who brazenly
refused to remove his cap; with a
swift gesture, he smartly knocked
the cap off the man's head.



How happy I was at that age!



Azelie, Isidore and Marie-Louise (Sister Marie-Dosithee) Guerin in 1857

I loved Mama and Papa very much



Isidore Guerin (1789-1868), after thirty years of service as a police officer, was decorated with the Sainte-Helene medal, an honour which Napoleon III bestowed upon the old Grognaards of Napoleon I. Isidore received his baptism of fire at Wagram



Born on December 23rd 1831 at Gandelain, in the Orne region, Marie-Azelie Guerin was an intelligent woman and a hard worker. She had considered becoming a religious, but the superior of the Hotel-Dieu of Alençon had discouraged her inquiry outright. Disappointed, Azelie learned the trade of lacemaking. She excelled in it so rapidly that at the age of twenty-two, she set up her own business on rue Saint-Blaise. At first she worked with her older sister, Marie-Louise who soon left to enter the Monastery of the Visitation in Le Mans. Throughout her life Sister Marie-Dosithee would remain the spiritual counselor of Zelie and also of her young brother Isidore, the spoiled child of the family.

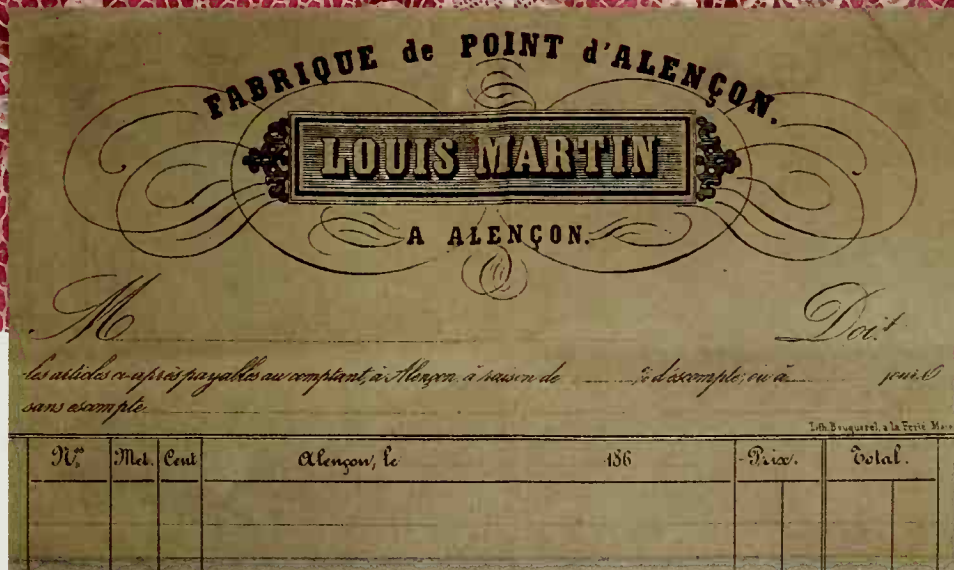
The lacemaker handled the pen as expertly as the needle. In a very lively fashion, she recounted to her Visitandine sister, then to her older daughters who were boarding in Le Mans near their aunt, the details of her daily life. Thanks to this correspondence in particular, we have savoury details about Therese's early childhood.



Alençon lace made by Azelie Guerin

Azelie Guerin was a real entrepreneur. When she received an order for an article, she asked a number of lacemakers who worked at home to each do a piece. On Thursdays, market day, each brought the result of her work to rue Saint-Blaise. Azelie checked it, made any necessary corrections, then passed it on to another worker, and so forth, until completion. Azelie was particularly skilled in the art of making the connections between the various stitches in a piece of lace invisible.

In addition to directing the manufacturing, she had to market the finished product. Her husband assumed



After he gave up his jewellery store, Louis Martin took care of the marketing aspect of the enterprise directed by his wife.

this task in 1871 after he sold his jewellery store to his nephew, Adolphe Leriche. He would regularly visit the big department stores in Paris to obtain the best price for the luxurious articles that came from his wife's workshop.



Captain Pierre-François Martin (1777-1865) had been decorated with the medal of the Royal Military Order of Saint-Louis



Louis Martin, Therese's father

Born in Bordeaux on August 22nd 1823, Louis Martin was raised on military bases at the various places his father was stationed. He elected to train as a watchmaker, a trade well in keeping with his love for precise work and his taste for solitude. At the age of twenty-two, he also thought about the religious life. He inquired at the monastery of Grand-Saint-Bernard but they informed him that he could not enter until he learned Latin. He applied himself courageously and took private lessons for more than a year, but finally abandoned this project. He then did a three-year internship in Paris to perfect his professional knowledge. He regularly visited the sanctuary of Notre-Dame-des-

Victoires. In 1850, he set himself up as watchmaker in Alençon at his parents' home.

His faith remained strong and vibrant. Opening his store on Sundays was out of the question. In his leisure time, he indulged his love of fishing, occasionally went hunting, and took part in evenings for young people at the Cercle catholique, founded by his friend Vital Romet. His mother was concerned at seeing him still single at the age of thirty-four. While she herself was learning the Alençon technique of lacemaking, she noticed the young, remarkably gifted Zélie Guerin... The young couple were married on July 13th 1858.

A clock repaired
by Louis Martin



Louis Martin's
jewellery store,
rue du Pont-Neuf

The young couple lived on the ground floor and Captain Martin and his wife Fanny lived on the second floor. In 1871, Monsieur Martin sold the building and his business to his nephew, Adolphe Leriche.



Therese greatly enjoyed celebrating her father's feast day, August 25th

The statue universally known today as the "Virgin of the Smile" — on account of Therese's miraculous cure at Les Buissonnets on May 13th 1883 — is a madonna that Louis Martin had received as a gift when still single. It had been given to him by Mademoiselle Felicite Baudouin, who had helped him set up his jewellery store, on rue du Pont-Neuf.

Louis, whose Marian devotion was already solid, placed this statue in a setting of greenery at the end of the central entrance to the Pavillon, a sort of quiet retreat he had bought for himself. It was not far from his store and he liked to withdraw to it.

After his marriage in 1858, he moved the statue to his home, above his store, where it became the centre of the household liturgy. Each evening, on rue du Pont-Neuf, then on rue Saint-Blaise, parents and children gathered before the Virgin to pray. Sometimes, when there was a conversion or cure to be obtained, the praying was more insistent. Madame Martin had obtained, at the beginning of 1870, a precious grace of serenity before this statue. Her little Helene had just died at the age of five and a

half. She was particularly affected by this loss because she reproached herself for not having thought to call a priest to her daughter's bedside; the daughter had told a small lie a little earlier. "Perhaps my daughter is suffering in purgatory on account of my negligence," she blamed herself. In her anguish, Madame Martin turned to the Virgin. Immediately, a mysterious voice sounded in her heart, "She is here, near me." It is understandable that Madame Martin did not listen to the complaints of her older children who wanted to pray before a statue that looked less like those at the boarding school. "It's too much like school, Mama! We would prefer a smaller, finer statue. — Children, I have received too many graces in front of this Virgin! As long as I live, the statue will never be moved from here!"

As May approached, a veritable oratory was set up for it. Surrounded by hawthorn branches that reached to the ceiling, the statue stood out against a background of flowers and greenery. It was lit up with countless candles which the children liked to light.





Celine

On March 4th 1877, Madame Martin wrote to Pauline, "Celine and Therese are inseparable. You could not find two children who love each other more. When Marie comes to get Celine for her lessons, poor Therese is in tears. [...] Marie takes pity on her, she takes her too, and this poor little one sits on a chair for two or three hours. She is given pearls to string or a rag to sew: she does not dare move and often lets out great sighs. When the thread comes out of her needle, she tries to rethread it — it's curious to see her, not able to do it, yet not daring to disturb Marie."

Louis approached marriage with every specific view: he wanted to live with his wife as brother and sister. He even copied a passage from a theology book which confirmed this way. Zélie, for her part, wanted to have many children; but she finally accepted her husband's point of view.

There was no selfishness in the young household. No sooner had they

set up house, than they took charge of a little five-year-old boy whose father had just died, leaving his wife with eleven children.

After ten months of life together, the strong intervention of a confessor led the Martins to change their mind. From that time, nine births followed in succession from 1860 to 1873.



Family tableau composed by Mother Agnes

*My dear Celine,
little companion of my childhood*



Helene at age four and a half

She died at the age of five and a half on February 22nd 1870. Three other children died in infancy: Joseph-Louis, Joseph Jean-Baptiste and Melanie-Therese.



Pauline, a boarding student in Le Mans

Marie and Pauline became boarders at the Visitation in Le Mans in October 1868. Sister Marie-Dosithee wrote to Madame Martin, around October 22nd. "Pauline is a little jewel, happy as a lark, studious and doing her very best at everything." But the little girl had a mind of her own and for this reason her aunt called her *mordicus*, that is, stubborn.



Pauline and Marie, the two oldest, in 1865



Leonie, a boarding student at the Abbey

Leonie was a difficult child. She found it hard to find her niche in the family, since she did not belong to either the group formed by the two older children nor the one formed by the two younger. At Les Buissonnets, she had a room apart from the others.

It is true that she had a tendency to depreciate herself as a result of unkind remarks she often received because of her protruding chin.

Therese's dolls



*The sunny years
of my early childhood... What a sweet impression
they left
on my soul!*



Rose Taille,
Therese's wet nurse

Toward the end of January, Madame Martin became apprehensive. Enteritis, which had already claimed the lives of four of her children, threatened to carry off her last little one. By the beginning of March, the child was in serious condition. The doctor was clear: to be saved, the baby must be breast-fed. Greatly distraught, Madame Martin left in the early hours of the morning for Semalle, eight kilometres from Alençon, to seek out the woman who had already nursed her two little boys. Rose Taille, thirty-seven years old, was then nurs-

ing her fourth child, aged thirteen months. The two women walked back to town together. Once fed, Therese fell asleep smiling. She was saved.

She was soon boarded at her nurse's home where she remained for a year. It was a decisive year for the formation of her "imagination." The odours of the stable and the cut bay, the noise of the cackling poultry, of the rooster that crowed and the cow that mooed, all that was buried in the child's memory. With great delight she let her nurse wheel her about in a barrow, sitting on top of the loads of grass!

Every Thursday, 'Little Rose' went to the Alençon market to sell butter, eggs, vegetables and the milk of Roussette, her only cow. On that day, Madame Martin was delighted to see her baby again and to admire her progress, but baby Therese in no way appreciated the outfits and hats of her mother's customers. She decidedly preferred the country garb of her wet nurse.

On Holy Thursday, April 2nd 1874, the child returned home to rue Saint-Blaise for good.



The farm at Semalle

Apple trees in Normandy

As a child, Therese had difficulty with grammar. She could not understand, for example, why 'apple' was a feminine noun, 'la pomme.' Unlike the pear which is graceful, soft and sweet, the apple, in her opinion, represented the masculine gender because its form is less refined and its pulp tart and firmer. Consequently she would say 'le pomme.'



Madame Martin wrote to Pauline on November 21st, 1875, "I hear the baby calling me, 'Mama!' as she goes down the stairs. On every step, she calls out 'Mama!' and if I don't respond every time, she remains there without going either forward or back."

The staircase of the home on rue Saint-Blaise



Therese at three-and-a-half
(July 1876)

Generally a happy child, she pouted that day because the big, black veil under which the photographer had made her apprehensive.

Later, Therese also recalled how children like to be carried up the stairs in their parents' arms. She would use this image to express how she saw the relationship between human freedom and the grace of God: In the spiritual life, we must do our best to reach the first step. But we must especially ask Jesus to come to us where we are so that he may carry us in his arms to the top of the staircase.

*All the details
of our
dear mother's illness
are still present
in my heart*



Zelie Martin, Therese's mother



Cheveux
de la
Servante de Dieu
Zelie Guerin

At the end of December 1876, Madame Martin learned that the fibrous tumour discovered in her breast was inoperable. Doctor Notta, a well-known surgeon of Lisieux, confirmed the diagnosis of the doctor from Alençon. The sick woman continued to work and remained cheerful. She was greatly saddened, however, by the death of her Visitandine sister who, overcome by tuberculosis, died in Le Mans on February 24th 1877. After her sister's death, Madame Martin's illness grew progressively worse.

The whole family united to seek a cure from heaven. Giving in to the insistent requests of those around her, Madame Martin agreed to go to Lourdes with her three older daughters. She was happy to meet Bishop Peyramale's servant who, in the absence of Bernadette's famous pastor, spoke to her of the little seer. Although she was immersed several times in the icy water of the pool, the sick woman was not cured; she returned to Alençon full of courage nonetheless.

Therese watched all the proceedings intensely. The ceremony of the Last Rites, which her mother received Sunday August 26th, was deeply engraved on her mind. "I still see the place where I stood, next to Celine; all five of us, we were in a row according to age, and our poor father was there too, sobbing." Two days later, at half past midnight, the end came. Madame Martin would have been forty-six years old on her next birthday. Therese's father took his four-and-a-half-year-old daughter in his arms and said, "Come kiss your poor little mother one last time." "And I, without saying a word, kissed my dear mother's forehead."

After the burial, Louise Marais, the maid, looked sadly at the two youngest orphans. "Poor little ones, you have no mother!" Celine rushed into Marie's arms. "Well then, you will be my mother!" Then Therese ran to Pauline. "Very well! Pauline will be my mother!"

It was the custom at the end of the 19th century to keep as a relic of the deceased person one or more locks of her hair, carefully arranged under glass. Hair powder was used to make the initials.



On the right, the pharmacy run by Monsieur Guerin from 1866 to 1888. After the death of his sister, Madame Martin, he suggested to Monsieur Martin that he leave Alençon and come to live in Lisieux. On Thursdays and Sundays, Therese met Jeanne and Marie, her two cousins, and their parents there. Uncle Isidore was somewhat intimidating, but she listened attentively to what he said. He met so many people in his pharmacy!

Isidore Guerin (1841-1909)

After spending all his early years in Alençon, Isidore Guerin left for Paris in 1862 to study pharmacy. Uncompromising and aggressive by nature, he ignored many of the recommendations lavished on him by his Visitandine sister. He listened more willingly to the tactful advice of Zélie, who especially encouraged him to visit the sanctuary of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires every day.

After he received his first-class diploma in pharmacy on April 1st 1864, he looked for a place to set up shop in the country. He set his sights on Lisieux. Monsieur Fournet's pharmacy was for sale and Isidore had taken a fancy to the Fournet's youngest daughter, Celine. Fortunately, the feeling was mutual. Their marriage took place on September 11th 1866 in Saint-Pierre cathedral, two steps from the pharmacy.

In May 1870, Isidore set up a hardware store adjacent to the pharmacy. On February 15th 1873, he entered into a partnership with Monsieur Maudelonde, his brother-in-law. Maudelonde was to manage the hardware store, but it burned down on March 27th.

I was pleased



Former garden of the episcopal residence of Leonor II de Matignon (†1714), designed by Le Notre



Madame Guerin, born Celine Fournet (1847-1900)

In order to emphasize the Fournet family's love of money, the gossips of Lisieux liked to remark that by transposing the letters of their name, you would get the word 'fortune.' It is true that the family was not particularly pious. They only went to church for weddings and funerals. Celine, therefore, received only a superficial religious education, but she possessed exceptional qualities of gentleness and good judgment which greatly contributed to the happiness of the household. Furthermore, under the influence of Sister Marie-Dosithee and Monsieur and Madame Martin, the Guerin family progressively became more authentically Christian. Isidore became seriously involved in parochial works (Saint Vincent de Paul conferences, Cercle catholique). In 1885, he founded the work of nocturnal adoration and was always willing to "keep watch" during the most difficult hours of the night.

to come to Lisieux



Front view of Les Buissonnets

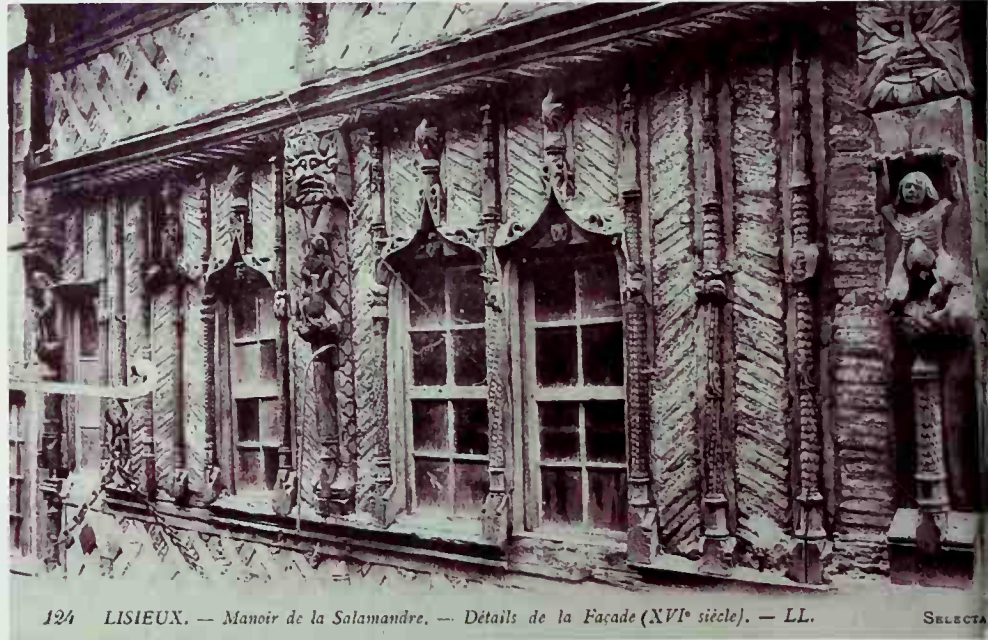
On the main floor, from left to right: a study where the older children worked during the day and where the family gathered in the evening, the kitchen, and the two windows of the dining room. On the second floor: a bathroom, the "room of [the Virgin of] the smile" (see p. 52) and the three windows of the father's bedroom. On the top floor: the four windows of the belvedere, thus called because of the view over the city. It served as Monsieur Martin's office. Before she began school, Therese used to go in at the end of the morning to show her father the homework that Pauline had made her do. Therese lived here from November 16th 1877 to April 9th 1888, the day she entered Carmel. The house was one hundred years old. The lease expired on December 31st 1889, while Monsieur Martin was hospitalized at Bon-Sauveur in Caen.

Old houses on the Place de la Halle-au-beurre



Salamander Manor

The Manor was located on rue aux Fevres, that is, on Artisans' street (*fabri*), the best known of the thoroughfares of Lisieux. Before the fire on the night of June 7th-8th 1944, caused by Allied bombing, Lisieux was the "sculptured-wood capital." Eighty wooden houses in the heart of the city offered varied examples of Norman dwellings from the 14th to the 16th centuries. These houses were often the victims of fire. The drum and bugle would sound in the streets of the town to summon volunteer firefighters.



View of a factory

With 18,600 inhabitants, Lisieux was the first industrial city of the Calvados region at the end of the 19th century. Tanneries, cider factories and distilleries processed the agricultural production of the region. Textile enterprises employed some 3,000 workers around 1875. The vast prairies of the Auge country made it possible to bleach hemp and linen without the use of chemicals. Lisieux was well-known for its fine upholstery fabrics.

The old market



LISIEUX. — La Place Victor-Hugo un Jour de Marché

Collections ND 1



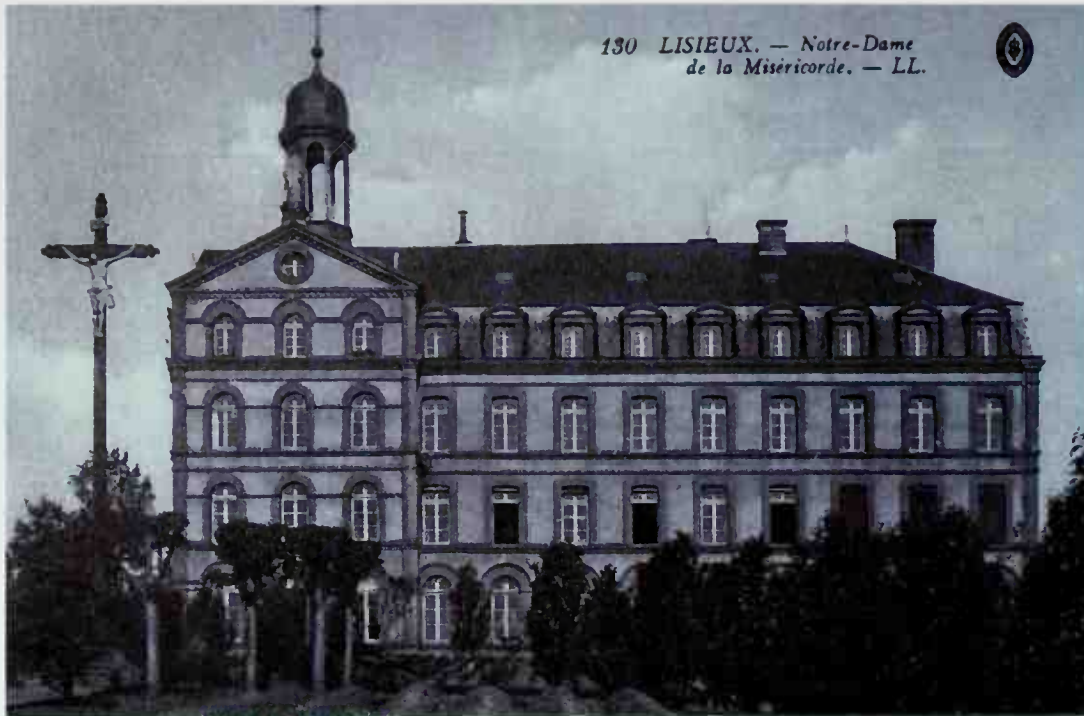
LISIEUX. — Lavoirs sur l'Orbiquet

Wash-houses on the Orbiquet

The turkey (picot) market

Located in the heart of a rich agricultural region, the town of Lisieux has always had prosperous markets. During the 19th century, on the Grand-Place, the rich produce of the Auge country was regularly sold: eggs, poultry, fruits and vegetables, as well as horses, cattle and pigs. More recently, a huge live poultry market is held on the first of August each year, at which young turkeys — "picots" — are sold to be taken home and fattened for the Christmas holidays.





The Refuge

Founded in 1873 by Father Rolau, this house was set up to take in former prostitutes. Directed by the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, the Refuge soon welcomed two hundred residents. Some of them, furthermore, asked to join the congregation.

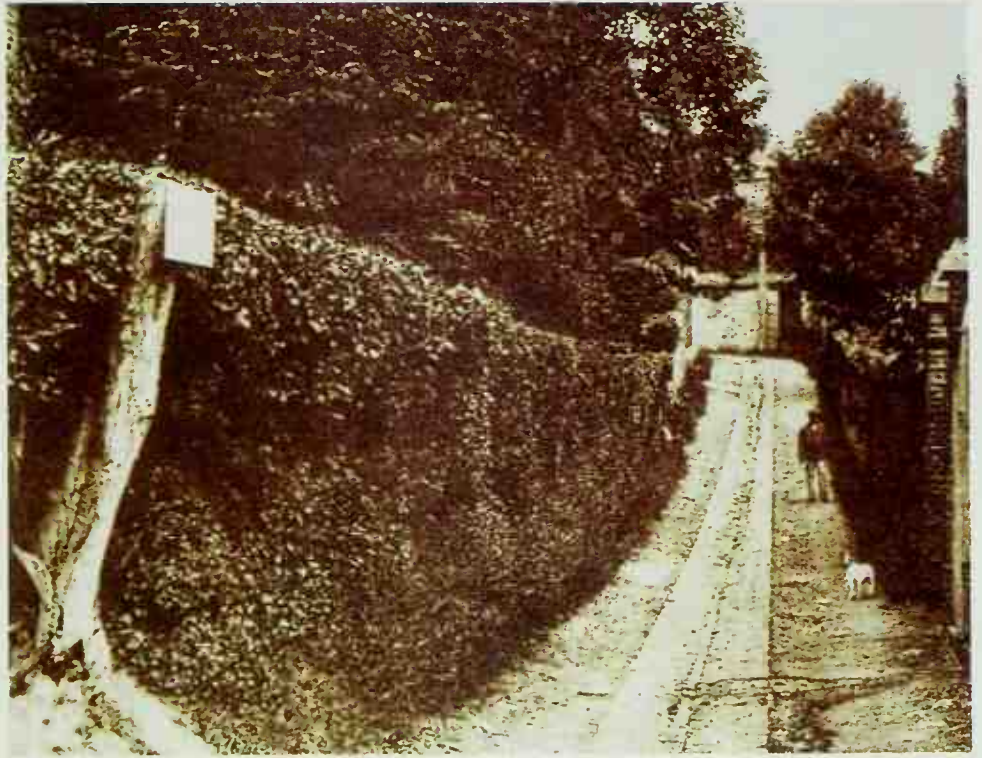
Monsieur Martin often went to the Refuge to bring some of the fish he had caught and Therese willingly went there with him. Later, she confided to

Sister Marie of the Trinity that, if she had not been accepted by the Carmel, she would have tried to commit herself to this work. "I would have so loved to talk to my companions about the mercy of God. — And how would you have hidden your 'innocence'? — I would have said that I had made a general confession after my conversion and that I was forbidden to talk about my past! My happiness would have been to pass for a 'reformed girl'."



The Delaunay barracks had been built in 1875; another one was built some time later. This permanent military presence was the result of the social unrest that had broken out in the city in July 1873.

Therese herself noted the influence on her soul of the military music she heard from Les Buissonnets, "The murmur of the wind, and even the distant sounds of the soldiers' music which reached me, gently saddened my heart."



Victoire Pasquer,
a maid at Les Buissonnets

"Buissonnets Lane" began at the national highway leading to Pont-l'Évêque, ran along the Etoile Garden and, then, after making a slight bend — as it still does today — it passed in front of the Martin home.

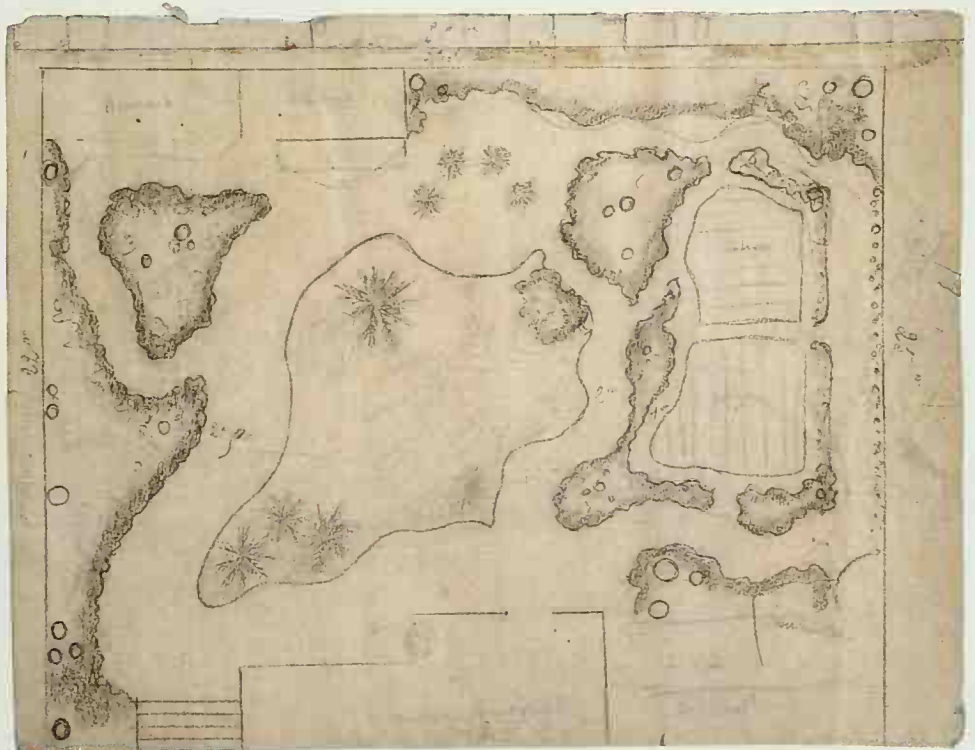
The neighbourhood was then called the New World Village because

it was located at the periphery of the town. The Martin girls named their home "Les Buissonnets." In doing so, they rediscovered, quite by accident, the name given to the lane at the end of the 18th century.

The garden at Les Buissonnets

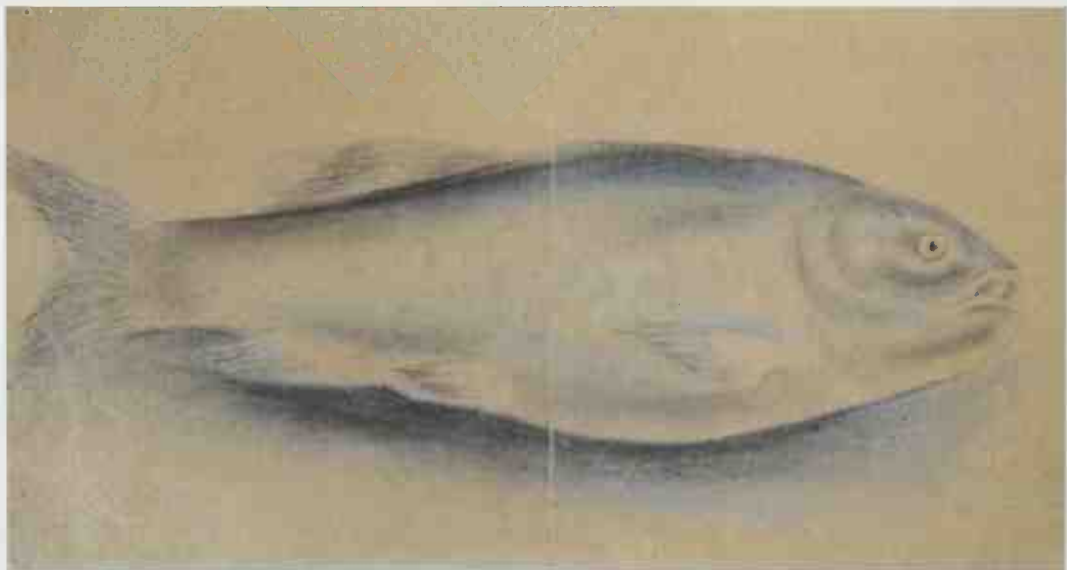
At each corner of the lawn there were clumps of yucca: their tips often punctured Therese's balloons.

On the right, near the rest rooms, was a small courtyard for the hens and two rabbit hutches.





My "dear king" used to take me fishing





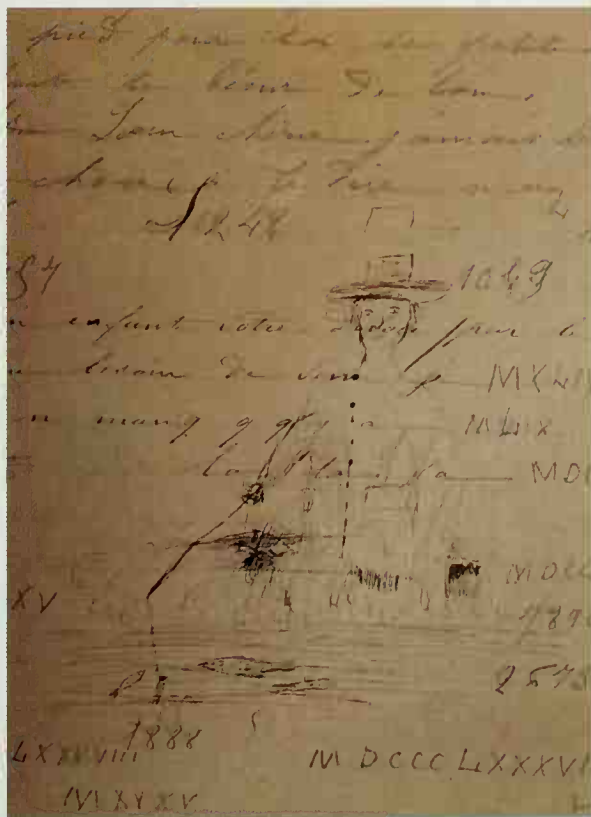
with him

A carp weighing 2.17 kilograms caught by Monsieur Martin in the Touques River, at Saint-Martin-la-Lieue, on September 8th 1879

Monsieur Martin often brought his catch of fish to the Carmel on rue de Livarot. Pauline sometimes drew a lifesize sketch of the fish. This one measured 59 centimetres.

Sketch by Therese of Monsieur Martin teasing the fish!

Therese later used the same sheet of paper to practise writing Roman numerals and to do the rough draft of a letter to Leonie (October 1887).



Throughout her life, Therese would use the symbolism of flowers to express her thought. At the beginning of her first manuscript, she wrote, "Jesus put before my eyes the book of nature and I understood that all the flowers that he created are beautiful, that the glory of the rose and the whiteness of the lily take nothing away from the scent of the little

violet or the captivating simplicity of the daisy. I understood that if all the little flowers wanted to be roses, nature would lose its springtime beauty, the fields would no longer be dotted with wildflowers... Thus it is in the world of souls which is Jesus' garden. [...]

"Just as the sun simultaneously shines down on the giant cedars and

on each little flower as if it were alone on earth, so too does Our Lord take care of each soul in particular, as if there were no other like it. And just as in nature all the seasons are arranged to make the humblest daisy bloom on the appointed day, so too everything corresponds to the good of each soul."

I so loved the countryside, the flowers



Celine, Therese and Leonie at Pont-l'Eveque
Sketch by Father Lepelletier

Curate at Saint-Pierre cathedral from 1878 to 1888, Father Lepelletier was Monsieur Martin's regular confessor and then Therese's after she left the Abbey school (1886-1888). On June

16th 1887, he went fishing with the Martin family. That day, Therese lent him her sketchbook and he sketched the silhouette of the teenager busy picking flowers.





The church at Oully-le-Vicomte,
on the banks of the Touques River

Monsieur Martin loved to fish along
the banks of the Touques River.

“Sometimes I would try to fish
with my short line, but I preferred to
sit down alone on the flowered grass.
Then my thoughts were indeed pro-
found and, without knowing what it
was to meditate, my soul was im-
mersed in real prayer. [...] Earth
seemed to me a place of exile and I
would dream of heaven.”



Etoile Garden

It extended along the road to Pont-l'Eveque to the area occupied today by an apartment building and a parking lot located on the left as you go up to Les Buissonnets. The entrance was situated on Buissonnets Lane.

Planted with magnificent, exotic trees that stood in the middle of the perfectly maintained lawns, this park was created in 1778 by Monsieur Caumont, formerly the doctor of Louis XV. It was purchased in 1824 by a company of forty stockholders who rented access to a certain number of pass-holders — the Martin, Guerin and Maudelonde families among others. Therese often came here. The annual pass cost thirty francs and entitled the pass-holder to pick flowers!

Pauline's sketch of Celine, whom Monsieur Martin liked to call "intrepid," perched on the branch of a tree in the garden at Semalle.



The church at Ouilley-le-Vicomte
 Sketched by Therese
 on April 12th 1887

"Every afternoon I went for a little walk with papa. Together we would visit the Blessed Sacrament, each day visiting a new church."



One of Therese's dolls

One day Therese used one of her dolls to confide her desire to become a Carmelite. During recreation she kissed Sister Henriette's veil, saying, "Pauline has a veil like that! — And you? Would you like to have one also? Would you like to be a Carmelite like her?" Therese dared not answer, but the next day she showed her the doll that Pauline had dressed as a Carmelite.



Therese at the age of eight with her sister Celine (1881)

This was the year Therese entered the Abbey school. The skipping rope Therese is holding was, along with the swing, her favourite game because she very much liked the movement. "Higher," she would tell her father or her sister when they pushed the swing, "so I can see Mother Godet's bonnet." She was their neighbour at Les Buissonnets and would work in her garden with a cotton bonnet on her head. You can still see the two hooks on a beam in the shed where the swing was hung.

I enjoyed setting up little altars



Even when Therese was fourteen years old, there were all kinds of things in her room. "It was a real bazaar, a collection of pious articles and curios, a garden and an aviary."



Les Buissonnets was located in Saint-Jacques parish. Upon arriving in Lisieux, Monsieur Martin paid a visit to the well-known Father Delatroette, pastor there since 1867. Monsieur Martin expressed his desire to rent for the year, as was the custom, seats that would allow his five daughters, the maid and himself to follow the services. But there were no places

available in the nave of the church. At Saint-Pierre cathedral, on the other hand, Monsieur Martin found there were seats available in the little chapel dedicated to Saint Joseph of Cupertino, in the apse to the right of the main altar. Through the choir grill, the Martin children were able to follow closely the liturgy of the mass and Sunday Vespers. After the reading of

the gospel, the whole family went to sit in the nave to listen to the sermon. The first sermon Therese understood was one on the Passion delivered by Father Ducellier, the curate who would bear her first confession and who later became the archpriest of the cathedral. Once the sermon was over, the family returned to their seats.



Saint-Pierre cathedral

The cathedral replaced a Romanesque church consecrated to Saint Peter. Construction on the new building began in 1149 under Bishop Arnould, upon his return from the Second Crusade where he had accompanied King Louis VII. Completed in 1250, the cathedral features a central ridge turret, characteristic of Norman Gothic architecture.

The late Gothic apsidal chapel was built between 1432 and 1442 by Pierre Cauchon, then Bishop of Lisieux. At the end of the 19th century, it was generally believed that the bishop had had this Marian chapel built "in expiation for the iniquitous judgment rendered against Joan of Arc." Thus stated Therese's geography textbook which is on display in the window at Les Buissonnets.

The confessional

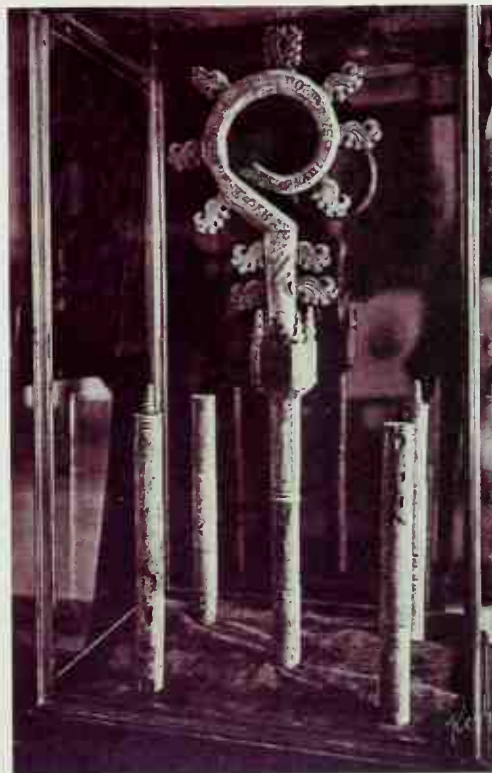
The first time Therese knelt here, at the age of seven, she could not see over the arm rest. Father Ducellier had to ask her to stand up! "Upon leaving the confessional, I was so happy and so light, for I had never before felt such joy in my soul. Afterwards, I returned to confession on all the major feasts and it was always a real joy for me each time I went."

Later, during the eighteen months when she experienced a serious attack of scrupulosity, she would accuse herself only of those sins which her godmother, Marie, would authorize her to say. Thus, her confessor did not know that his penitent was scrupulous!

We know how this trial ended in October 1886, when Marie entered Carmel: Therese had recourse to the intercession of her four brothers and sisters who had died early in life. She was thereupon delivered from her scrupulosity.



*The first sermon I understood
was a sermon on the Passion*



Episcopal crozier
of Pierre Cauchon,
Bishop of Lisieux (1432-1442)
(Vieux Lisieux Museum)

In 1931, during excavations of the apsidal chapel, the prelate's ivory crozier was found placed on his leaden casket. When he died in Ronen, he was brought back to his see, where, at the time of his burial, they placed on his casket the sign of his former authority.

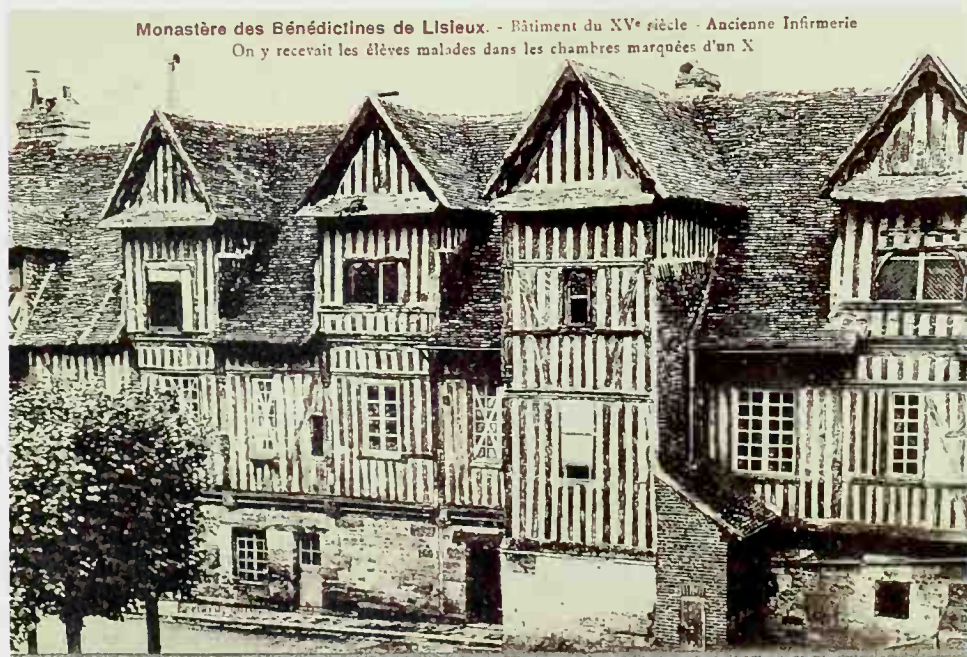
The diocese of Lisieux disappeared in 1890 as a result of a new law which stipulated that there could be only one diocese per department.



The school dormitory

Therese slept in this dormitory only once, during the retreat in preparation for her first communion.

The five saddest years



On October 3rd 1881, Therese, eight-and-a-half years old, began her studies as a day student at the boarding school run by the Benedictine nuns of Lisieux. She entered the fourth level, the 'green' class (colour of the uniform belt). The daily trip — about 1.5 kilometres — was made on foot with Celine and their cousins Jeanne and Marie, accompanied by Marcelline, the Guerin's maid. They arrived at eight in the morning and left around six in the evening. What a joy for Therese, when her father himself came to meet the little group at the end of the day!

She would later write that these years were the saddest of her life. Envied by her companions for her academic success, she did not much like the noisy games during recreation; she preferred to tell stories.



of my life

An afternoon at Mont Cassin

This is what the Benedictines called the undulating part of their property where the students could go on their days off. Because she did not much like

group games, Therese went to pick flowers on Thursday afternoons in Etoile Garden or stayed at Les Buissonnets to play cards with her cousin Marie Guerin.

The Abbey of Notre-Dame-du-Pre is one of the oldest monasteries in lower Normandy. In 1046, William the Conqueror gave the Benedictine nuns possession of a modest piece of land called Saint-Desir. After the turmoil of the Revolution, Napoleon permitted them to return to their abbey with the stipulation that they open an educational establishment.

The residential school accepted about eighty students grouped into six classes (red, green, violet, orange, blue and white). Each class, which was itself divided into two groups, had only a dozen students.

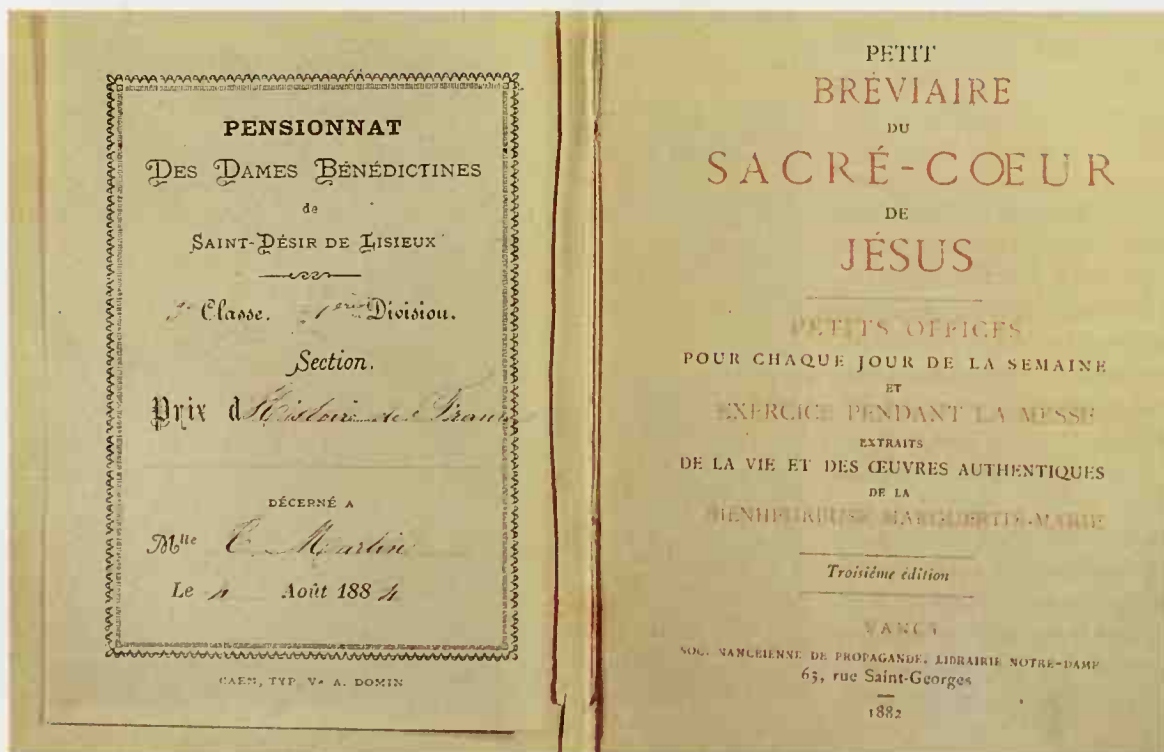




The seventy-four students of the Abbey in 1880

In the second row from the front, counting from left to right, the fifth child is Marie Guerin, the seventh is Celine Martin, the last is Jeanne Guerin; in the fifth row, the fifth is Leonie Martin.

Summer vacation lasted two months. In 1884, it ran from Monday August 4th, the day of the distribution of awards, to Monday October 3rd, the day the new school session began.



PENSIONNAT
 DES DAMES BÉNÉDICTINES
 de
 SAINT-DÉSIR DE LISIEUX
 ———
 2^e Classe. 1^{re} Division.
 Section.
 Prix d'Histoire de France
 DÉCERNÉ A
 M^{lle} C. Martin
 Le 1^{er} Août 1884

CAEN, IMP. V. A. DOMIN

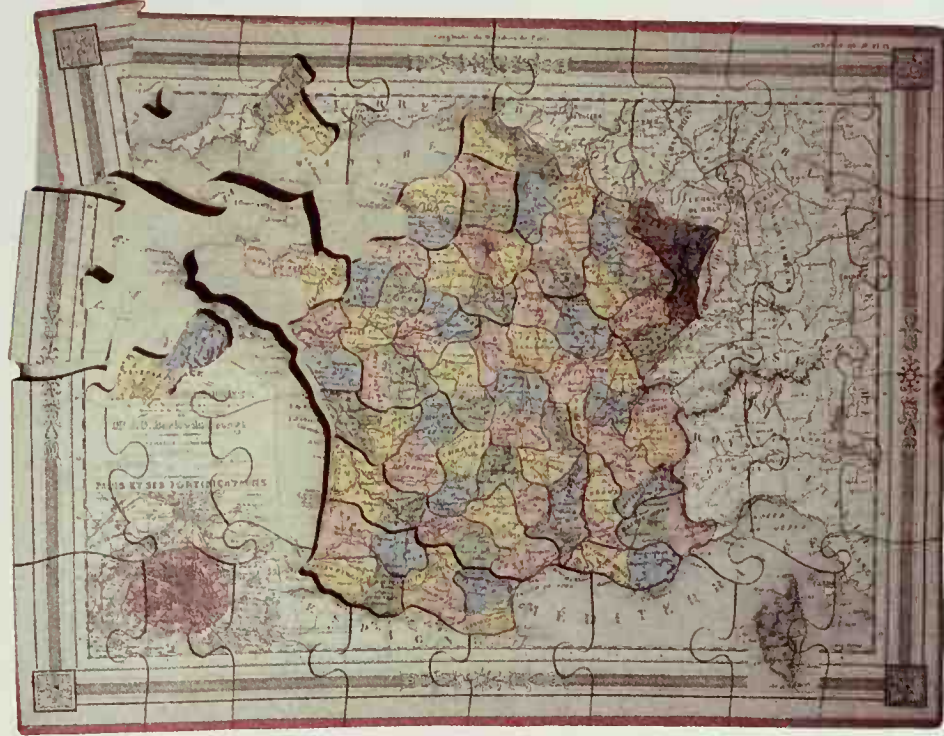
PETIT
 BRÉVIAIRE
 DU
 SACRÉ-COEUR
 DE
 JÉSUS
 ———
 PETITS OFFICES
 POUR CHAQUE JOUR DE LA SEMAINE
 ET
 EXERCICE PENDANT LA MESSE
 EXTRAITS
 DE LA VIE ET DES ŒUVRES AUTHENTIQUES
 DE LA
 BÉNÉDICTINE MARQUETTE-MARIE

Troisième édition

VANVES

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1882



Therese greatly enjoyed history, geography... and catechism. She had a harder time with math and spelling, which sometimes resulted in a much lower weekly average. Nor did she regularly receive, at the end of the month, the scarlet palm awarded to

the students who had won the silver palm for four consecutive weeks. She was then inconsolable. She experienced the same emotion when she was not able to answer a question. She cried for nothing, and then cried for having cried.

Raine Carre.

Pp. 76.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 27.16 \quad | \quad 46 \\
 \underline{16} \quad \quad \quad 86 \\
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 000
 \end{array}$$

Analyse Logique. ii.

Les enfants qui sont obéissants sont amis du bon Dieu.

Les enfants sont amis du bon Dieu.

P. Elle exprime l'objet un sans complément par elle-même.

P. Tous ses termes sont exprimés.

D. Ils le sont dans l'ordre ordinaire.

S. Il n'exprime qu'un seul objet du jugement.

In. Il n'a pas de complément.

V. Existant par lui-même.

Ab. Il n'exprime qu'une seule manière d'être du sujet.

C. Apart pour comp. int. bon Dieu.

Qui sont obéissants.

P. S. Elle commence par qui. — P. D. Sur sujet simple. In.

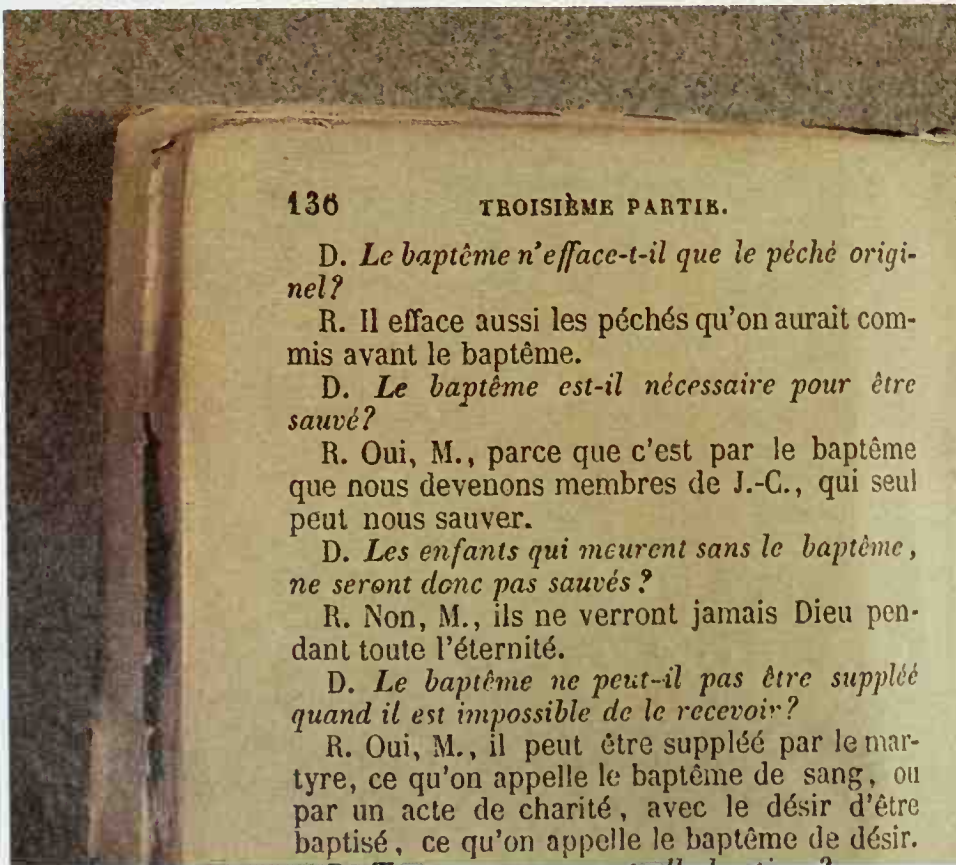
S. V. Existant par lui-même obéissants. Ab. In.

Homework completed in early 1888. The garlands with which she decorated her work are evidence of Therese's delight at entering Carmel soon.



The Abbey Chapel

In the foreground, at the end of the students' benches, can be seen the stalls for the religious.



Therese's catechism

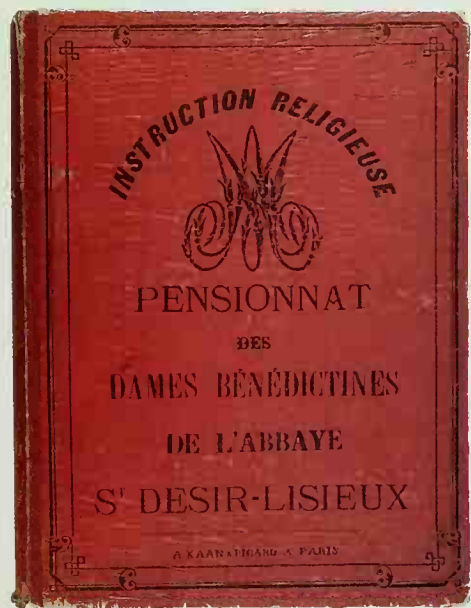
It was widely taught at the time that children who died without having been baptized could not enjoy the happiness of heaven but went to limbo. Therese strongly disagreed with this 'theological opinion' which has never been a Church teaching.

Mother Saint Francis de Sales, who taught Therese catechism, recalled, "One day [probably in 1884], when I was explaining the lesson on baptism, Therese stopped me, 'But then, the little children who die without baptism will never see God? Never? Never? But they have not sinned?' I repeated the formal answer of the catechism. This did not appease my dear little one who immediately said, with great sadness, 'But, not to see God is terrible; since the greatest happiness is to see God, they will never be happy!'... Then, after some words of regret, this exclamation, 'Well, since God can do everything, if I were God I would show myself!'"



Father Louis-Victor Domin
(1843-1918)

He was chaplain at the Abbey for forty-four years. Because of Therese's interest in her catechism lessons and the accuracy of her answers, he had nicknamed Therese his "little doctor." It was he who preached the retreat in preparation for her first communion and for her second communion the following year.



Celine Martin's catechism
of perseverance (25.5 x 19 cm)

The students copied down the lessons dictated by the chaplain, in a beautiful notebook provided by the school. Therese did not have to do this; she used Celine's notebook.



Procession dress

Therese wore it to participate in the Corpus Christi processions.

Pauline
before her entrance into Carmel



Saint-Jacques church,
restored after the bombings of 1944

The church dates from 1540. Begun in 1496, it was built with the help of the Le Vallois, rich nobles of Mesnil-Guillaume, and under the watchful eye of foreman Guillot de Samaison, who insisted on being paid by the day like a simple worker.

*I was going to lose
my second mother*

By chance, during the summer of 1882, Therese overheard a family conversation and learned that Pauline, her "second mother," was preparing to enter Carmel in October. She had naively assumed that Pauline would wait for her to enter the cloister. Consternation followed. She was going to become an orphan a second time!

Therese then understood that she also was called to bide herself one day in the shadow of Carmel. Not to join Pauline, but for Jesus alone. Monday October 2nd 1882 was a tearful day. Therese kissed Pauline a last time before her departure for the Carmel on rue de Livarot, while she herself went to the Abbey to begin a new school year.



The statue of
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
(Saint-Pierre cathedral)

It was while praying before this statue on February 16th 1882 that Pauline discovered her vocation: she was not going to become a Visitandine like her maternal aunt, but would enter Carmel. At first she thought of the Carmel in Caen, but soon learned that there was room for her in

Lisieux. At the time, this statue was located in Saint-Jacques church where Canon Delatroette, the pastor, had celebrated, in October 1881, a triduum — three days of prayer — to begin a year in honour of Teresa of Avila on the occasion of the tricentenary of her death.

*Aurovoir ma Mère Chérie
je vous embrasse bien tendrement
comme je vous aime.
Votre Petite fille
Chér'sita*

Conclusion of
a letter Therese sent
to Mother Marie de Gonzague
in November–December 1882

During the summer of 1882, Therese
arranged to be alone in the parlour
with the prioress and confided her
secret desire to her: to become a
Carmelite like her sister. Mother Marie
de Gonzague did not say no.

A few weeks later, she even pro-
posed to the child that she take the
name of Sister Therese of the Child
Jesus, in memory of Teresita of Jesus,
Teresa of Avila's niece, who had en-
tered the cloister at age nine. Therese
was radiant, for that was the name she
had dreamed of.

She was proud to use this name to
sign the letter she sent to Mother Marie de
Gonzague in the following weeks.



Teresita,
Teresa of Avila's niece,
who entered Carmel as
a boarder at age nine

Therese at age eight
(see p. 38)



The ravishing smile of the Blessed Virgin



Having skipped a grade, Therese found herself in the 'violet' class when she returned to school in 1882. This class prepared the children for first communion. This prospect helped Therese to deal better with her second mother's departure for Carmel. A recent diocesan regulation, however, stipulated that new communicants must turn eleven years of age during the year in order to be admitted to the Lord's table. Therese was born two days too late to be eligible in 1883. There was an outpouring of tears. At

The room where Therese was cured on May 13th 1883

the Carmel, on Thursday afternoons, the adults spoke with Pauline through the parlour grills. The youngest had only two or three short minutes at the end. Another outpouring of tears!

Beginning in December 1882, the child was often sick and, on Easter evening, she was overcome by nervous tremors that would last six weeks. The child, wrote Dr. Gayral, "reacts to

an emotional frustration with a neurotic attack." She had endured such frustration since Pauline's departure for Carmel six months earlier. Because of her anguish at being abandoned by her second mother, she began to regress, wanting to be "doted over like a baby." The whole family joined together to obtain a cure from heaven for the child. A novena of masses was celebrated at the Parisian sanctuary of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires. On May 13th 1883, the feast of Pentecost, Therese turned toward the statue near her bed. "All of a sudden, the Blessed Virgin seemed beautiful to me, more beautiful than anything I had ever seen, her face radiated ineffable goodness and tenderness, but what penetrated to the depths of my soul was the ravishing smile of the Blessed Virgin."

Therese was cured, but she would have to convince herself that the Virgin's smile was not an illusion resulting from her illness and her delirious state. Her scruples in this regard would not disappear until November 1887, at Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, just before her pilgrimage to Rome. Furthermore, she wrote, "for a long time after my cure, I thought that my sickness was deliberate and this was a real martyrdom for my soul." In other words, she felt guilty for having fallen into infantile behaviour during her illness. She was definitively delivered from this feeling of guilt when she went to confession to Father Pichon on May 28th 1888.

The Virgin of the Smile



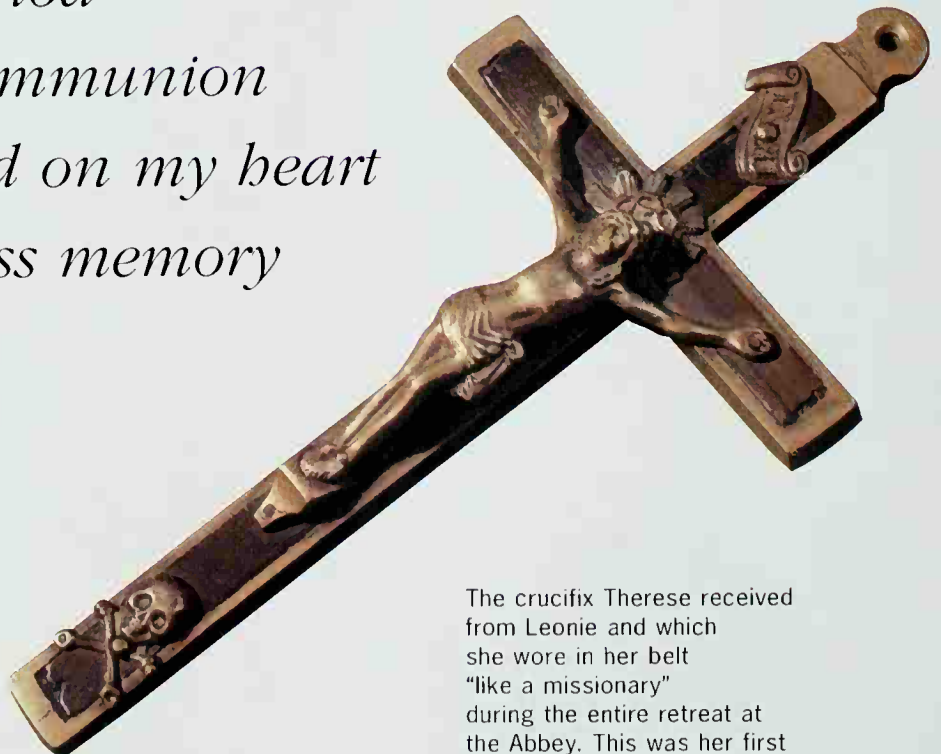


The cover of the notebook composed by Pauline to help Therese prepare for her first communion

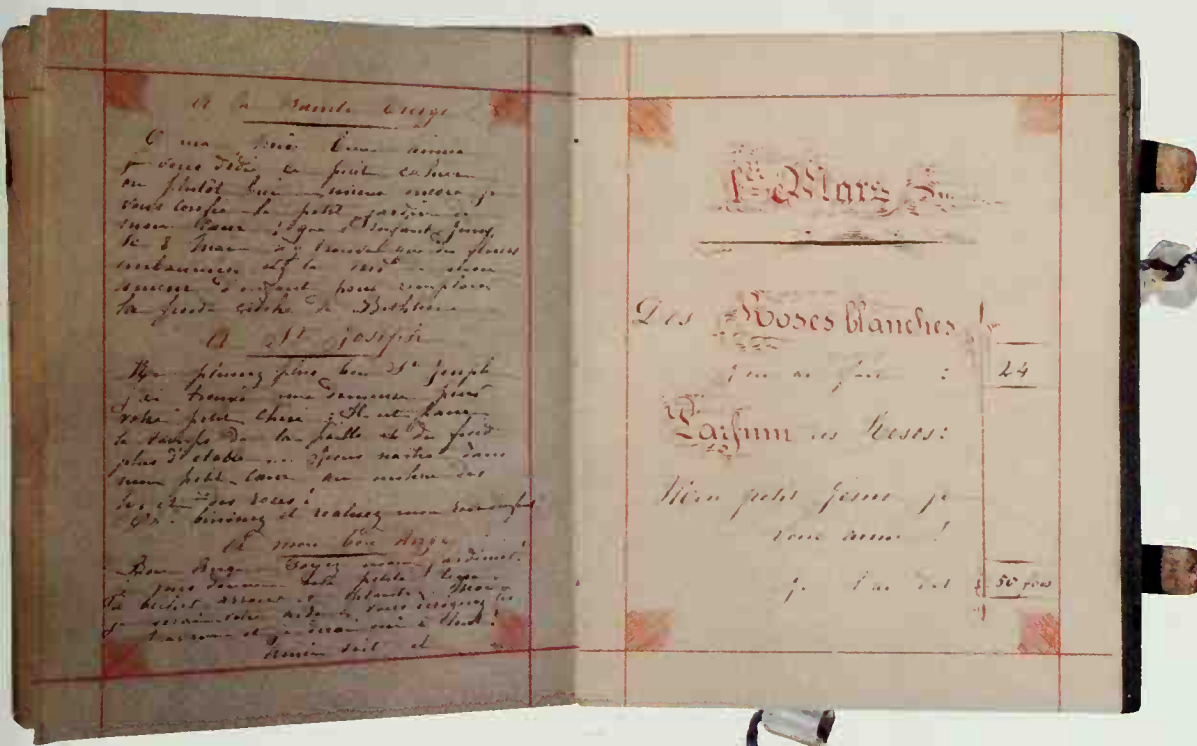


The first page of the notebook

*The period
of my first communion
remains engraved on my heart
like a cloudless memory*



The crucifix Therese received from Leonie and which she wore in her belt "like a missionary" during the entire retreat at the Abbey. This was her first experience as a boarder



The number of flowers corresponds to the number of sacrifices accomplished. The next figure expresses the number of invocations addressed to the Lord

With six other students from her class, Therese prepared to make her first communion on Thursday May 8th 1884, in the chapel of the Benedictines.

To prepare herself, Therese made use of a little notebook composed by Pauline. Each day, she was invited to offer Jesus the flowers of her sacrifices and to turn her heart to him often. At home, Marie also encouraged her to renounce herself. Therese missed no opportunity to do so: from March 1st to May 7th, she counted up 1,949 sacrifices, an average of 28 each day. She repeated 2,773 times the invocations suggested in the notebook, about 40 daily.

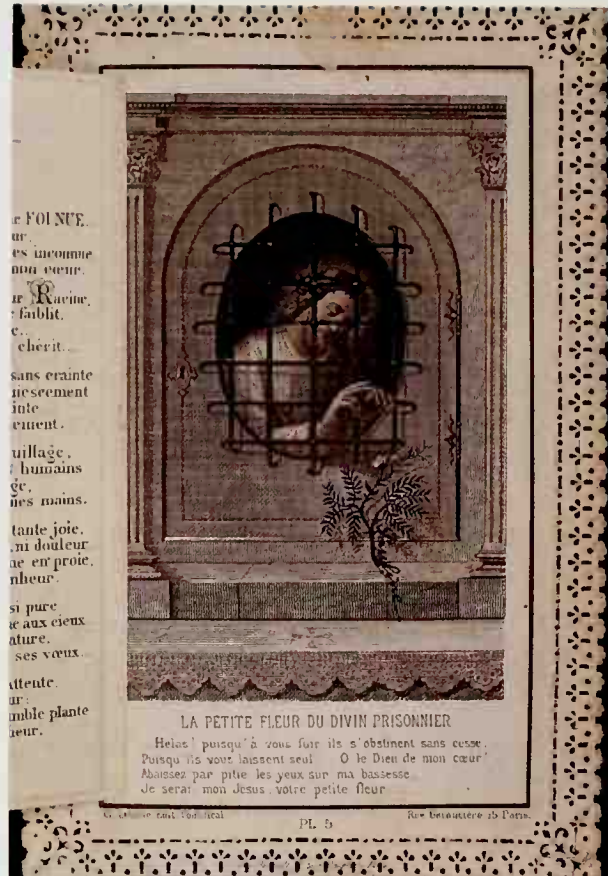
At the end of the retreat preached by Father Domin, she made three resolutions, "I will not get discouraged; I will say a Memorare to the Blessed Virgin every day; I will try to humble my pried [sic]."



The chaplet of practices used by Therese

She used it to count the sacrifices accomplished during the day. In the evening, she 'pushed up' the beads she had 'pulled down' each time she had accomplished some effort to please Jesus. There were thirty beads.

Last page of the notebook composed by Pauline who called her sister by her future Carmelite name: Theresita (see p. 50)

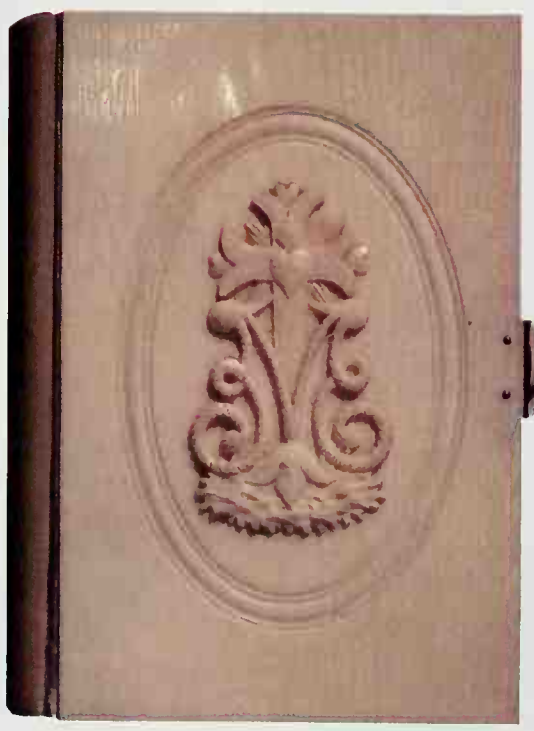


A picture that Pauline had sent to her little sister for her final preparation. Therese alluded to it in her manuscript

“The little flower of the Divine Prisoner told me so many things that I was immersed in them. Seeing Pauline’s name written at the bottom of the little flower, I wished Therese’s name could be there too and so I offered myself to Jesus to be his little flower.”

We can actually see Pauline’s name written in pencil on the stem.

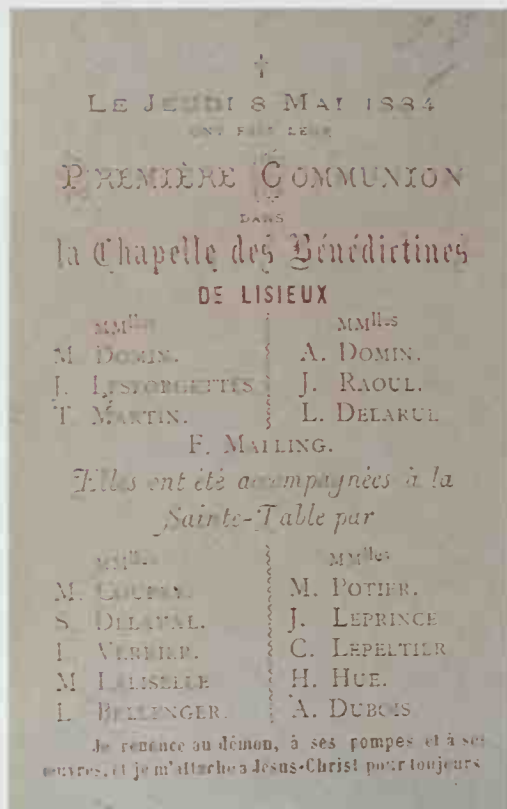
The pictures of the times often emphasized the indifference of Christians regarding Christ’s presence in the Tabernacle. Jesus remains alone behind the door, like a prisoner in his cell: no one comes to visit him. The bars in the picture irresistibly brought to the mind of the child the grill of the Carmel behind which Pauline would make herself prisoner and hide herself definitively. On May 8th, in fact, in the chapter room of the monastery on rue de Livarot, Sister Agnes would make her religious profession. Therese hoped to join her there as soon as possible so that she too might offer the flower of her love to the “Divine Prisoner of the Tabernacle.”



The missal Therese received as a gift the day of her communion

Therese’s first communion dress





Souvenir card given by the religious at the boarding school

Among the seven first communicants were: Marie and Alexandrine Domin, the chaplain's nieces; Jeanne Raoul and Felicie Malling, Therese's two favourite classmates.

That same day, ten other students renewed the promises of their first communion made a year or two earlier.

*Mama's
absence
caused me
no pain*



The card painted by Sister Agnes

"Pauline had sent me a beautiful card... I never tired of admiring it and having everyone else admire it."

The card given by Leonie

The dedication on the back reads, "Your little sister who loves you so tenderly. Leonie, child of Mary."

The text on the card may have inspired Therese's 1894 Christmas play, *The Angels at the Crib*.

During her thanksgiving, Therese felt tears flow down her face. Those around her misunderstood the orphan's tears. Several of her companions thought that she was crying because she missed her mother: "Oh no! Mama's absence caused me no pain the day of my first communion: Wasn't heaven in my soul, and hadn't Mama taken her place there long before? Thus in receiving Jesus' visit, I was also receiving my dear mother's."



The card sent from Paris by Father Pichon

Therese had first met Father Pichon in August 1883. At the time of her communion, she associated him with her joy, "I will soon be a Carmelite," she wrote to him, "and you will be my director." Father Pichon had a strong devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Recalling her first communion, Therese confided, "It was a kiss of love, I felt myself loved, and I replied, 'I love you and I give myself to you forever.'" This act of love closely resembles the prayer written on the card. In sending her this card, the Jesuit had written to the child, "Ask for the grace to love him as much as he wants to be loved by your heart."

Therese was already aware of her fragility. To be faithful to the resolutions she had taken, she placed her freedom in the hands of Jesus, and she gave him her heart.



The sanctuary of the Carmel

At the end of the afternoon, the whole family went to the Carmel and met, in the parlour, with Sister Agnes who had made her profession that same morning in the hands of the prioress, in the chapter room. "I saw my Pauline become the bride of Jesus, I saw her with her white veil like mine and her crown of roses." On July 16th, Sister Agnes exchanged the white veil of the novice for the black veil of the professed nun.

"I was not insensitive to the family celebration that took place the evening of my first communion: the beautiful watch my King gave me made me very happy."

Monsieur Martin's gift



The students prepared for their confirmation with a retreat day. Because of a last-minute problem, Bishop Hugonin could not come until the day following the designated one. Therese was very happy to take

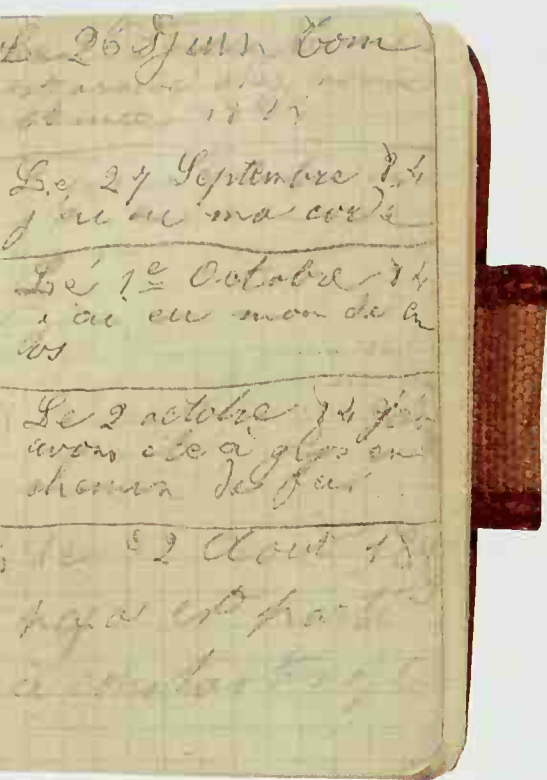
advantage of this extra day of solitude to be better prepared to receive this "sacrament of love." "Ab! how joyous was my soul! Like the apostles, I was happily awaiting the visit of the Holy Spirit!"



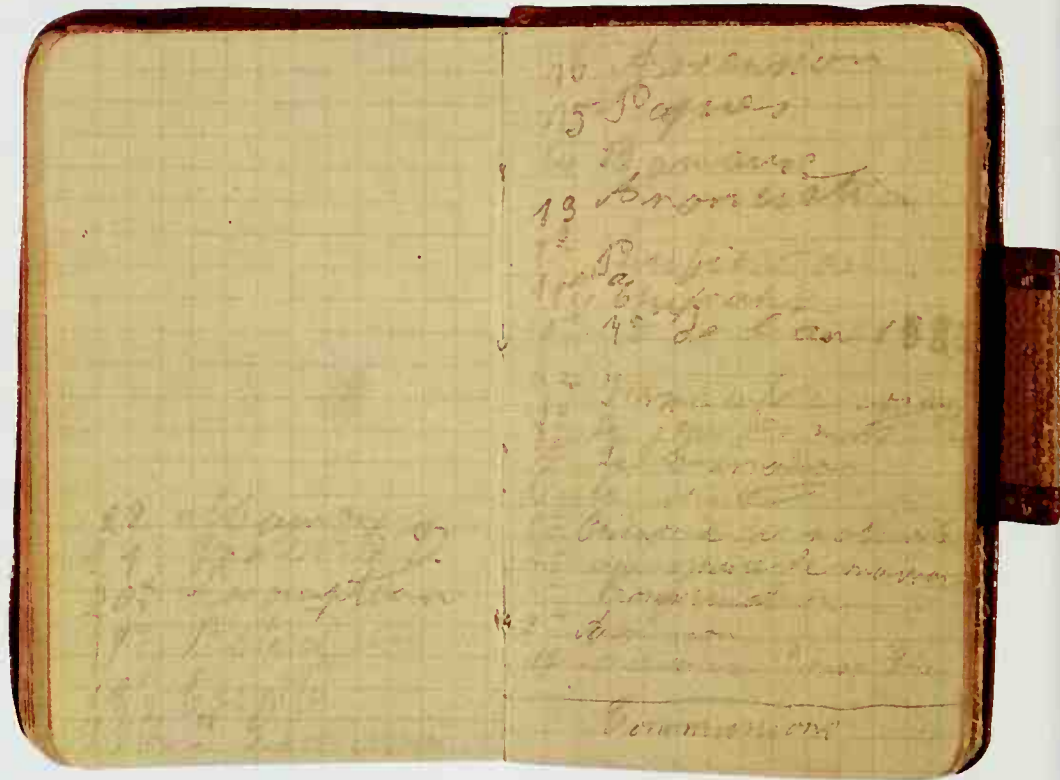
A card in three sections given to Therese by Leonie, her confirmation sponsor

On the right-hand side, Leonie wrote the date of her goddaughter's confirmation: Saturday, June 14th 1884.

On May 8th, Therese had pronounced the act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin in the name of her companions. Father Domin's two nieces had been chosen to do so, but they urged the chaplain to give this honour to Therese because she was an orphan.



In a little notebook, Therese liked to jot down important dates in her life. The arrival of the spaniel at Les Buissonnets on June 26th 1884 inaugurated the series.



At the end of the notebook, Therese noted all the dates on which she was permitted to receive communion:

from May 8th 1884 to August 28th 1885, a total of twenty-two times. Hunger for the eucharist is taking hold of her heart.



*Tom
came to live
with us*

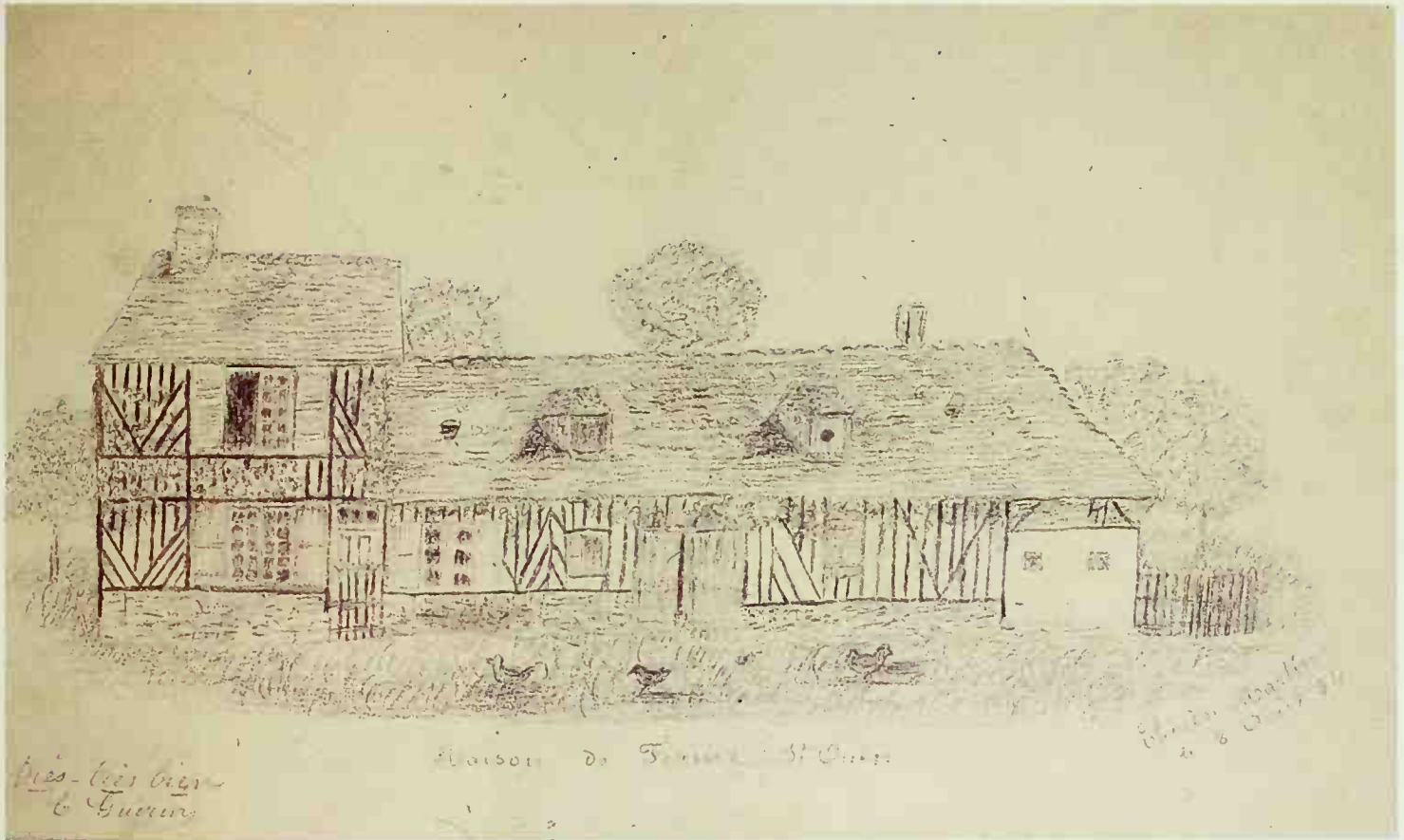
Tom, Therese's faithful walking companion

Father Domin dared permit Therese to approach the communion table again less than two weeks after her first communion. This was an exceptional privilege at the time. During this second eucharistic encounter, Ascension Day (May 22nd 1884), a line from Saint Paul came to her mind, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

After another communion, a prayer from the Imitation came spontaneously to her lips, "O Jesus! Ineffable sweetness,

change all the consolations of the earth into bitterness for me!" She would eventually understand that Jesus was already leading her to desire the grace he would give her some time later, that of not allowing herself to be enslaved by overly intense friendships with classmates, in order to be able to love him always, above everything.

Nevertheless, this did not prevent Therese from enjoying the simple joys of vacations in the country or walks with her dog.



Drawing by Therese of the farmhouse at Saint-Ouen

In August 1884, Therese drew this picture of the main farm building.

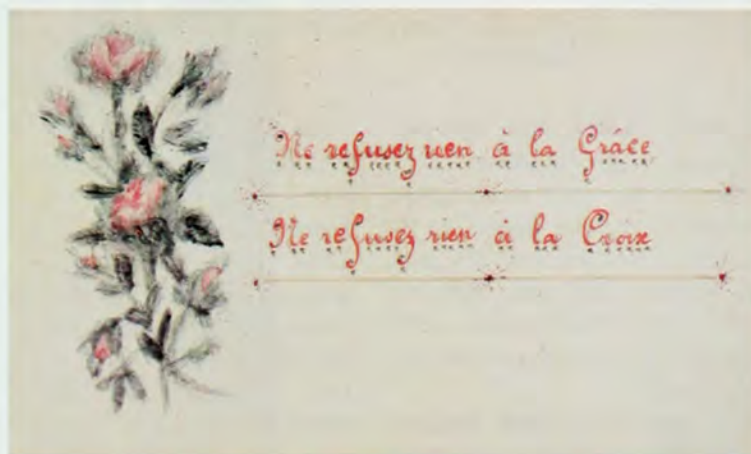
"It was so hot that day," wrote Madame Guerin, "no one wanted to go very far." Still, every evening, the children watched at milking time and each one drank a glass of fresh, warm milk. "I believe this is a good remedy for whooping cough."

Three years in a row, Therese came with her sisters and cousins to

Saint-Ouen-le-Pin, 10 kilometres from Lisieux, to the farm belonging to Madame Fournet, Madame Guerin's mother. The first time, in July-August 1884, she came to recover from whooping cough; the second time was in July-August 1885. These holidays at the farm, so in keeping with Therese innate love of the country, were no doubt the happiest of her childhood.



To suffer with Jesus and for Jesus



Picture done by Therese a few months after her entrance into Carmel and which she gave to Madame Guerin on her birthday (November 19th 1888)

The verse on this card reiterates the theme that no sacrifice must be refused to Jesus: "How sweet it is to suffer with Jesus and for Jesus!" On her very first card (1884), Therese had written in calligraphy, "Suffering passes; to have suffered well remains eternally."



Monsieur Martin had a talent for drawing and it is understandable that, in such a climate, his daughters likewise wanted to draw. From the beginning of the school year 1882, Celine benefited from drawing lessons given by Mademoiselle Godard. Guessing that his youngest, then aged nine, might also enjoy

drawing lessons, Monsieur Martin proposed, "And you, my little Queen, would you like to learn to draw?" Therese was about to answer yes when her godmother, Marie, cut in somewhat dryly, remarking that the house was already full of mediocre daubs that needed to be framed... Her opinion prevailed, and Therese

said not a word. However, a few weeks before her death, she reminded Celine of this incident and admitted that it had been a great sacrifice.

Nevertheless, in 1884 Therese began to paint small pictures. They are reproduced here actual size. Therese's taste for flowers is already evident.



75 LISIEUX. — La Gare. — Ligne de Trouville. — LL

Albert Grete. — Lisieux
SELECTA

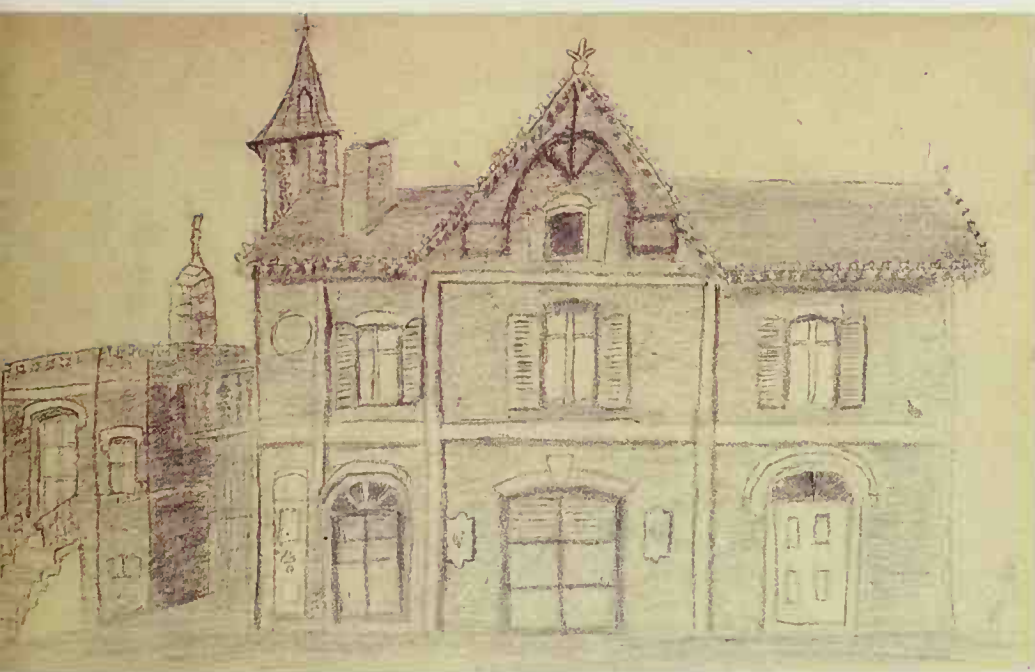
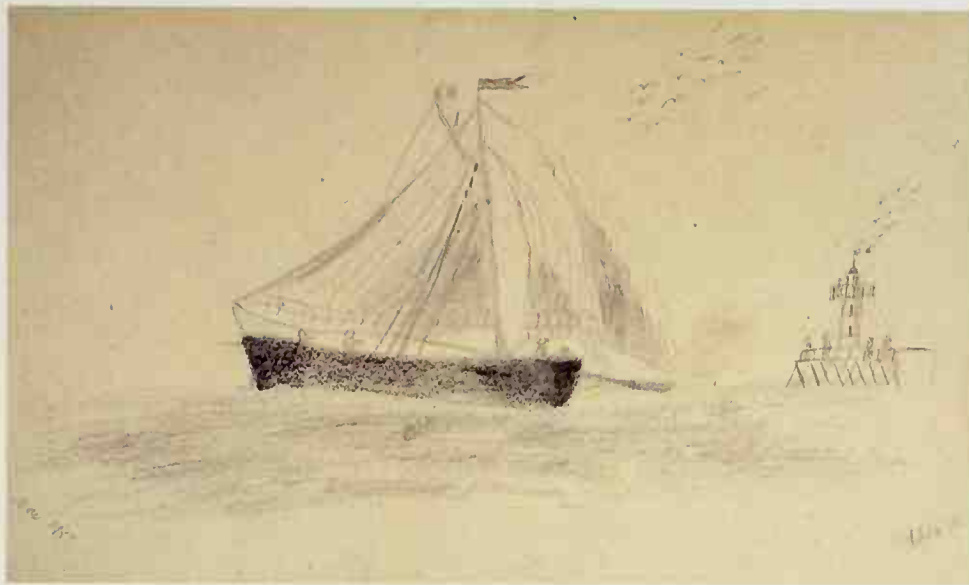
At the beginning of May 1885, during the Pentecost vacation week, Therese was once again invited to join her aunt, only this time not in the country but at the seashore. The Guerin family went to a home lent by friends in Deauville, Quai de la Touques, to enable their youngest daughter Marie to breathe in deeply the iodized air that came in from the open sea. Therese was enchanted. She was already familiar with Trouville because she had gone there several times on day trips with her father and she never tired of returning there: she loved the long walks along the beach, the liveliness of the little fishing port, but also, of course, the mass she attended each morning at the church of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, on the other side of the Quai de la Touques that separates Deauville from Trouville.

My aunt invited us to Trouville every year

On the beach at Trouville, with light blue ribbons in her hair, Therese did not go unnoticed, especially during her last visit at the end of June 1887. There she was not called "little Therese," but the "tall English girl." What an attractive young woman with her long blond hair! She was the tallest in the family (1.62 m); Pauline, the shortest of the five girls, was no more than 1.54 m tall.



60 TROUVILLE. — L'Heure du Bain. — LL.



Three pages from
Therese's sketchbook
(14.8 x 24 cm)

Therese travelled to Deauville or Trouville four times.

She sketched the *Villa Rose* (Quai de la Touques, Deauville), where she stayed on her first trip, in May 1885.

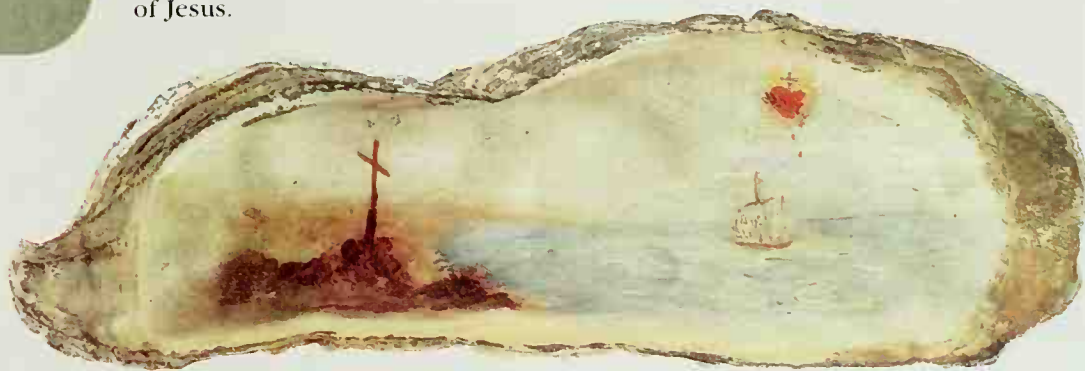




On the evening of August 8th 1878, having contemplated at length, with Pauline, a sailboat crowned by the last rays of the setting sun, Therese resolved to live always under the beaming gaze of Jesus. She understood that, to make a success of life, one had to remain in this "golden beam," to allow oneself to be illuminated by the face of Jesus. This theme appears several times in her pictorial compositions.

Painting by Therese

In each of these paintings, Therese illustrates one of her favourite themes: the heavenly body which allows the boat to sail in total security is the heart of Jesus.



Oyster shell painted by Therese

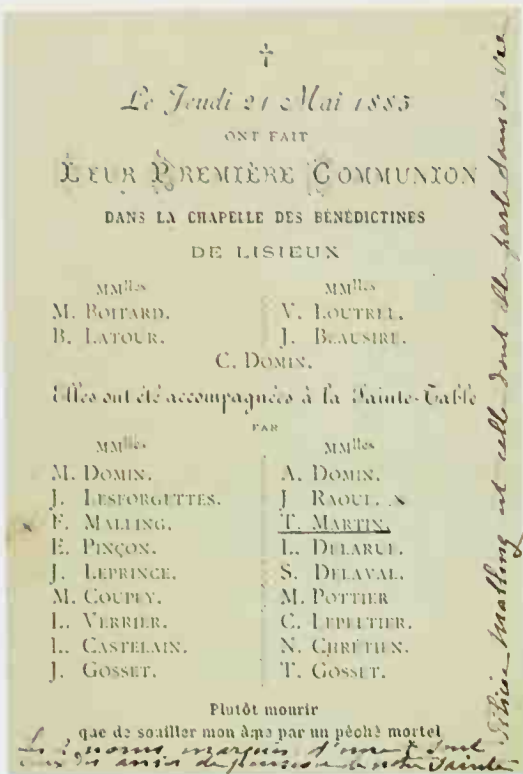


31. HONFLEUR — Chapelle de Notre-Dame-de-Grâce
 Construite au XVI^e siècle sur un terrain donné par M^{me} de Montpensier, sur l'emplacement d'une Chapelle fondée au XI^e siècle par Richard II, Duc de Normandie.

Notre-Dame de Grace chapel

Therese visited Honfleur in June 1887, with Monsieur Martin, Celine and Leonie. Beforehand, they had gone on pilgrimage to the chapel near Honfleur.

During the retreat for my second communion, I was beset by the terrible illness of scrupulosity



Celine Mallory est elle dont M. Boifard dans sa vie

Upon her return from Trouville, Therese prepared for the renewal of her first communion. Father Domin's instructions were much like those of the previous year, but this time, Therese was traumatized. "What Father told us was very frightening," she noted after the second instruction: "he spoke to us about mortal sin." The adolescent sank into an attack of scrupulosity that would last eighteen months. In all likelihood, her anxieties of conscience had to do with chastity — which would enable her to understand her cousin some years later (see p. 192). Docile as she was, Therese confessed only those sins that her godmother would let her say, so her confessors never suspected her "terrible illness." Despite her scruples, Therese continued to find happiness in everyday experiences. She again enjoyed herself that year at Saint-Ouen-le-Pin, then at Trouville — two weeks at the seashore with Celine!

A souvenir of the renewal of first communion by Therese and her companions

The verse near the bottom of the card reflects the era's obsession with the danger of mortal sin: "Better to die than to sully my soul with a mortal sin."

Therese marked an x beside the names of her two favourite classmates.

"When Therese had spoken of 'her' Jeanne, she had said it all," Celine would say later. Celine had been Jeanne Raoul's sponsor at confirmation. But, a few months later, these two classmates were no longer interested in Therese. Disappointed, she did not try to win back their affection. Later, she would thank God for thus escaping from the danger of overly exclusive adolescent friendships.

A picture Therese painted and gave to her godmother on May 21st 1885



Card given to Therese by Mother Saint-Placide on the occasion of her reception into the Association of the Children of Mary (May 31st 1887)

Therese believed, with Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, that true devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary consisted in living "in Mary," but it was rather under Mary's virginal veil that she liked to take refuge (see p. 152).



Therese at thirteen (February 1886)

This photograph is reproduced from an enlargement (28.7 x 35.2 mm) touched up by Sister Genevieve using gouache and pencil, and restored to its initial integrity in the laboratory.

At the end of October 1886, Therese benefited from a second grace of healing. Marie, her godmother, had just left for Carmel. She had no one left in whom she could confide her scruples and with whom she could prepare for confession. Consequently, she turned resolutely to her brothers and sisters who had died before her birth and begged them to obtain for her the grace of a cure for her scrupulosity. She was heard; peace flooded her soul and she understood even more how much she was loved in heaven.

But she remained hypersensitive and would cry for nothing. It was at Christmas, after midnight mass, that what she would call her "complete conversion" took place. Instead of crying at a somewhat sharp remark by her father, she held back her tears and opened the gifts before the fireplace as if her father had said nothing. She was no longer the same person. Jesus had changed her heart. "In an instant," she wrote, "the task I could not accomplish in ten years Jesus did himself, being satisfied with my good will."

This was the beginning of the third and most beautiful phase of her life. The orphan rediscovered the strength of soul she had lost at the time of her mother's death. "The strong and powerful God" of the crèche whom she had just received in communion clothed her with strength forever.

The account of the grace of Christmas 1886 from the 1895 manuscript

plénié... tous les raisonnements étaient inutiles et je ne pouvais arriver à me corriger de ce vilain défaut. Je ne sais comment je me bécotais de la douce pensée d'entrer au Carmel étant encore dans les langes de l'enfance! Il fallait que le Bon Dieu fît un petit miracle pour me faire grandir en un moment - et ce miracle il le fit au jour inoubliable de Noël, au cette nuit lumineuse qui éclaire les délices de la Trinité Sainte. Jésus le doux petit enfant d'une heure, changea la nuit de mon âme en torrent de lumière... ce cette nuit où il se fit faible et souffrant pour mon amour. Il me rendit forte et courageuse. Il me revêtit de ses armes et depuis cette nuit béni, je ne fus vaincue en aucun combat, mais au contraire je marche des victoires en victoires et commença pour ainsi dire une course de géant! 33



*On this night of light
began the third phase
of my life*



A sad saint is a sorry saint

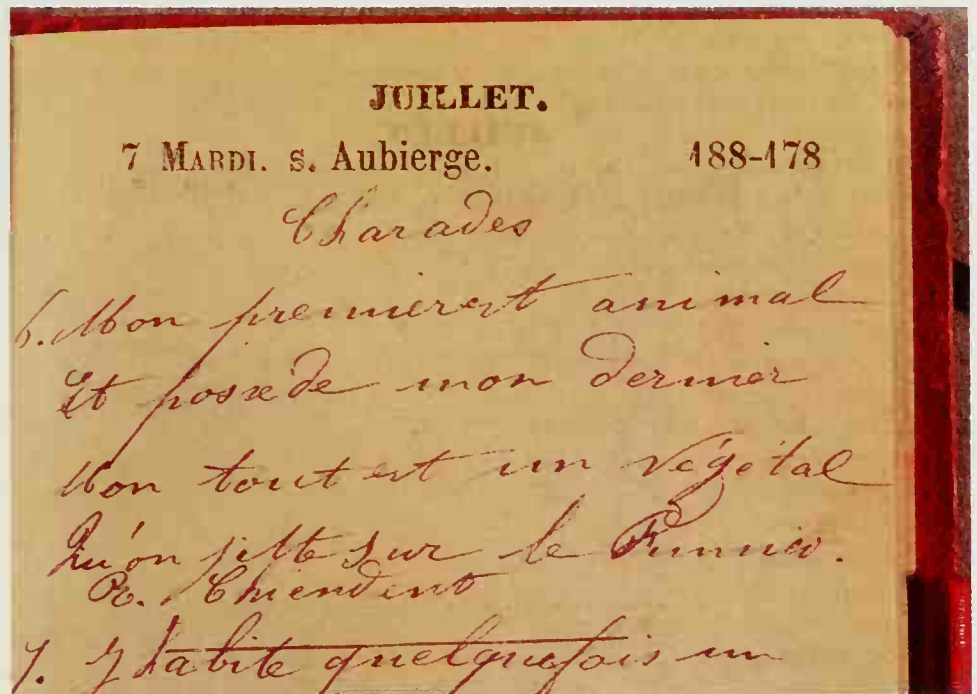
Monsieur Martin, sketched by Celine

A great nature lover, Monsieur Martin knew how to imitate bird-calls perfectly. An admirable storyteller, he willingly mimicked the gestures and into-

nation of the people he spoke about. Therese inherited this art of mimicry from him. Monsieur Martin, however, did not bequeath his magnificent voice to his youngest child.

Immediately after recalling her Christmas grace, Therese wrote, "I felt love enter my heart, the need to forget myself to please others, and from that time on I was happy." This joy was infectious. Therese appreciated more and more the saying of Saint Francis de Sales, with which she had filled a whole handwritten page the previous year: "A sad saint is a sorry saint."

Therese wrote down the riddles she heard in order to remember them



The eve of April 1st 1887, Therese gave Celine a comb for her hair. Her gift was accompanied

by a sketch in which the comb serves as a diadem for an April Fool's Day fish.

In 1887, the year she turned fourteen, Therese opened herself to the world and went from discovery to discovery. Freed from her scrupulosity and her unhealthy sensitivity, her mind developed. Everything interested her, especially the works of science and history. Celine taught her how to sketch and make models. She enthusiastically read the Conférences by Abbe Arminjon, her first book of spirituality.

On Pentecost Day, May 29th 1887, she decided to confide her great desire to her father: to enter Carmel as soon as possible. She wanted to be there by Christmas for the first anniversary of her conversion. Admirably generous, Monsieur Martin expressed no opposition to the plan. He could easily see that she was serious. Picking a blossom of saxifrage from the enclosure wall, he gave it to his youngest daughter, explaining to her that she herself was a little flower that God had always eagerly cared for.



Therese glued this precious memento on a picture of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires and placed it in her Imitation, at the chapter entitled "One must love Jesus above all else."

Image of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires (8.9 x 5.7 cm) on which Therese glued the little blossom of saxifrage picked by her father at Les Buissonnets

We know that Therese entitled her first manuscript *The Springtime Story of a Little White Flower*. In English-speaking countries she is called "the little flower of Jesus."

*I welcomed
this little flower
like a treasure*

One Sunday in July 1887, Therese received a great eucharistic grace at Saint-Pierre cathedral. At the end of the mass, a picture of the Crucified Christ stuck out of her missal. She was struck by the idea that his blood was falling to the ground without anyone

thinking of collecting it. She decided to remain at the foot of the cross for the rest of her life to receive this precious divine dew for the sake of sinners. In her heart sounded the cry of Jesus, "I thirst." It was her thirst for love.

A few days later, Therese was presented with a privileged opportunity to put her resolution into practice. On July 13th 1887, Henri Pranzini was condemned to death. She wanted to save him at any cost.



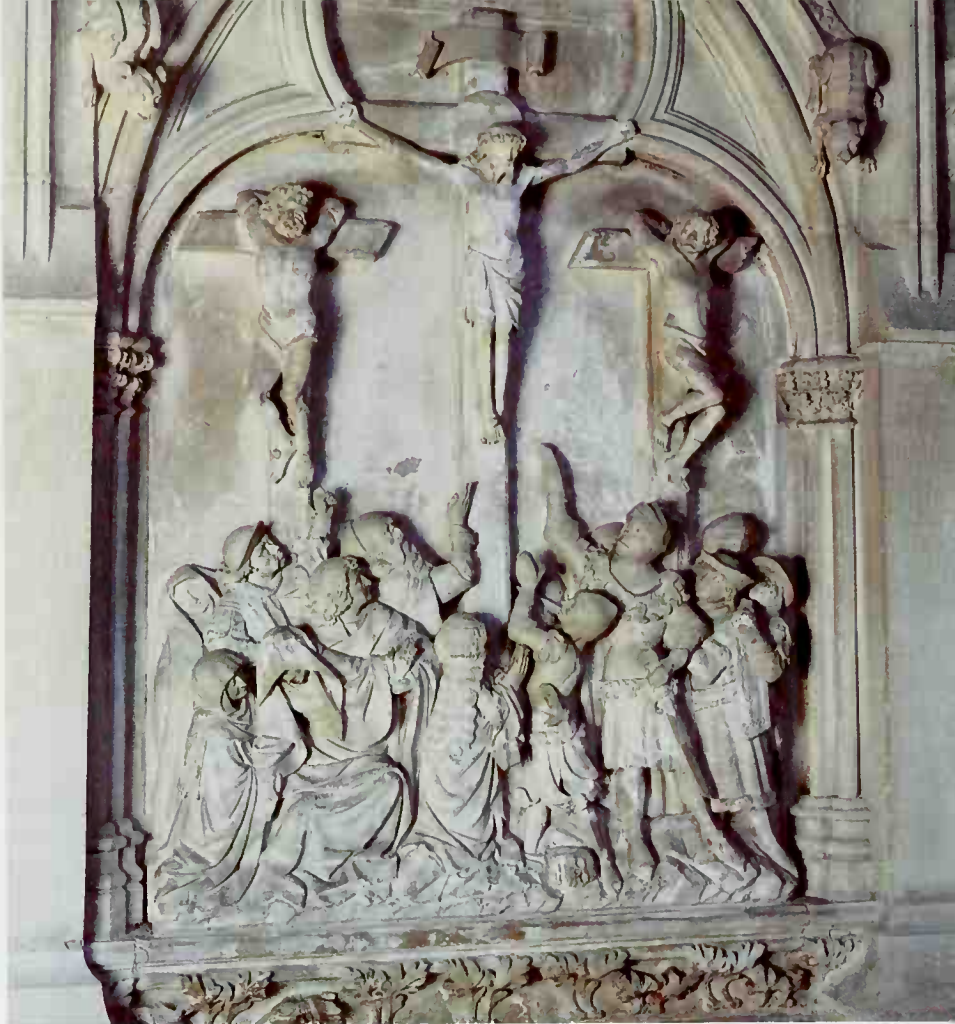
A breviary card
 composed by Therese
 for Sister Genevieve

Therese had already made a similar card for herself. The picture that Therese had in her missal in 1887 has not been found, but we know it was identical to this one.

Around the image of Christ on the cross, Therese copied two passages

from the gospel in which Jesus promises to quench our thirst.

Note that, in July 1887, Therese imagined blood flowing from the hands and feet of the Crucified Christ, although the picture she had before her did not represent his bleeding wounds.



Bas-relief found in the apsidal chapel of Saint Pierre cathedral

Therese attended mass every morning in front of this bas-relief. It reminded her that, in a flash, the "good thief" had be-

come a model of repentance. She had no right then to despair of Pranzini's salvation. He too could receive the grace of conversion 'in an instant,' just as she herself, that Christmas night, had received the grace to put aside, "in an instant," the swaddling clothes of infancy.

Pranzini was the first 'great sinner' for whom Therese gave of herself without counting the cost. In relating in great detail the triple murders he had committed on the rue Montaigne in Paris the night of March 19th-20th, the newspapers of the time insisted on the criminal's particularly rebellious character. Despite the overwhelming charges that weighed against him, he manifested no sign of repentance. In fact, he boldly proclaimed his innocence.

It is unlikely that Therese had read many articles about him in the papers although she did not refrain from doing so. "Despite the fact that papa had forbidden us to read any papers," she related, "I did not think I

was disobedient in reading the passages that spoke of Pranzini." Furthermore, everyone was talking about this criminal incident. "Everything led to the belief that he would die unrepentant. I wanted at any cost to prevent him from falling into hell."

For Therese, this was the big problem. Her concern was to save a great sinner from the mortal danger he was in. By persevering in his dishonesty and impenitence, he might be deprived forever of the joy of living with God.

She multiplied prayers and sacrifices to obtain his conversion and had a mass celebrated for him. Although she was certain that Jesus would answer her, she asked him to give her a

sign of Pranzini's genuine conversion. "Simply for my consolation," she said to the Lord, "because he is my first child!"

Thus she was jubilant to read the account of his execution in the September 1st edition of *La Croix*. At the last minute, he asked the chaplain for his crucifix and he kissed it twice. In writing her memoirs eight years later, Therese recalled that he made this gesture "three times." This sign of repentance impressed her all the more because it resembled the grace she herself had received in July.

It was before the wounds of the Crucified Christ that her heart began to burn with the desire to save many souls.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED
ON AUGUST 31st 1887
WHEN PRANZINI
WAS EXECUTED?

The book *Souvenirs de la Roquette* [Memories of La Roquette], written by Father Faure, the outstanding chaplain who exercised his ministry at La Roquette prison for six years and who accompanied twenty condemned prisoners to their execution, tells the story. Pranzini, who spoke eight languages fluently — he spent the hours of his imprisonment translating pages of Alexandre Dumas into various languages — always received the chaplain with great courtesy and frequently attended mass. He spoke to him with feeling about the piety of his mother, who lived in Alexandria.

The day before the execution, the chaplain stayed with him in his cell for a long time. Always very discreet, Father Faure wrote: "Our interview was more cordial and more intimate than ever. We conversed for more than two hours and, when I left him, he told me he was sorry to see our conversation end so soon."

cliquetés de fer résonne, les larmes brillent, et sur le seuil de la prison, dont la porte s'ouvre, l'assassin pâtit livide.

L'aumonier se met devant lui pour lui décrocher la sinistre machine. Les aides le soutiennent: il repousse et le prêtre et les bourreaux. Le volet devant la bascule. Debiler le pousse et l'y jette. Un aide, placé de l'autre côté, lui empoigne la tête, l'amène sous la lunette, le roulement par les cheveux.

Mais avant que ce mouvement se soit produit, peut-être un éclair de repentir a-t-il traversé sa conscience. Il a demandé à l'aumonier son crucifix. Il l'a vu deux fois embrassé.

Et quand le couteau tomba, quand un des aides saisit par une oreille la tête détachée, nous nous disons que si la justice humaine est satisfaite, peut-être ce déguiser balsemer aura satisfait aussi la justice divine, qui demande surtout le repentir.

End of the article on Pranzini in *La Croix* (September 1st 1887), page 2

This helps us to understand better the condemned man's response to Monsieur Beauquesne, the director of La Roquette, when he was asked, early in the morning of August 31st, if he wanted to stay with Father Faure for a few moments. "The chaplain has fulfilled his duty," he replied,



A wax mould preserved at the Police museum in Paris

"and I know mine." He was no doubt alluding "to our long conversation of the previous day," commented Father Faure. Here is how he described Pranzini's last moments: "When, after saying a last farewell, I took a step back, he cried out in a voice choked with anguish, in a cry full of repentance and faith: 'Father, bring me the crucifix!' I quickly went to him and pressed the crucifix to his lips — he



kissed it fervently. We exchanged a couple of words... He was pushed against the platform, a noise sounded, the blade fell... it was all over."

In his report, Monsieur Beauquesne's testimony was identical: "He asked to kiss the crucifix the chaplain presented to him." Monsieur Baron, the police commissioner for the La Roquette area, added that he kissed it after calling for it in these words: "Bring me the cross!" As for Monsieur Taylor, chief of security, he wrote that the condemned man kissed the crucifix "mechanically." He insisted, on the other hand, that at the foot of the scaffold Pranzini "stopped short and twice called for the chaplain." Taylor added that he seemed to be waiting to be embraced by the chaplain but that this did not take place.

My first child

Pranzini's so greatly desired conversion encouraged Therese to put everything in place to enter Carmel as soon as possible. Since the Lord gave her Pranzini as her first child, she would surely have many more if she consecrated her life to self-sacrifice and prayer for the salvation of sinners.

The resistance of her uncle Guerin fell rather quickly, but Canon Delatroette, the priest responsible for watching over the admission of postulants, was definitely opposed to Therese's candidacy. "She is much too young... Let her wait until she is twenty-one! Unless, of course, His Excellency gives her permission."

Therese seized the opportunity. "Let's go see the bishop!... And if he is

opposed," she added, "I will go ask the pope." As it happened, her father had signed up himself and his two youngest daughters for a pilgrimage to Rome, organized by the diocese of Coutances in honour of Leo XIII's jubilee.

For the trip to Bayeux, Therese wore her prettiest white dress and put her hair up in a bun in order to appear older. Before the audience, she and her father entered the cathedral, where there was a funeral going on. Therese was quite a sensation with her white dress and hat!

A prudent man, Bishop Hugonin avoided making a final decision on the spur of the moment. He merely assured her that he would soon discuss her request with Canon Delatroette. Therese had no illusions about this.

The bishop would not change the mind of the superior of the Carmel. Her request would be shelved. She did not wait to be out of the room before the tears flowed. Bishop Hugonin, in his paternal manner, tried to console her. Taking her by the neck, he pressed Therese's head against his shoulder and promised to give her his response during the pilgrimage to Italy.

The falling rain on that October 31st 1887 was indeed the reflection of her sadness. "I have noticed," Therese later wrote, "that in all the serious situations of my life, nature has been the image of my soul. On days of tears, the heavens cried with me, on days of joy, the sun shone brilliantly and not a cloud could be found in the blue sky."

It was raining hard when we arrived in Bayeux





Most Reverend Flavien Hugonin (1823-1898)
Bishop of Bayeux and Lisieux (1866-1898)

Over his lifetime, Father Hugonin devoted many hours to the study of Richard of Saint Victor, the great 12th-century theologian. He published his studies in volume CXCVI of Migne's *Patrologia Latina*. The work began with a biographical note on the prior of the abbey of Saint Victor in Paris.

Originally from the diocese of Grenoble, Father Hugonin was called to Paris by Bishop Affre in 1847. He was first assigned as professor of philosophy and literature at the Carmelite School in 1850, then lecturer at the Sorbonne in 1859, and finally superior of the Carmelite Seminary in 1861.

Named bishop of Lisieux in 1866, he was the only bishop ever consecrated by the illustrious Bishop Dupanloup of Orleans. Like him, Hugonin was part of the minority at the First Vatican Council. But, in 1872, to indicate clearly that he submitted unreservedly to the definition of papal infallibility, he had a statue of Saint Peter erected in his cathedral. He refused to become the "Primate of the Gauls" in the

archdiocesan See of Lyon and explained why one day by showing the ring on his right hand: "I would be ungrateful if I broke my commitment, for a bishop loves well only once." However, the bishops of France often went to Bayeux to consult him.

It was he who confirmed Therese at the Abbey of Notre-Dame-du-Pre on June 14th 1884. He received her visit in Bayeux on October 31st 1887, granted her permission to enter Carmel on December 28th 1887, and presided at her reception of the habit on January 10th 1889. He was the only bishop Therese ever knew and she certainly prayed a great deal for him.

After Therese's death, he granted, on March 7th 1898, the *imprimatur* for the first edition of *The Story of a Soul* at the request of Father Godefroid Madelaine. He died in Caen two months later while on a round of confirmations. Cathedral staff announced his death to the diocese, emphasizing that "Bishop Hugonin loved to work in silence, that he was reluctant to make a display of himself and [...] that he avoided publicity."



Father Maurice-Joseph Reverony
(1836-1891)

Vicar general of Bayeux, he was present when Therese and her father visited the chancery. The following month, he presided over the diocesan pilgrimage to Rome and presented the pilgrims to Leo XIII on November 20th 1887. He acted as arbiter between the Carmel and its superior, Canon Delatroette, for Therese's admittance.



The altar at Notre-Dame-des-Victoires

Before the French Revolution, the statue of Notre-Dame de Savone was venerated here. Louis XIV had entrusted Colbert with the responsibility of constructing this chapel to honour her. The statue disappeared during the turmoil of the Revolution and was replaced in 1822 by this plaster statue, the work of an anonymous Italian.

While celebrating mass at this altar on December 3rd 1836, Father des Genettes, the pastor, was inspired to consecrate his parish to the most holy and immaculate Heart of Mary and to found, in her honour, an association of prayer — an archconfraternity — to obtain the grace of the conversion of sinners.

The following Sunday, more than four hundred people pressed together before the altar to pray to the Virgin, "Refuge of sinners." Conversions multiplied in the parish and people came from everywhere to beseech the Virgin.

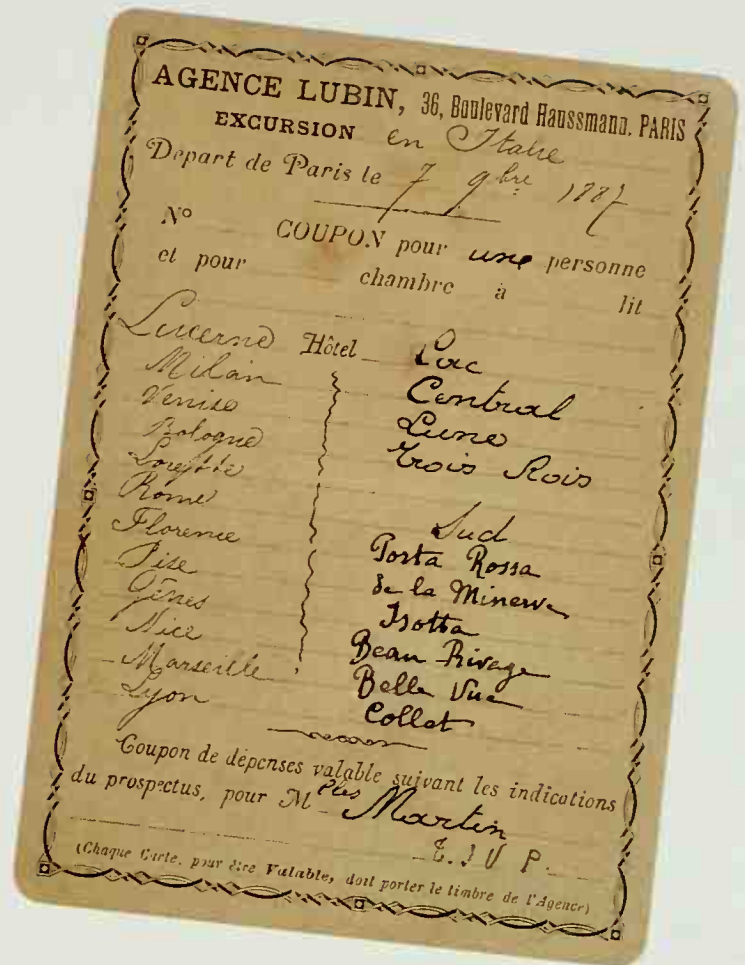
The statue was crowned in the name of Pius IX on July 9th 1853, in thanksgiving for the liberation of Rome by French soldiers in 1849.

*The Blessed Virgin made me feel
that it was truly she who had smiled at me*

The first meeting of the 197 pilgrims going to Rome was set for Sunday, November 6th at 9 o'clock in the crypt of the basilica of Montmartre. Monsieur Martin, however, left two days earlier with his two daughters to show them Paris. He wanted them to see "all the marvels of the capital": the Champs Elysees and the puppet theatre, the Tuileries, the Arc de Triomphe, the Bastille, the Palais Royal, the Louvre, the Invalides, and the elevators in the Printemps department stores, etc.

For Therese, the marvel of marvels was the church of Notre-Dames-des-Victoires where she went to participate in the eucharist in the early morning of November 4th. She knew that her father and uncle had often gone there to pray during their youth: her father during his internship in watchmaking in 1850, her uncle, thirteen years later during his studies in pharmacy. Nor did she forget that her cure of May 13th 1883 occurred at the end of a novena of masses celebrated in this sanctuary.

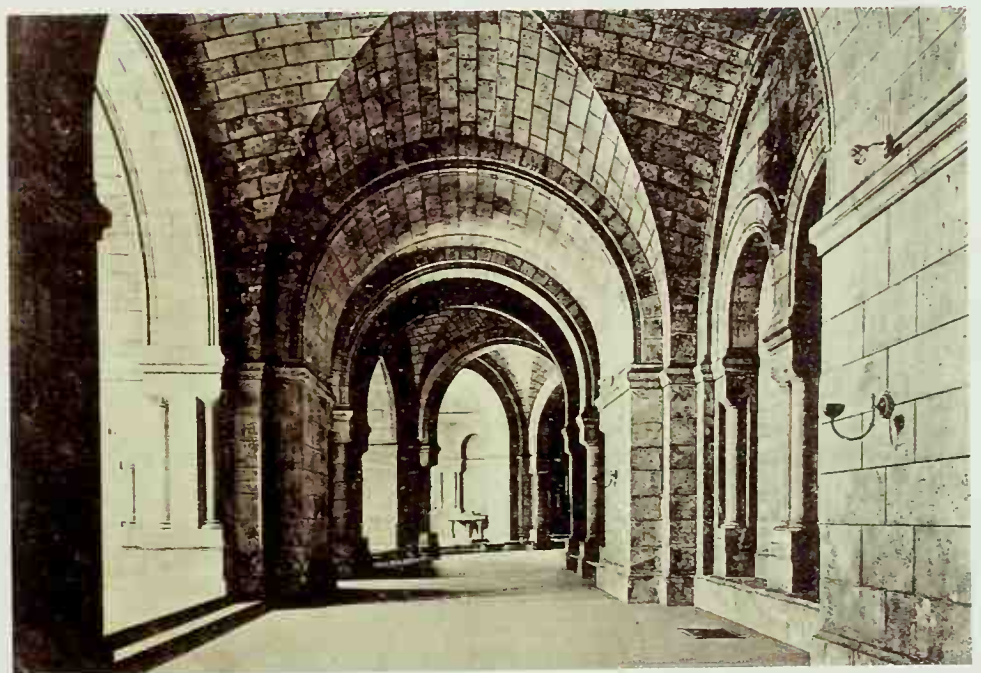
In coming here herself on a pilgrimage, she was finally and definitively freed from the scruple that had haunted her since her cure. The Blessed Virgin made her feel that it was truly she who had smiled at her and cured her. "I understood," wrote Therese, "that she was watching over me, that I was her child: after that I could only call her 'Mama.'"



The list of hotels where Therese stayed during her trip

The crypt of the basilica of Montmartre

The eve of her departure for Rome, Therese took part in the group activities of the pilgrims. On her return to Lisieux, she sent her gold bracelet to the chaplains of Montmartre so it could be melted into part of a great monstrance — a gesture that clearly expressed Therese's desire to keep watch day and night close to Jesus in the eucharist.





The Alps

"How these natural beauties did my soul good! How they lifted it up to the One who was pleased to toss such masterpieces onto this land of exile which lasts but a day [...] I did not have enough eyes with which to see. As I looked out from the train, the view took my breath away. I wish I could have been on both sides of the car at once," Therese wrote later.

Venice





Assisi

Leo XIII, pope from 1878 to 1903

He recommended that French Catholics rally to the Republic and gave Cardinal Lavigerie the responsibility of spreading this message (toast of Algiers, 1890). Later, he clarified his thought in the encyclical *Inter Innumeras Sollicitudines* (1892). He encouraged gatherings of socially minded Catholics (Bishop Mermillod, La Tour du Pin) in Freiburg and received several pilgrimages of French workers led by Leon Harmel. On May 15th 1891, he published the famous social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* on the conditions of workers. He opened the Vatican Archives to researchers and advocated the rediscovery of the thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas.



*Most Holy Father,
I have a great favour to ask of you*



Rochet border in Alençon and Argentan lace offered by the Diocese of Bayeux and Lisieux to Leo XIII on the occasion of his jubilee

The dome of Saint Peter's

Giacomo Della Porta built the calotte, or crown, of the cupola between 1588 and 1590, during the pontificate of Sixtus V. He took the liberty of modifying Michelangelo's plans in such a way that more prominence was given to the exterior curves.





The Holy House of Loretto

Since the 16th century, countless pilgrims have come here to venerate the house that the Holy Family was supposed to have inhabited in Nazareth and which angels were supposed to have transported to Loretto, 31 kilometres from Ancona. Teramano, the rector of the church in Loretto, fabricated this legend around 1472.

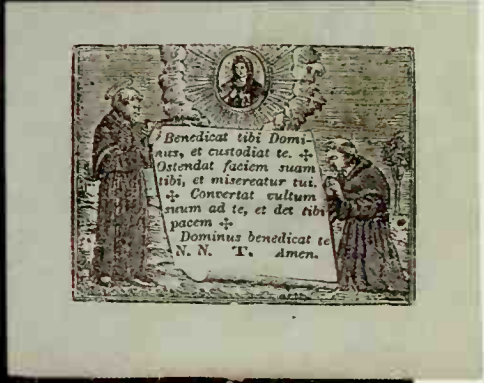
Therese was delighted to have been able to receive communion with Celine inside the Holy House. A priest on the pilgrimage — most probably Father Leconte, curate at Saint-Pierre cathedral in Lisieux — placed two

small hosts on his paten and permitted the two young women from Lisieux to receive communion at mass he celebrated. "It was such celestial happiness that words cannot express. What then will it be like when we receive communion in the eternal dwelling of the King of heaven?... Then our joy will be endless; there will be no more sadness of leave-taking, and to bring home a souvenir we will not have to *secretly scratch* the walls sanctified by the divine presence, since his *house* will be ours for eternity."



Souvenirs from the pilgrimage

Therese was happy to bring back souvenirs from her pilgrimage: soil from the catacombs and from the Coliseum carefully placed in small pouches; a reproduction of a nail from the Passion, and also a fragment of a mosaic which came loose while she was visiting the basilica of Saint Agnes (it is preserved in a golden reliquary).



The Coliseum

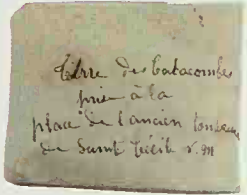
*I am very happy
to have gone to Rome*

Started by Vespasian in 72, after the taking of Jerusalem, and inaugurated by Titus in 80, the Flavian amphitheatre undoubtedly owes its name to the colossal statue of Nero erected nearby. The interior could hold 45,000 people. The Coliseum remains the symbol of the Roman passion for bloody spectacles: the combats of gladiators, the hunting and killing of wild beasts. For its inauguration, 9,000 animals were slaughtered. Trajan exhibited 10,000 gladiators to celebrate his triumph over the Dacians.

There is no doubt that Christians were immolated in the Coliseum: the custom of throwing the condemned to

the beasts makes the fact incontestable. It was only in the 17th century, however, that devotion to the martyrs of the Coliseum began.

The arena has been broken up to show what was behind the scenes: hoists for the beasts, dungeons, etc., but this had not yet been done at the end of the last century. Thus Therese and Celine were able to kneel on the spot where the martyrs died. "My heart was pounding as I bent down to kiss the dust, dark red with the blood of the early Christians; I asked for the grace to be a martyr too for Jesus and I felt in the depths of my heart that my prayer was heard."





When they stopped in Genoa on the way back, Monsieur Martin gave each of his daughters a piece of jewellery in the shape of a butterfly.

The desire to enter Carmel as soon as possible did not suppress Therese's joy in letting herself be spoiled by her father... and in wearing the jewel from Italy.

An account of the papal audience written by Therese in a letter to Sister Agnes dated November 20th 1887

The passage that it was thought best to erase at the time of the process of canonization (because of Therese's very realistic description of the pontiff's old age) can be reconstituted: "The good Pope is so old that one would think he is dead. I would never have imagined him like that; he could hardly say a word. Father Reverony did all the talking."

Every report at the time noted the seventy-seven-year-old pontiff's pallor. To help him save his strength, Father Reverony, the vicar general of Bayeux, who had made the trip in place of Bishop Hugonin, practically prevented the pope from speaking. The fragile old man did not die until 1903, six years after Therese.



An article published in *L'Univers* on Thursday, November 24th 1887

A pilgrimage to Rome was quite an event in those days. Louis Veuillot's newspaper devoted an entire column to a description, by the Roman correspondent, of the pontifical audience on Sunday, November 20th. It was only when he read this article that Therese's confessor, Father Lepelletier, curate at Saint-Pierre cathedral, learned of his young penitent's desire to become a Carmelite. Therese had never breathed a word about it to him! "I spent little time in the confessional," wrote Therese in her memoirs.

De moi, maintenant il ne me
 reste plus qu'à prier.
 Monseigneur n'était pas le
 16^e Reichow le remplaçant, j'osai
 te faire une idée de l'audience
 il aurait fallu que tu sois là.
 Le Pape était assis sur une
 grande chaise très haute. M^r Reichow
 était tout auprès de lui, il
 regardait les pèlerins devant qui
 s'avançaient devant le Pape après
 lui avoir embrassé le pied puis
 il disait un mot de quelque
 ans. Tu pouvais comme ton
 cœur battait fort en voyant mon
 bon arrivée mais je me sentais
 pas en la retourner sans avoir
 parlé au Pape. J'ai peur
 n'ai pas tout dit. M^r Reichow me m'en
 a pas donné le temps, il a dit
 aussitôt: "Cris Saint Jean est

un enfant qui dort entre un
 barreau à quinze ans, mais ses
 supérieurs s'en occupent en ce
 moment.
 J'aurais voulu pouvoir
 régler mon affaire mais il
 n'y a pas eu moyen. Le saint-
 dit simplement: "Si le bon
 est dans l'entre-deux. Puis on m'a
 fait passer dans une autre salle
 de Pauline, je ne puis te dire
 ce que j'ai senti; j'étais comme
 amnésié je me sentais abandonné
 puis je suis si loin si loin.
 Je pourrais bien en écrivant
 te parler de la com bien gros. C'est
 mon Dieu ne part pas sans

Erriw Batta
 gliatarie
 Celine Martin
 A Leconte
 M. Leconte
 C. Martin
 Louis Martin

The pilgrims' signatures
 on a thank you note
 addressed to Monsignor Germain,
 Bishop of Coutances,
 pilgrimage director

Among the seventy-five priests on the
 pilgrimage was Father Leconte, twenty-
 nine years old, curate at Saint-Pierre.
 He so often joined the two Martin sis-
 ters, his parishioners, that his "affec-
 tionate attentiveness" — according to
 Celine's expression — to the two
 youngest members of the group set
 tongues wagging somewhat.

Therese herself would say that
 during her trip, she realized that priests
 too needed her prayers. For three
 weeks she had the opportunity to see
 them up close, on the train or at table.
 Returning from Italy, a new intention
 was added to her prayer: the holiness
 of the clergy.

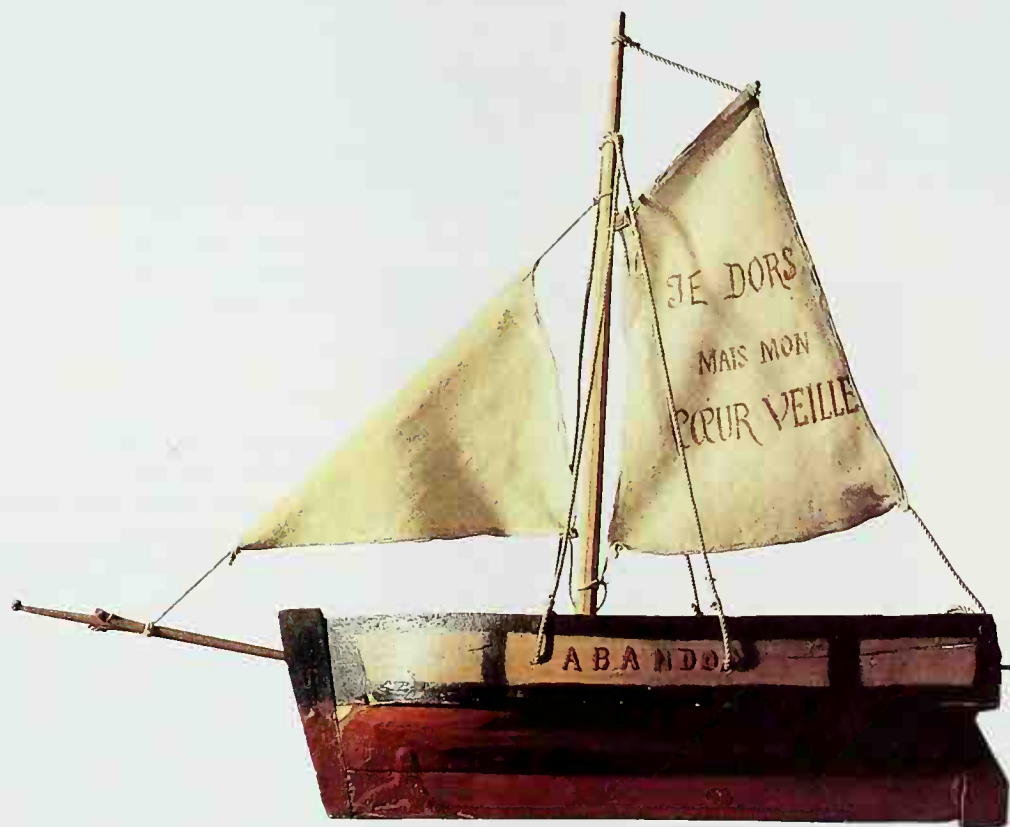
On her return from Rome, Therese waited as patiently and peacefully as possible for Bishop Hugonin's response. Would she be able to enter Carmel to celebrate there the first anniversary of her conversion? Every day, after mass at the cathedral, she checked the mailbox for a response. Nothing came! To encourage her sister to "abandon" herself totally to Providence, Celine gave her a little boat on whose hull she had engraved the word.

Christmas 1887 arrived. Still nothing! She cried at midnight mass... But she discovered that the trial must increase her confidence.

At last, on January 1st, the eve of her fifteenth birthday, Mother Marie de Gonzague transmitted the bishop's response: It was yes!

One final difficulty then surfaced: Pauline thought it prudent to postpone Therese's entrance until spring. Thus the very young postulant would be spared beginning her religious life in the midst of the Lenten austerities.

Her entrance was set for April 9th, the Monday of the second week of Easter; On that day they would celebrate the feast of the Annunciation which could not be observed on March 25th because of Lent.



The boat Celine gave Therese

The verse from the Song of Solomon (5:2) inscribed on the sail, "I sleep but my heart keeps watch," reminded Therese that, if Jesus seemed to be asleep and doing nothing to facilitate her entrance into Carmel, his heart continued nonetheless to watch over her lovingly.



On Sunday April 8th, Therese sat down for the last time at the table at Les Buissonnets with her father, her sisters and the Guerin family. The next day, she would leave her childhood home forever.

This photograph was taken in April 1888, a few days before Therese's entrance into Carmel. This was the hairstyle she wore the previous October 31st when she went to see the Bishop of Bayeux.

Three weeks before she entered Carmel, Therese confided her desires to her sister, "Pauline, when Jesus places me on the blessed shore of Carmel, I want to give myself entirely to him, I want to live only for him. Oh! no, I will not fear his blows for, even in the most bitter sufferings, one always feels that it is his gentle hand that strikes. I felt it strongly in Rome at the very moment when I would have thought the earth could give way under my steps.

"Once I am in Carmel, I will desire only one thing: always to suffer for Jesus. Life passes so quickly that it would truly be better to have a very beautiful crown along with a little suffering than to have an ordinary one without any suffering. And then I think that suffering borne joyfully helps one love God better for all eternity. Why, by suffering, you can even save souls. Ah! Pauline, if at the moment of my death, I could offer one soul to Jesus, how happy I would be! There would be a soul snatched from the fires of hell to praise God for all eternity."



*Monday April 9th
was chosen
for my entrance*

After the seven o'clock mass, Monsieur Martin, Leonie, Celine and the whole Guerin family accompanied Therese to the enclosure door. She knelt on the tile floor to receive her father's blessing. One last time, Canon Delatroette expressed his disagreement over the entrance of such a young postulant. "Well! Reverend Mothers, you can sing a *Te Deum*! As the delegate of His Excellency the Bishop, I present to you this child of fifteen whose entrance you so desired. I hope that she will not disappoint you, but I remind you that, if such be the case, you alone shall bear the responsibility for it."

The enclosure door

Une famille
à sa
Francisque

Vifs
remerciements
à Sainte THERÈSE
Avril 1855
Ners 1850

Une famille
confiante
et
reconnaissante

Reconnaissance
et demande
de protection
A.P. C.E.D.

Nombreux
bienfaits reçus
de l'ANGE
de Lisieux
B.J.

Une malade
reconnaissante
de sa guérison
Paris 1821
E.L.A.

Hommage
reconnaissant à
Sainte THERÈSE
J.H. A.T.

Reconnaissance
et confiance
Paris 1833
A.J.P.

Sincère
reconnaissance
Thérèse 1850
G. de B.
S. de E.

M. G. D.

M. G. H.

M. G. I.

M. G. J.

M. G. K.

M. G. L.

M. G. M.

M. G. N.

M. G. O.

M. G. P.

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M. G. KX.

A VERY YOUNG
POSTULANT

Therese, who entered Carmel on April 9th 1888, the liturgical feast of the Annunciation, was happy to unite her own consent to the Virgin's fiat. She had turned fifteen on January 2nd.

This early entrance often astonishes people. Some think Therese did not know the world before entering the convent. Others think that it was a whim on her part to want to enter the cloister so young. Still others think that she would have shown true charity by remaining at Les Buissonnets near her father whose health was beginning to decline. Yet others see in this early desire of total gift of self the sign of an admirable, but inimitable, generosity.

At the end of the 19th century, one could take final religious vows at eighteen years of age, following a few months of postulancy and one year of novitiate. Obviously entering at sixteen was not unusual. Therefore Therese was asking only for a one-year dispensation. Mother Saint-Placide, director of the Abbey boarding school, had entered her community at the age of fifteen.

Furthermore, there were periods when these admissions, which we consider precocious today, were commonplace. Teresa of Avila admitted her niece Teresita to the cloister at the age of nine and Sister Marguerite of the Blessed Sacrament had entered the Carmel of Beanne in her 12th year (see p. 160).

Nonetheless, to dare say that by entering so young Therese could never have understood the world would be to forget that contemplatives know from within the problems of their times and know them with an intensity that others have difficulty imagining. It is sufficient to recall the way in which Therese shared in the drama of unbelievers!

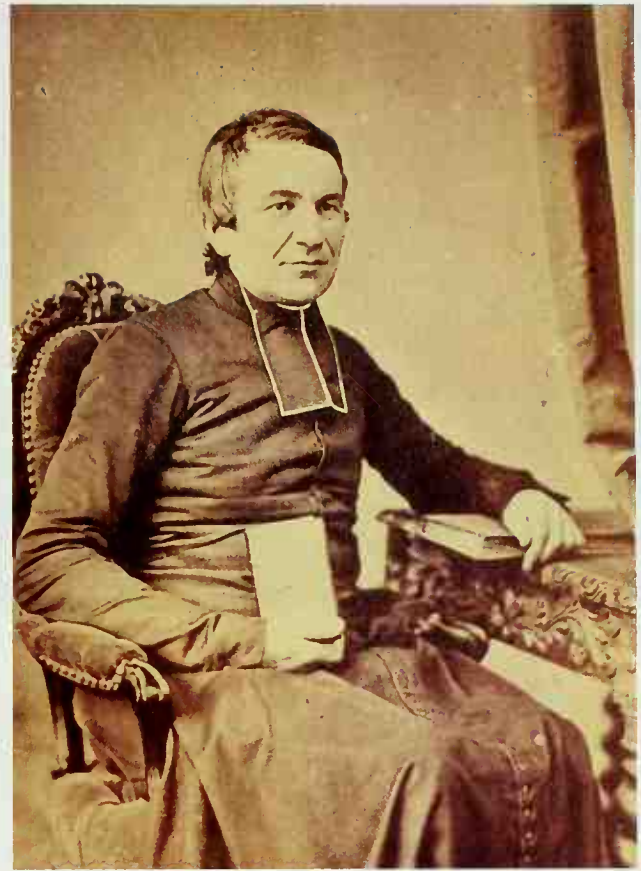
Moreover, through her uncle Guerin Therese was certainly kept up-to-date concerning the debates currently stirring up public opinion. In



Therese at fifteen (April 1888)
The enormous bow, called a chou,
on the back of her dress
has been coloured over on the photograph.

the 19th century, a dispensary was a centre where discussions and varied exchanges took place frequently. This was especially true since Monsieur Guerin became deeply involved in politics in 1891 when he became a regular editorial contributor for the newspaper *Le Normand* (see p. 180).

Finally, it would be nonsense to consider Therese's early entrance into Carmel as one of the elements of her holiness. This is a frequent misinterpretation. Because many Christians find it difficult to imagine that a Carmelite whose entire life was ordinary could be canonized, they spare no effort looking for the exceptional in her short life and they place too much importance on the fact she entered religious life so young. Therese herself considered her entrance at fifteen as a sign of her weakness! She said this on several occasions to Celine who joined her in Carmel only later. As early as July 23rd 1888, Therese explained the reason for this difference. "One of the lilies was weak, the other strong. Jesus took the weak one."



Canon Delatroette (1818-1895)

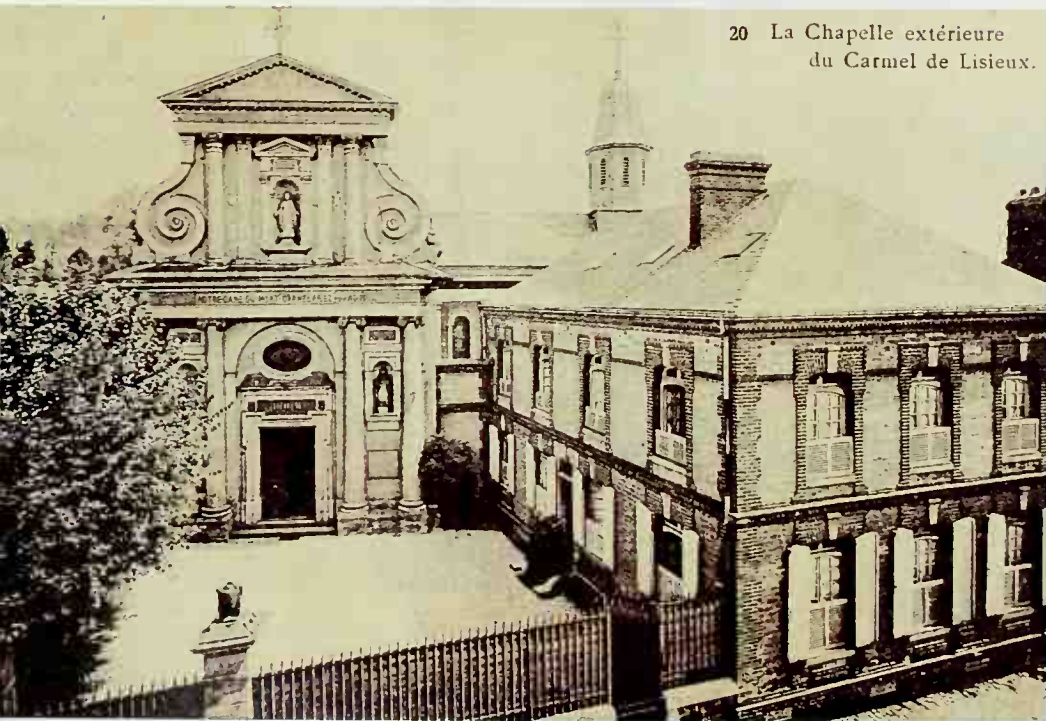
He was born in Saint-Martin-des-Besaces, in the Norman countryside and, after his ordination in 1844, he was appointed curate of Saint-Jean in Caen. From 1867 to 1895, he was pastor of Saint-Jacques in Lisieux and superior of the Carmel.



An apricot tree planted by Mother Genevieve between the two windows of the heated parlour



The home of the widow Le Boucher located on Beuillers Road where the first Carmelites of Lisieux lived for a few weeks in 1838 before moving into the Carmel on rue de Livarot



20 La Chapelle extérieure du Carmel de Lisieux.

Front view of the Carmel. On the right, the building for the extern sisters, built in 1890

Construction of the chapel (1845-1852) was financed by alms collected throughout France by Father Sauvage, curate of Saint-Jacques parish in Lisieux.

The Carmel of Lisieux owes its existence to two young women from Le Havre, Athalie and Desiree Gosselin. Raised in the boarding school that the Carmelites of Pont-Audemer were obliged to open after the Revolution in order to obtain authorization to re-establish their monastery, they too desired to become nuns. Their health was too fragile, however, to endure the austerities then imposed by the Carmelite Rule. Father Sauvage, who helped them in their search, advised them to devote their modest fortune to founding a Carmel. The bishop of Bayeux wanted the foundation to be made in Saint-Jacques parish in Lisieux where Father Sauvage exercised his ministry.

The young Gosselin women went with Caroline Gueret, also from Lisieux, to Poitiers to make their novitiate. They returned in 1838 with two professed nuns: Mother Elizabeth of Saint-Louis, superior of the new foundation, and Sister Genevieve of Saint Teresa, subprioress and mistress of novices. When Mother Elizabeth died four years later, 1842, Sister Genevieve assumed the office of prioress and exercised that responsibility continually — with the exception of those intervals required by the Constitutions — until 1886. Thus she is regarded as the true mother and foundress of the Carmel of Lisieux.

On August 24th 1838, the anniversary of the first Teresian foundation of Saint Joseph in Avila, Bishop Robin of Bayeux blessed the oratory of the new monastery under the title "Mary conceived without sin" and, on September 16th, the Gosselin sisters and Caroline Gueret made profession there. On March 19th 1839, the feast of Saint Joseph, the community received its first postulant.

Father Sauvage considered his task incomplete. He wanted the Carmelites to be able to pray in a chapel worthy of the name. He began to beg throughout France to collect the necessary funds for its construction. On September 6th 1852, Bishop Robin blessed the new sanctuary. Father Sauvage died a few months later, in April 1853. The Carmelites wanted him to be buried in the chapel built though his efforts, near the choir grill.

When Therese entered the Carmel in 1888, construction had been completed for eleven years; it had taken about forty years to build. By a curious coincidence, the cloister wing, where the infirmaries were located, was blessed on September 30th 1877, exactly twenty years to the day before Therese died in one of them.



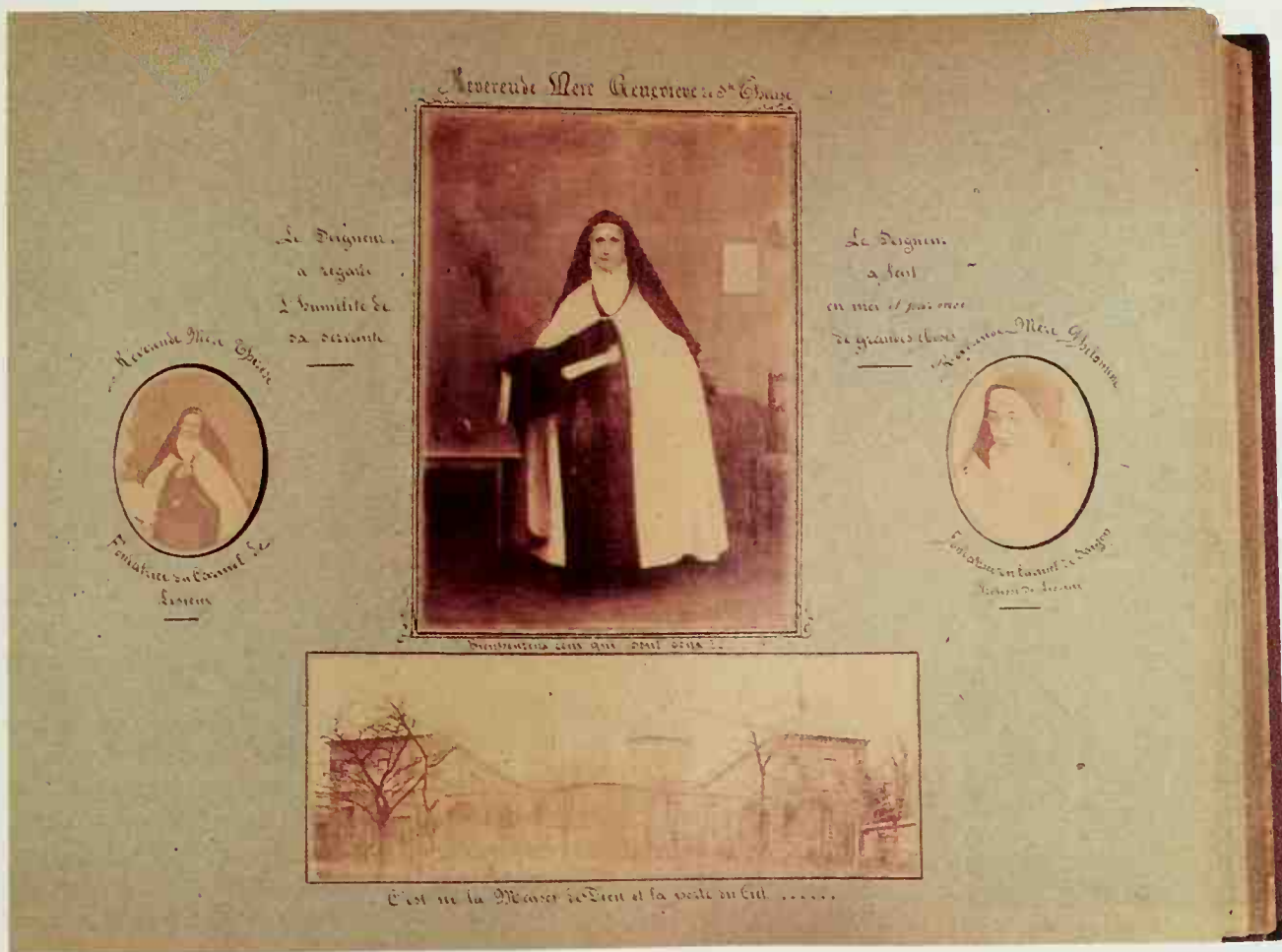
The statue of Saint Joseph in what was the cloister wall of the garden

In 1562, La Madre placed her first foundation, the Carmel of San Jose in Avila, under the protection of Saint Joseph. Following her example, the Carmelites have always had special devotion to him. On June 11th 1897, Mother Agnes saw Therese throwing flowers at this statue. "Why are you doing that?" she asked her. "To obtain a favour? — Oh no, to please him!"

For Mother Marie de Gonzague's feast day (June 21st 1897), Therese, in collaboration with Mother Agnes, prepared an album (26.5 x 35.5 cm) that described the life of the Carmel

The photographs of the foundresses took up the first page. In 1861, Sister Philomene left Lisieux for Saigon with three companions to found the first Carmel in the Far East. The ties between the two Carmels would always remain very strong.

I am here forever



I found religious life to be as I had imagined it

Therese had often heard her two sisters speak about the unfolding of a Carmelite's day. When she entered the monastery in April 1888, she was not taken by surprise.

Obviously, prayer took priority. It occupied about six and a half hours: two hours were spent in silent prayer, and the other four and a half hours were for mass and the choral office. Each nun was free to devote more time to prayer, spiritual reading or personal projects during the hour of the midday siesta or the evening hour of free time. A half-hour was to be devoted to personal spiritual reading.

The hourglass that Therese, like every Carmelite, kept in her cell. There was an identical hourglass in each parlour to measure the authorized half-hour visit.

A religious at the time was not permitted to wear a watch, even if she were a watchmaker's daughter!

Work — about five hours a day — was done in solitude, either in the cell or in the room, or 'office,' set aside for it (laundry, baking altar breads, sacristy, etc.). Ordinarily the work was manual so that the mind was free to think of God. Life in solitude was balanced with life in community: two hours of recreation, meals in silence in the common refectory while a text was read aloud.

The six hours of sleep in summer were complemented by an optional one hour siesta. There were seven continuous hours of sleep in winter.

Finally, in the evening before Matins, was the "grand silence": an hour of free time.

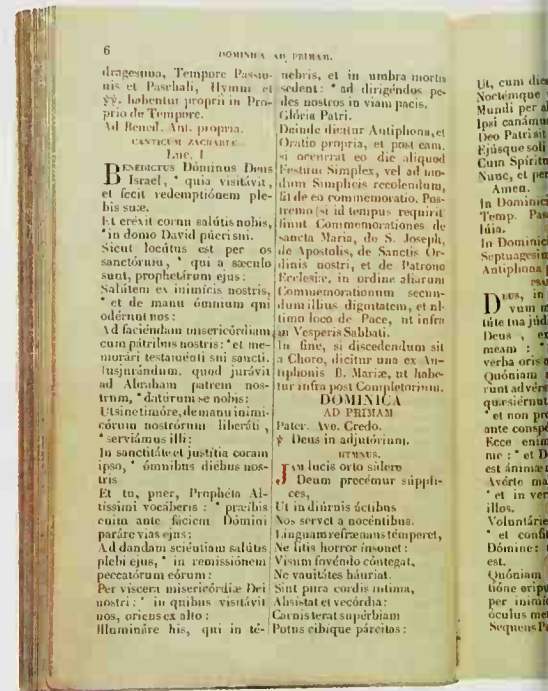
The schedule described here was the summer schedule, in effect from Easter to the Triumph of the Cross (September 14th).

In winter, rising was delayed an hour and so were all the morning exercises. Since there was no siesta, work resumed immediately after lunch, following the same afternoon schedule as in summer.

4:45 a.m. Rising

5:00 a.m. Prayer in choir

6:00 a.m. Early hours of the Office



One of Therese's four breviaries (24 x 15 cm) opened to the office of Prime. Instructions on how to celebrate an office are called "rubrics" (from the Latin meaning red).

Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart was designated to be her little sister's "angel," that is, to initiate her in the handling of these large books and also to teach her the other customs of the monastery.

Before the conciliar reform, the religious recited the morning office (Prime), followed immediately by the 9 a.m. (Tierce), the noon (Sext), and the 3 p.m. (None) offices. The psalms were not sung, but recited on a single tone.

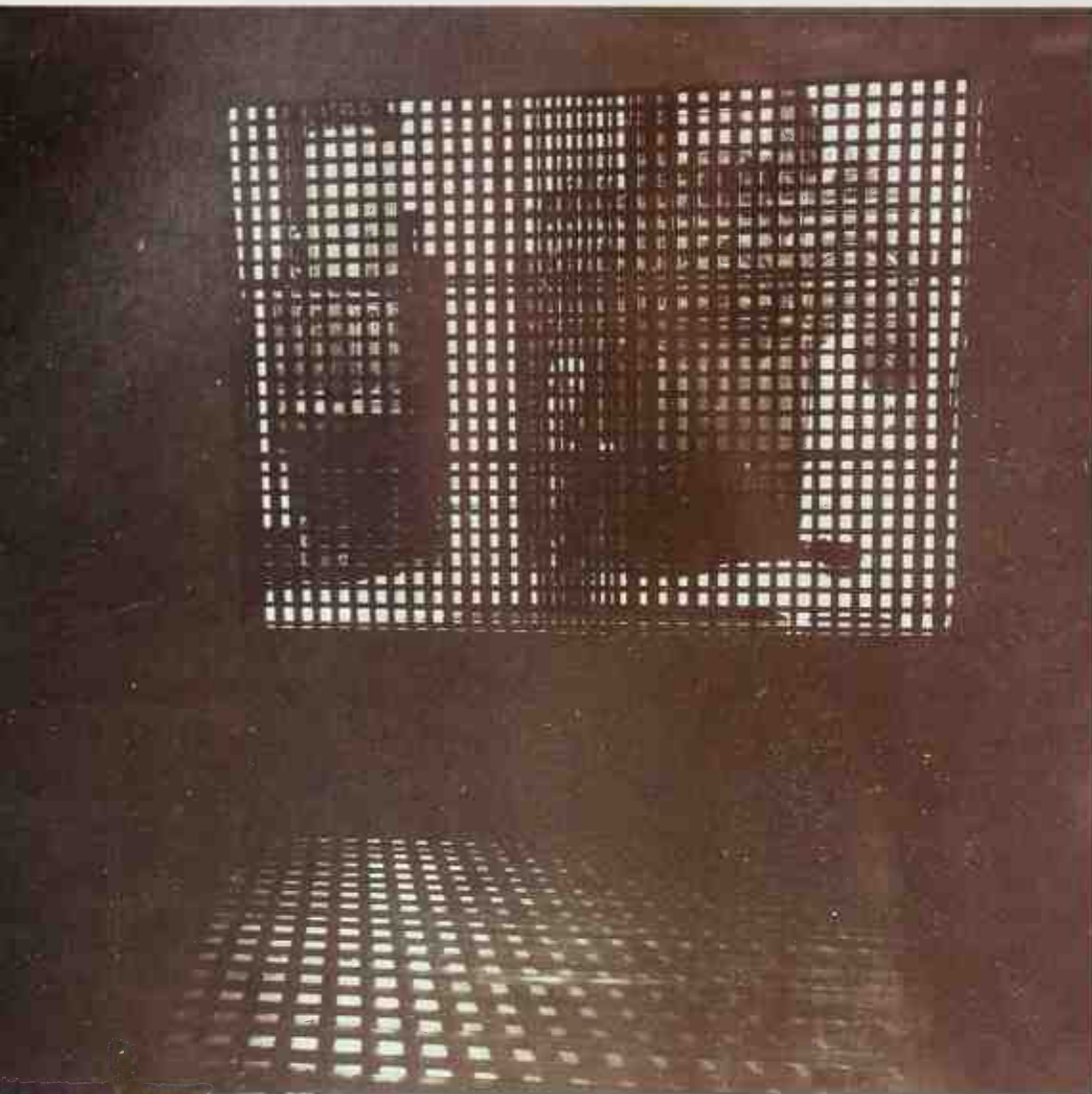


The album put together by Therese and Mother Agnes in 1897 constituted an accurate report on the life of a postulant in Lisieux at the end of the 19th century. Marie Guerin, who entered Carmel on August 15th 1895, wore this postulant's dress until she received the habit (March 17th 1896). The one Therese wore from April 9th 1888 to January 10th 1889 was similar: a long blue dress covered with a black cape and a dark little bonnet that held her abundant blond hair in place.



Carmelites often sit back on their heels when they pray in the choir of their chapel

To the right of the column is the communion door. It opens onto a window through which the Carmelites receive communion.



7:00 a.m. Mass and thanksgiving

The choir. The clock that had set the rhythm of Therese's youth at Les Buissonnets was installed above the communion window on the right at the end of 1889.

"I cannot say that I often received consolations during my thanksgivings: it was perhaps the moment when I received the least...I find that completely natural, since I offered myself to Jesus, not as someone who desires to receive his visit for her own consolation, but on the contrary for the pleasure of the One who gives himself to me. [...] Coming away from my thanksgiving, realizing that I made it so badly, I resolve to be in thanksgiving the rest of the day."

8 a.m. Breakfast

A thick soup eaten while standing at one's place, on the outside of the table. On fast days: nothing.





8:15 a.m. Work

9:50 a.m. Examination of conscience
in choir

10:00 a.m. Meal

The menu: fish or eggs, vegetables (generous serving), dessert (cheese or fruit). The portions were prepared in advance on earthen dishes. The Carmelite rule requires perpetual abstinence from meat, but permits it in cases of illness or weakness. Some sisters found this very short interval of two hours between the first two meals more painful than the fast.



To make the album,
Mother Agnes and Therese
used photographs of Marie Guerin,
taken when she was a postulant
(August 15th 1895 — March 17th 1896)

During the meal, two points of the Constitutions were read and, on Fridays, the entire Rule; then a biography was read. On Sundays and certain feast days, this biography was replaced by *L'Année liturgique [The Liturgical Year]* by Dom Gueranger. During Lent, a life of Jesus was read. Instead of the biography, the obituaries of Carmelites were read each time that the prioress deemed it appropriate to make known to the community the life of a religious who had just died in another Carmel.



11:00 a.m. Dishes
for those sisters assigned:
about one half-hour

When Therese was assigned to do dishes, the nuns would say at the beginning of recreation: "We are not going to laugh today." In effect, her imitations and stories often brightened up the community recreations.

For example, she imitated the accent of the Italian guide in Rome showing the French pilgrims the "beautiful statues" on the "lovely cornishes." Later, she took pleasure in imitating the very special pronunciation with which Father Baillon, the extraordinary confessor of the monastery since 1892, asked his penitents: "Sister, are you truly 'soory' for your sins?" In recreation, Therese dotted her conversation more than once with a well-placed "I am 'soo soory.'"



11:00 a.m. Recreation
The community at recreation
on Chestnut Tree Lane
(April 20th 1895)

Here Sister Genevieve followed the advice given at the time by C. Klary in his *Guide de l'amateur photographe* [*Guide for the Amateur Photographer*] (Paris: 1888). Have the subject "pose in some characteristic occupation or situation. A soldier, for example, could lean on his rifle, a fisherman could have his rod in his hand."

Each sister in the community posed here before the camera with her regular work in hand. In the centre of the photo, Mother Agnes of Jesus, the prioress, seated at a table, is drawing a picture. She had Mother Marie de Gonzague, the former prioress, sit on her right. On her left, standing, Sister Genevieve is painting a tableau placed on an easel: the Virgin



Mary (see p. 155). Therese, standing by a tree, is repainting the statue of the Child Jesus from the cloister (see p. 132). On her left, also standing, is Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart. The four sisters in white veils are not novices, but 'lay sisters,' that is, sisters who, in Therese's time, were generally assigned to the domestic work of the monastery (kitchen, housekeeping, etc.): Sister Marthe, at the far left of the photo, and on the right — from left to right — Sister Marie of the Incarnation, Sister Marie-Madeleine of the Blessed Sacrament and Sister Saint Vincent de Paul. They attended choral office, but they were dispensed from the recitation of the breviary for which they substituted a certain number of Our Fathers. After their profession, they did not receive the black veil as did the choir sisters. Consequently they were called the "white-veiled" sisters.

Noon to 1:00 p.m. Free time in silence (option of taking a siesta in summer)

One day, Celine came into Therese's cell while she was sewing: "What are you thinking about?" Celine asked. "I am meditating on the Our Father," replied Therese. "It is so good to call God *our Father!*" Tears shone in her eyes.

On June 5th 1897, she would say: "If you find me dead one morning, do not grieve. The good God, our Papa, would have simply come to get me. Surely it is a great grace to receive the Sacraments; but when God does not permit it, it makes no difference. All is grace."



1:00 p.m. Work

Honour-bound! When one lives
in Normandy, one drinks cider!
A pitcher for every two nuns
at the 10 o'clock meal.

During her nine years in Carmel, Therese was assigned to various work. As a postulant, she worked in the laundry, under the direction of her mistress of novices (see p. 115). After she received the habit, she was assigned to the refectory for two years (see p. 152). In 1891, to the sacristy, under the direction of Sister Saint Stanislaus (see p. 174), until June 1893. She was then asked to work in the art studio (see p. 196). At that time she was also the third sister — the third guardian — who would accom-



Wood was needed for the ovens in the kitchen, for the laundry and for the baking of altar breads. The community room, where the communal recreations were held, and the infirmaries were heated.

pany the bursar when workmen entered the convent. In September 1893, she was appointed to the gate house, under the direction of Sister Saint Raphael (see p. 202). She was also in charge of the novices (see p. 195) and in her free time she went to the art studio. In March 1896, she was again appointed to the sacristy which she soon left because of poor health. She then offered to help Sister Marie of Saint Joseph in the laundry (see p. 281).

2:00 p.m. Vespers

"For me, *prayer* is a movement of the heart, a simple gaze toward heaven, a cry of gratitude and love in the midst of trial as well as joy. [...]

"I would not want you to think, however, that I recite the prayers in common without devotion. On the contrary, I love common prayer, for Jesus has promised to be in the midst of those who gather in his name: that is when I sense that the fervour of my sisters compensates for my own lack."

2:30 p.m. Spiritual reading or a meeting of the novices with the novice mistress

3:00 p.m. The bell is rung to recall the death of Christ. Each Carmelite, wherever she is, kneels down, kisses the ground and then her crucifix



One of Therese's crucifixes

"In Carmel," Therese wrote to Father Belliere, "we sometimes exchange religious articles, for this is a good way to prevent becoming attached to them."



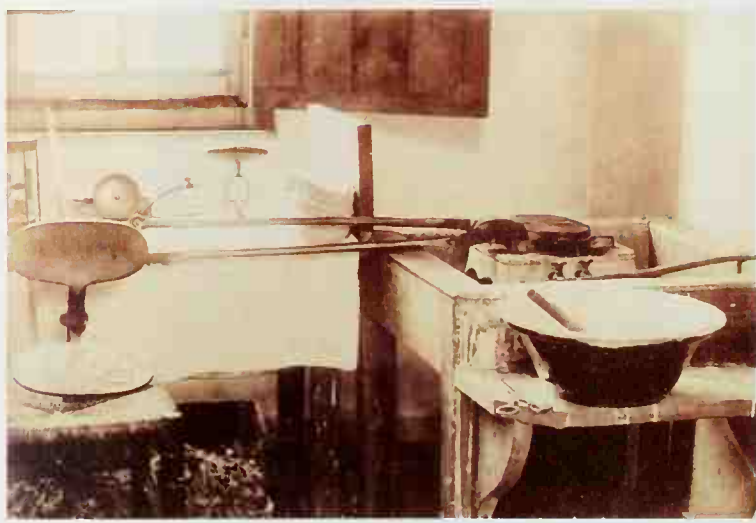
Avec un grand courage
Avec beaucoup d'ardeur
De m'en vais au lavage
En chantant de tout cœur.



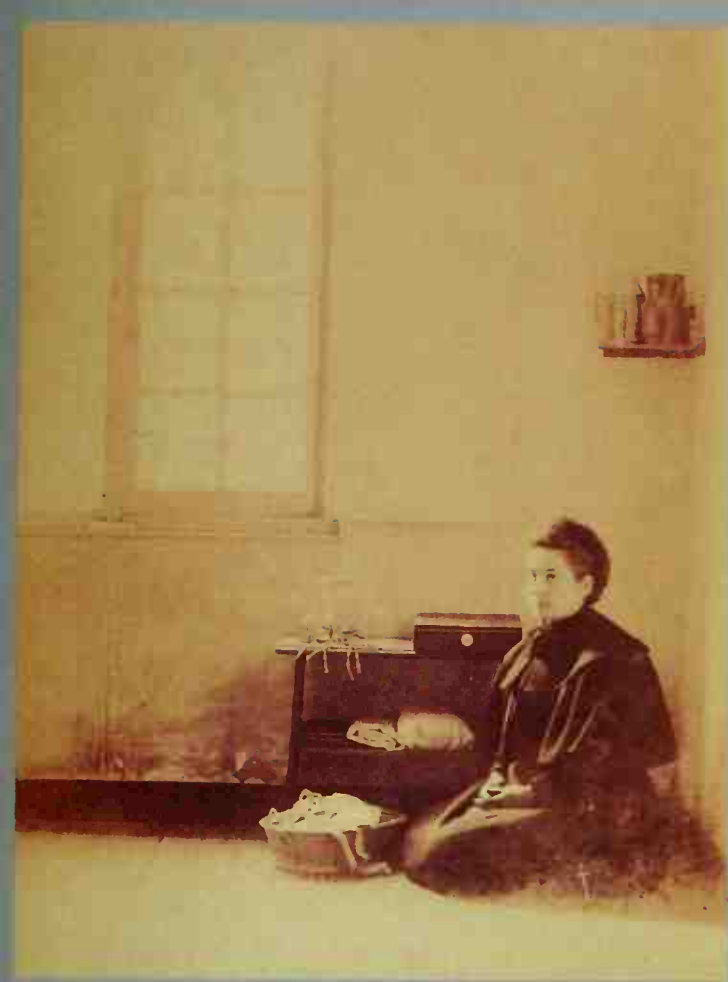
De prise à la fontaine
J'ai souvenir qu'un jour
Le humble Samaritain
Y rencontra l'Amour.

3:00 p.m. Work: Laundry

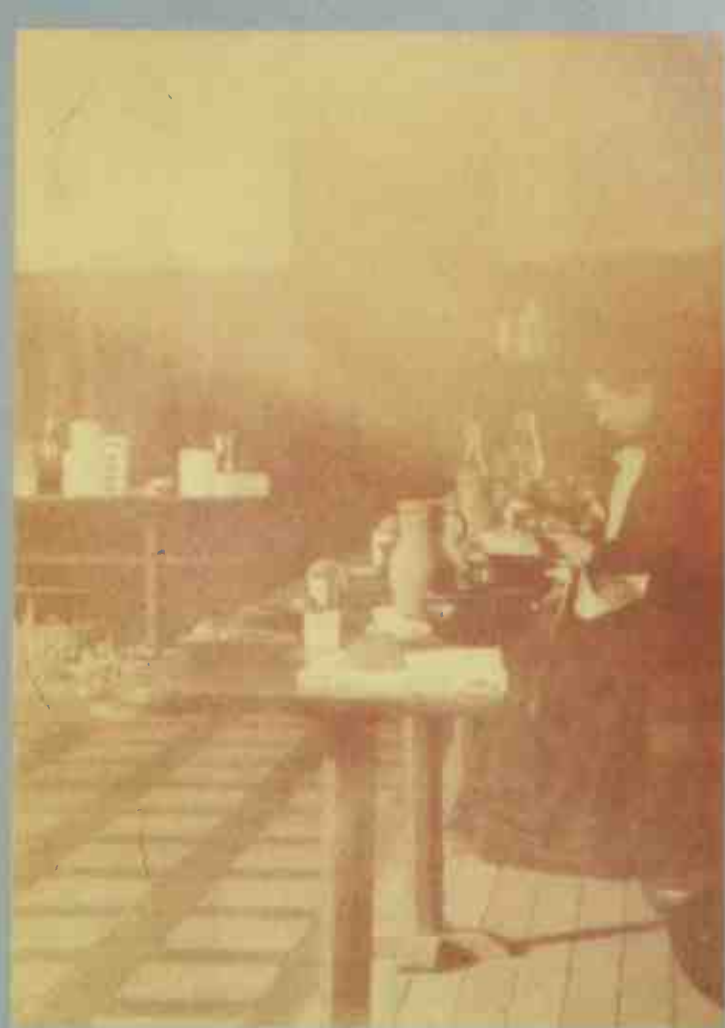
The pump from which Marie Guerin is drawing drinking water was located where Therese's reliquary is today



The baking of altar breads



Dans la cellule aimée
De chants le Carmel
Et la Voixte aguice
Me fait rêver le Ciel!



5:00 p.m. Mental Prayer

Each year, the Carmelites took turns making a personal retreat. For ten days they participated in neither work nor recreation and kept their veils lowered, except when alone. They could withdraw to their cell for two additional hours of mental prayer.

6:00 p.m. Dinner

The menu: soup, vegetables, dessert. On fast days, a light meal consisting of seven ounces (210 grams) of bread, butter or cheese, fruits and sometimes jelly. On those evenings there was nothing hot, neither broth nor soup.

At the evening meal were read: the translation of the martyrology — the same which had been read in the morning in Latin at the office of Prime — the translations of the lessons of Matins; on certain feasts, the entire office with the exception of the psalms; the passage from *L'Année liturgique* devoted to the feast of the following day and, to conclude, a biography of a saint.

6:45 p.m. Dishes and recreation

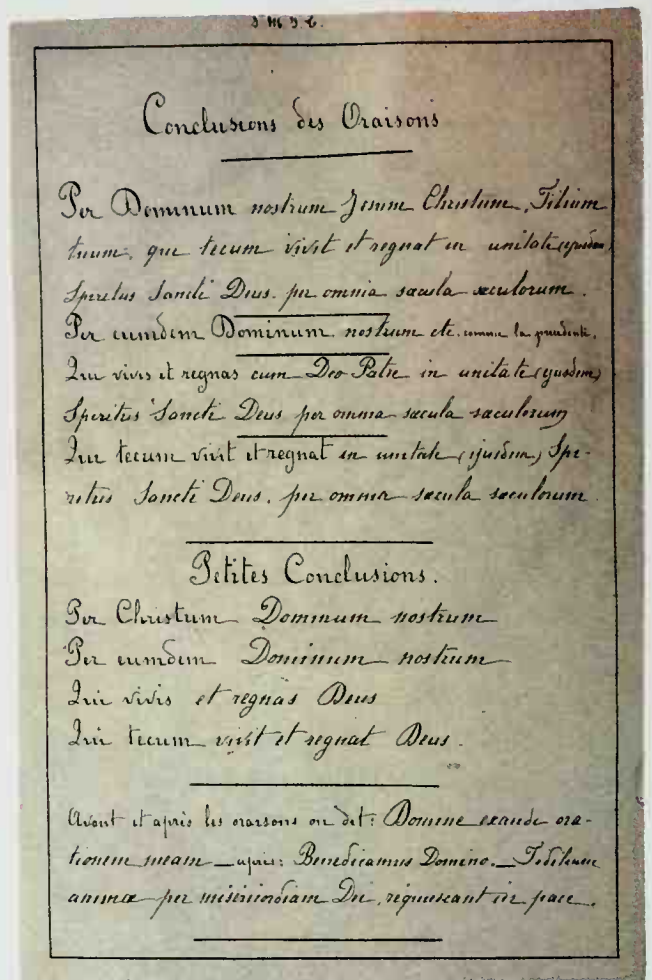
7:40 p.m. Compline



8:00 p.m. Free time in silence.
The Carmelites often took
advantage of this time
to say their rosary

Therese would admit, in her last manuscript, that this solitary recitation of the rosary was more difficult "than the application of an instrument of penance. I tried in vain to meditate on the mysteries of the rosary, but I could not keep my mind still." After a long period of discouragement over this, she understood that the Blessed Virgin saw her good will.

Therese also used this time for the composition of her poetry or plays.



9:00 p.m. Matins and Lauds
Lasting an hour and a quarter
(an hour and forty minutes on feast days).
The recitation of this office was
followed by an examination of conscience
(10 minutes) and the reading of the
meditation theme for the next day.

Therese made large cardboard pictures that she used as bookmarks for her breviaries. On the back of one of these, she copied the prayer endings that she had to read aloud when it was her turn to preside at the office for a week. On the other side, around a picture of the Holy Family, she had written gospel texts relating to the apostolate of her missionary brothers (see pp. 250 and 264): "The harvest is great, but the labourers are few."



10:30 – 11:00 p.m. Retire for the night
The corridor — then called the
'dormitory' — which led to the two
cells that Therese occupied
in succession until August 1894.
At the far end, the staircase that
led to the office of the prioress.
Thus this corridor was
called "Mother's dormitory."

The doorway of
Therese's first cell

Therese's neighbour was Sister Marie-Philomene, her novitiate companion (see p. 116). Throughout her life she would remember the gesture Therese made each evening after Matins, before closing the door of her cell. She waited for Philomene to go by and gave her one of her warmest smiles.



The staircase leading to the office of the prioress

Despite the humiliations that she received at her hands, Therese would always feel a strong liking for Mother Marie de Gonzague. Was it not thanks to her that she was able to enter Carmel so young? Six years before, she had proposed to Therese that she take the name Sister Therese of the Child Jesus. And so, the young postulant was often tempted to go to the prioress to ask for some permission in order to be with her for a few minutes. But she felt that this avoided the solitude into which she must immerse herself to find God. More than once, Therese held tight to the rail of the staircase, when she was passing by the cell of the prioress, in order not to give in to the temptation to knock.



Mother Marie de Gonzague (1834-1904)

Marie Davy de Virville belonged to a family of seven children. Her father was a magistrate. Raised at the Visitation in Caen, she developed a solid devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Welcomed into the Carmel of Lisieux in 1860 by the foundress, Mother Marie de Gonzague rubbed shoulders with the future foundresses of the Carmels of Saigon and Jerusalem.

Elected prioress for the first time in 1874, at the age of forty, she would be prioress, with the intervals provided for by the Rule, for twenty-seven years. Prioress were elected for three years and then had to hand over authority to another religious after six years of administration.

After the flood of July 7th 1875, which filled the ground floor with a sea of mud up to 1.80 metres deep, she boldly undertook the restoration and expansion of the monastery. She successfully solicited financial aid from the friends of her youth. This made it possible for the two wings of the cloister that remained to be constructed — one overlooking the garden and the other including the infirmary — to be completed in eighteen months.

Postulants were not lacking. When Therese arrived on April 9th 1888, the little Carmel of Lisieux had just celebrated fifty years of existence. The previous year,

the prioress decided once and for all to eliminate the dampness that had permeated the refectory and the cloisters since the flood. Concrete and other materials improved the drainage of the terrain. The red cobblestones — recycled to the granaries — were replaced by tiling of black, grey and white stones that formed a kind of checkerboard. The four broad steps of the inner courtyard, across from the lanes that led to the Calvary, were rebuilt. The one on which Therese posed for a photograph on Easter Monday 1895 would become famous (see p. 242-243).

Mother Marie de Gonzague guarded her authority jealously and found it difficult to see it pass into the hands of others when her term as prioress was over. She directed the monastery with detrimental instability, rectifying by whim situations that called for firmness and consistency.

Of fragile health, she willingly gave herself to supererogatory mortifications. At the beginning of her religious life she beat herself with nettles.

All that did not prevent her from wanting a joyful atmosphere to reign in her community, particularly among the novices. She also deserves credit for accepting Therese into the Carmel, despite her young age and the fact that she was the third Martin sister to enter there.

T H E R E S E ' S D E B U T

*A*t the time of her entrance into Carmel, Therese was placed under the direction of Sister Marie of the Angels, the Novice Mistress in charge. She worked with her in the laundry. For more than four years, early in the afternoon, Therese attended her presentations on the history and customs of Carmel. Then, to complete her assignments, she swept a corridor and a staircase, and did a bit of gardening in

the afternoon. Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart (her older sister Marie), designated to be her "angel," initiated her into the countless details of conventual life. She taught her; for example, to find her way through the breviaries used for the choral offices. However, in order to be sure that she was not trying to recapture through her the warm atmosphere of Les Buissonnets, Therese quickly let her

sister know that she could manage by herself.

Therese discovered the difficulties of community life rather early. Sister Saint Vincent de Paul, the finest embroideress in the community, made her feel that she was rather awkward in manual work (see p. 189). She even gave her a nickname, "the big nanny-goat." These stinging remarks hurt, but Therese offered them to Jesus for the conversion of sinners.

My first steps met with more thorns than roses

Count Amedee de Chaumontel, lieutenant in the first regiment of the Royal Guard, and his wife, Elisabeth Gaultier de Saint-Basile, were living in the castle of Meauty in Montpinçon, in Calvados, when their fourth daughter, Jeanne-Julia, was born. Two boys followed.

A lively and playful child, her fits of anger were so violent that her brothers nicknamed her "Lady Tempest." At twelve, she became scrupulous: the evening of her first communion she wondered whether or not she was in a state of grace...

In 1866, she decided to enter the Carmel of Lisieux despite the sorrow she felt at the thought of leaving her family. She left for the convent with Marie, her older sister, under the pretext of going on a retreat there... and never returned. The anger of her parents is understandable and the following year they did not attend their daughter's investiture.

She was subprioress twice, from 1883 to 1886 and from 1893 to 1899, and responsible for the novitiate from October 1886 to February 1893 and from 1897 to 1909.

This aristocrat willingly tackled the most menial tasks. A courageous woman, she was badly burned when she extinguished a fire with her bare hands. At the time of the great flood of 1875, she worked tirelessly to save what could be salvaged. In 1895, Therese

wrote that she was a "true saint, the ideal of the first Carmelites."

Her absent-mindedness often amused the community. Near the end of her life, she was seen one procession day holding up, with dignity and devotion, her cane instead of her candle.

Sister Marie of the Angels realized early on the quality of her young recruit and made it her duty to speak to her endlessly of the spiritual life when they worked together in the laundry. Therese would have preferred silence, but she put up, as best she could, with the pious chatting and multiple questions of her novice mistress. One day, no longer knowing what to say in response, the postulant threw her arms around her neck and hugged her. Therese gradually opened up to her. She even confided, at the time of her father's illness, "I am suffering a great deal, but I feel that I could suffer still more."

It was only after Therese's death that Sister Marie of the Angels learned of the existence of her manuscripts. While listening to the reading of *The Story of a Soul* in the refectory, she was filled with awe. The Little Way charmed her and she entered into it whole-heartedly. Near the end of her life she wrote, "I would like to be even poorer and more destitute so Jesus could show himself even more merciful!" She died a few months before the canonization of her former novice.



Sister Marie of the Angels (1845-1924)

Dimanche Juin 1888.

Mlle chère Céline,

Je serais bien gentille de m'envoyer le plus tôt possible
l'étoffe que tu as achetée pour te faire un tablier, Je me
fédérerais aussi la ceinture écossaise que tu m'as pour le
dignifier. Envoie moi aussi tous les rubans blancs propres que
tu as, il y en a un que j'ai eu autour de la tête le jour de
ma 1^{re} communion. Tu peux aussi rendre visite au bonnet...
Tout cela est pour représenter le Jésus...

A note from Therese to Celine
(June 17th 1888)

Therese asked her sister to send her something with which to play the role of Saint Agnes in a playlet composed by Sister Agnes, which would be presented on

June 21st, Mother Marie de Gonzague's feast day. Wearing a white tunic, her thick golden hair tumbling over her shoulders, the postulant incarnated in the freshness of her fifteen years an Agnes beaming with love for Christ, her fiancé, "It is Jesus Christ whom I love."



Sister Marie-Philomene of Jesus
(1839-1924)

Born in Langrune-sur-Mer, in Calvados, Noemie-Colombe-Alexandrine Jacquemin was the third in a family of six children. Her father ran a woodworking shop and one of her younger brothers became a priest.

She entered the Carmel of Lisieux in 1876, only to leave the following year to take care of her critically ill mother. She returned definitively in 1884 at the age of forty-five.

Three and a half years later, Therese joined her in Carmel. Despite the great difference in their ages, they got along very well together. "What do you think of our so different vocations?" asked Sister Marie-Philomene one day. Therese answered, "I think that God chooses fruits from every season. Isn't it the diversity of the fruits and flowers in a garden that makes it so pleasant?"

Before long Therese reproached her older sister for her excessive fear of purgatory. "You don't have enough confidence, you fear God too much; I assure you that he is grieved by it. Do not fear purgatory because of the pain suffered there, but desire not to go there in order to please God [...]. He purifies you at every moment

in his love." On her part, Sister Marie-Philomene reproached Therese for her hope of dying young. "One does not ask to rest before completing one's work!" she told her. Therese replied that she would not rest in heaven. "Look at Saint Aloysius Gonzaga," she said to her. "He was not dead two years when he had already done marvels for the glory of God and the good of souls."

Tall and strong, Sister Marie-Philomene was a hard worker. With Sister Marguerite-Marie and Sister Marie of Jesus, she was part of the trio regularly assigned to the difficult tasks of the community. For a long time she saw to the production of the altar breads. Therese encouraged her to give a more spiritual meaning to this exhausting work by writing for her "The Sacristans of Carmel" (November 1896).

After Therese's death, Sister Marie-Philomene committed herself with determination to the Little Way. At the end of her life, she no longer feared purgatory. She understood that God is only Father. "He is even like a grandfather," she dared to proclaim.

From a very early age, Therese loved to celebrate the feast of Saint Agnes. Since Pauline became Sister Agnes, this saint was her second mother's patroness. Therese happily collected a souvenir from her basilica at the time of her pilgrimage to Rome (see p. 88). When Pauline was elected prioress in 1893, January 21st became the great community feast day. On that day in 1894 Therese presented her first play on Joan of Arc and, in 1895, the second play. On January 20th 1896, Therese gave Mother Agnes her first manuscript as a feast-day gift.

Holy card kept by Therese



A Lazarist like his uncle, Jean-Gabriel Perboyre died a martyr in China at the age of thirty-eight. After 110 strokes with a bamboo cane for refusing to trample the crucifix underfoot, he was condemned to death by strangulation. Leo XIII beatified him on May 30th 1889, four weeks after Sister Marthe's reception of the habit.



Holy card kept by Therese

Sister Marthe of Jesus and of the Blessed Perboyre (1865-1916)

Florence-Marthe Cauvin, having lost her father and mother at the age of eight, grew up in various orphanages run by the Daughters of Saint Vincent de Paul. All her life she looked for the maternal comfort she was deprived of during her childhood. This explains some of her behaviour, in particular her excessive attachment to the prioress and her aggressivity.

She entered Carmel in 1887, at the age of twenty-two. Three months later, Therese joined her and became her novitiate companion. Although she admired the intelligent, generous younger woman, Sister Marthe was terribly jealous of her. She often yielded to the temptation of wounding her with biting sarcasm. She found it difficult to accept that Therese was admitted to profession two weeks before her.

She desired nonetheless to benefit from Therese's presence and advice for as long as possible. Thus, like Therese, she asked to remain in the novitiate after her profession (September 25th 1890). She even wanted to make her annual retreat at the same time as Therese. Therese agreed to this. For three consecutive years, in



1891, 1892 and 1893, Therese renounced the great silence of her personal retreat to speak to her companion each day, to listen to her difficulties and give her advice. Sister Marthe did not even realize the sacrifice she was thus imposing on Therese.

In 1893, when Therese was given the responsibility of watching over the novitiate, Sister Marthe continued to benefit from her understanding, all the while inflicting her tactlessness on Therese. It was only after 1897 that Sister Marthe became aware of the patience Therese had shown on her behalf. "She always had equanimity of soul," she would testify at the process.



To find Jesus in the heart of our being

Our little cell especially delighted me

Sister Marie of the Angels faithfully pointed out to the novices the essential place the Constitutions accorded to life in the cell, "Whenever they are not in community or at the office, each nun will remain alone in her cell or in the hermitage permitted her by the prioress" (p. 150-151).

When the Bible speaks of the human heart, it speaks of what is most intimate in each of us, of this inner cell where God dwells and where he invites us to meet him. The Desert Fathers liked to present conversion as the return of the sinner to his inner self. Before returning to his father, the prodigal son "came to himself" (Lk 15:17).

Likewise, all spiritual writers insist on the importance of the "return to the heart." In his *Confessions*, Saint Augustine regretted his delay in seeking God where he was:

"Late have I loved thee,
O beauty ever ancient, ever new!
Late have I loved thee!
You were within me, but I was
outside,
and it was there that I searched
for you.
In my ugliness, I plunged
into your gracious creations.
You were with me, but I was not
with you.
Created things kept me from you;
yet if they had not been in you,
they would not have been at all.
You called, you shouted
and you broke through my
deafness!"

Teresa of Avila described the spiritual life as the progressive journey of the soul toward the most secret mansion of the Interior Castle.

It is difficult to illustrate this inner journey to the depths of the soul. The picture on this page tries to do so: Jesus peacefully awaits the return of the dove to its resting place. Therese may have thought of this picture when she wrote to Celine on July 7th 1894, "A soul must be great to contain a God! Yet the soul of a one-day-old child is a Paradise of delights for him."

To remind themselves that they owned nothing, the Carmelites of Therese's time habitually referred to "our breviary," "our cell."



"Here am I knocking at the door..."
A picture hung on the wall
of Therese's cell

The Divine Prisoner of the tabernacle
awaits the visit and the gratitude of his
creatures, yet how many abandon him!
He knocks at the door of our heart to
make of it a tabernacle where he can rest.

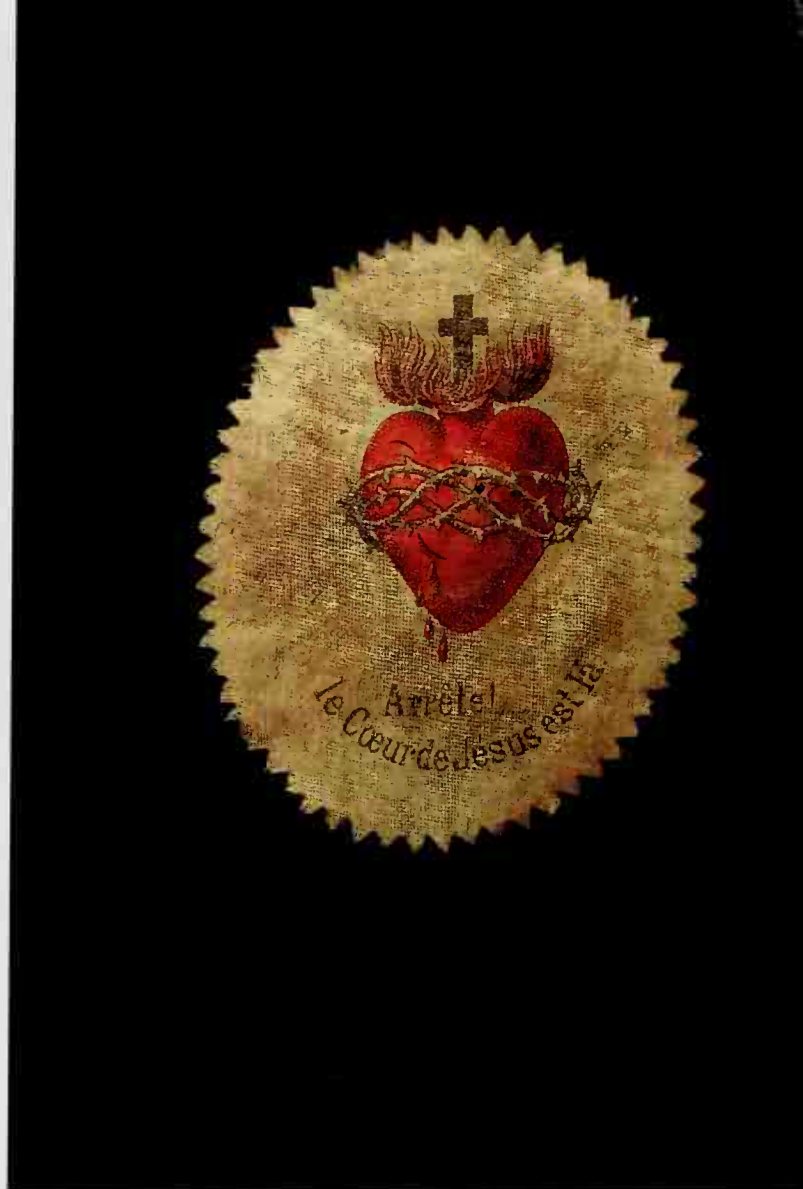
While looking at this picture, Therese
thought about the passage in the Song of
Solomon (5:2) where the Creator re-
quests the hospitality of his creature,
"Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove,
my perfect one; for my head is wet with
dew, my locks with the drops of the
night." This is the verse Sister Agnes had

Painted in 1887 on the wall of the Saint
Elias dormitory, between the Saint Agnes
and Saint Peter cells, very close to
Therese's cell (see p. 121).

Therese took up this theme again
in the painting she did in 1892 and gave
to Celine (see p. 197).



The Saint Eliseus cell, which Therese occupied from August 1894, had an antechamber where Therese placed the "Virgin of the Smile"



Standard of the Sacred Heart that was on the door of Therese's cell



Picture in the antechamber of Therese's cell

It may have belonged to Sister Marie-Philomene who had occupied the cell before Therese. In any event, Therese most likely composed the January 1897 poem "To My Guardian Angel" for this sister, her former novitiate companion for a year (1888-1889):

"Knowing my great weakness
You guide me by the hand
And I see you tenderly remove
the stone from the path."



Therese's last cell.
It was modestly furnished
and similar in every respect
to the one Saint Teresa of Avila
had in the 16th century



The cell of Teresa of Jesus
at the Carmel of the Incarnation
in Avila



Saint Elias Dormitory.
The door topped by a pediment
is the entrance to the
Chapter Room. To its left,
Therese's last cell



The confessional

*I made a general confession
like none I had ever made before*

Therese received many graces here. At the end of May 1888, Father Pichon preached a retreat at the monastery on the occasion of the profession of Marie, Therese's sister and godmother. Therese took advantage of the opportunity to make a general confession to her spiritual father. This encounter was decisive. The priest delivered her from the anxiety of conscience that had tormented her since May 1883. At Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, the Virgin made her feel that she had indeed been cured by her smile. She still wondered, nonetheless,

whether she had simulated her illness. The priest asserted that she had not been acting; she had truly been ill.

He reassured her on another point as well, "You have never committed a mortal sin. Thank God for it sincerely, because if he abandoned you, instead of being a little angel, you would become a little demon."

Located near the sacristy, the confessional also served as a parlour where the Carmelites met with the retreat masters.

Our Lady of Good Counsel

A painting done by Celine in 1888 for the Carmel

For a long time, this painting hung over the confessional door, near the convent door. Therese loved this painting. She remarked that the cheek of the Child Jesus is "pointed" like an infant's and "full of milk."

MATER BONI CONSILII



Jesus a souffert avec tristesse!... *Cristis est anima mea!*...
 tristesse, est-ce que l'âme souffrirait?.....
 Les maîtres ont souffert avec joie.... et le Roi des maîtres
 a souffert avec tristesse!... Et la première parole de son cœur

A retreat by Father Pichon
 at the Carmel of Lisieux (October 1887)

Sister Marie of Saint Joseph wrote down
 the outline of the conferences given to
 the Carmelites by the retreat masters.

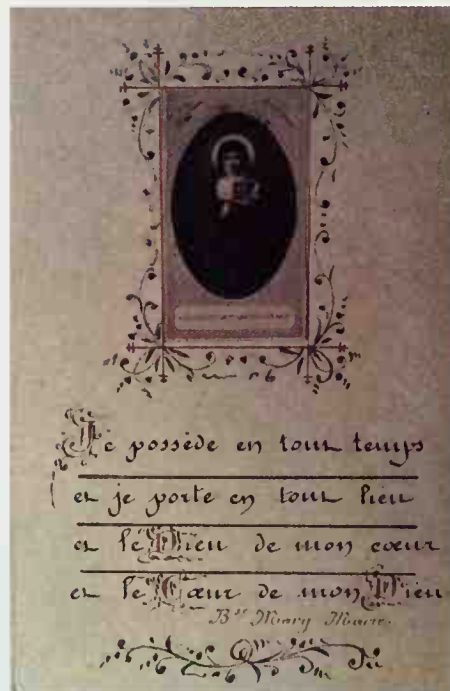
Upon her entrance into Carmel,
 Therese was happy to become ac-
 quainted with the content of the retreat
 given a few months earlier by her spir-
 itual father. She then discovered for the

first time an idea that would assume
 great importance in her understanding
 of suffering: Jesus suffered sorrowfully!
 Without sorrow, could the soul suffer?
 Let us be willing to suffer "poorly," with-
 out enthusiasm.

In his very first instruction, the
 preacher insisted on the poverty of
 spirit with which one must enter a re-
 treat. This was a theme to which
 Therese later returned constantly: "To

pray well, one must be desperate, that is,
 recognize that one has nothing and that
 one awaits everything from God!... A
 young girl, addressing her director,
 wrote him this profound thought: "Oh!
 Father, how heavy are empty hands be-
 fore God!"

Therese used this expression on
 June 9th 1895, in her Act of Offering to
 Merciful Love (see pp. 227 and 238).



A picture Father Pichon gave
 Therese for her feast day
 (October 15th 1889)

Therese met Father Pichon for the first time in 1882 when he visited Les Buissonnets. Marie had asked him to be her spiritual director and the Jesuit came to Lisieux from time to time to speak with Therese's godmother. The correspondence that followed was gradually extended to other members of the family. On the occasion of her first communion, Therese received from the priest a pamphlet on renunciation. In exchange, she confided to him her desire to enter Carmel.

On October 4th 1884, Father Pichon left for Canada. In writing, then in person — when he returned to Europe in September 1886 — he helped Marie discern her vocation. It was he who preached on the occasion of her reception of the habit, March 19th 1887.

In early October, he preached the community's annual retreat. His words were recorded by Sister Marie of Saint Joseph. Father Pichon was a master at telling an anecdote, a pithy story, or evoking a gospel scene. He liked incisive words, antitheses, even paradoxes. His reputation abroad as a great orator was not overrated. His whole approach was well-balanced and contrasted strongly with the sermon writers of his day, who were so quick to lead the way to heaven by emphasizing hell.

Having himself been a scrupulous youth — "to the point of madness," he admitted later — Father Pichon made every effort to calm souls. "There are souls who suffocate their whole lives long in the way of fear. I urge you to take your place in the heart of the Bridegroom. Go to him by love!"

Following the example of her godmother, Therese asked Father Pichon to 'direct' her soul. He truly became her spiritual father on May 28th 1888, the day she made a general confession of her past life to him. She came out of it delivered from her scruples. At the end of the conversation, the confessor concluded, "My child, may Our Lord always be your Superior and your Novice Master!" As it happened, Therese never met her spiritual father again since he lived in Canada most of the time. She wrote to him once a month, but he answered only once a year.

The fifteen letters which Father Pichon sent to Therese between 1888 to 1897 were not strictly speaking 'letters of direction.' He approved, blessed and expressed his joy at noting the progress accomplished in his "daughter's" soul, but he rarely gave her any directives. He intervened with authority only twice, to sweep away the scruples which once again sur-

faced in her soul, "I forbid you in the name of God to question your state of grace" (October 4th 1889).

Unfortunately, Father Pichon burned all the letters he received from Therese. She, on the other hand, carefully preserved his replies to her. By examining them closely, we can get some idea of what Therese had written to him in her previous letter, "You are right, your thanks must be multiplied in the evening of those days of aridity and bitterness" (March 27th 1890).

All her life, Therese maintained a profound sense of gratitude toward him. There are at least sixteen passages in her writings where she quotes him. She referred to his thought especially when she addressed Celine or Marie, for whom he remained the great authority.

On July 4th 1897, she confided to Mother Agnes, "Father Pichon treated me too much like a child; nonetheless he did me a lot of good too by saying that I never committed a mortal sin."



Father Pichon (1843-1919)

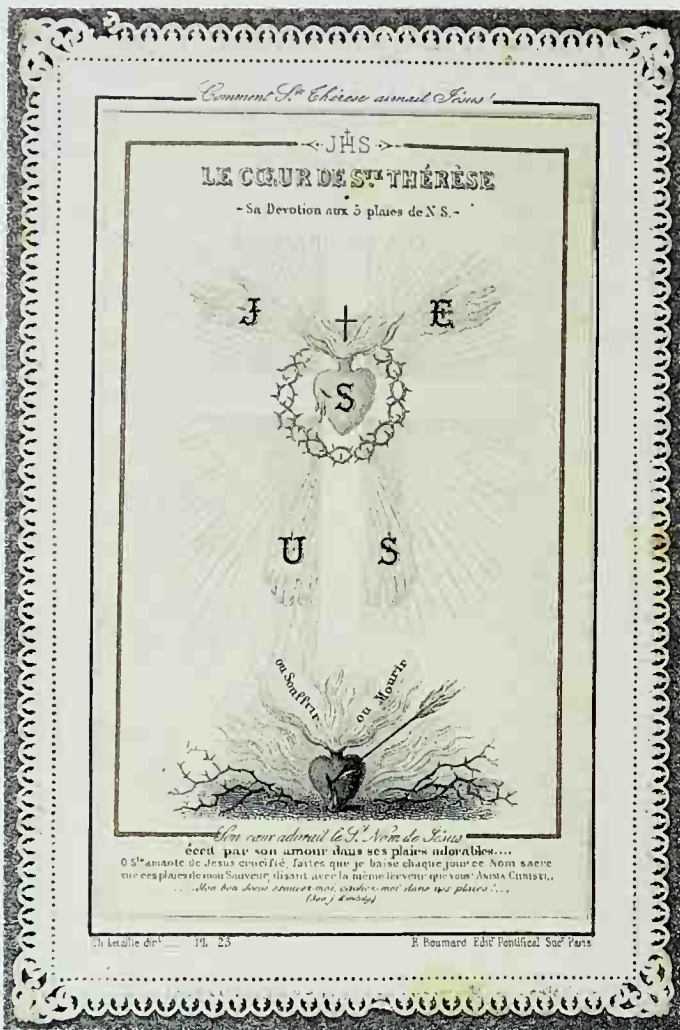
*Carmel was the desert
where God wanted me
to hide*

This Calvary had been donated by Monsieur and Madame Leroyer, the parents of Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine. Therese, who experienced a strong dislike for this sister, certainly asked the Lord, when passing through the cloister, for the grace to smile at her nonetheless (see p. 247).

She believed with her whole heart that these well-hidden acts of love of neighbour gladdened the heart of Jesus and contributed to the salvation of her brothers and sisters.



O CRUX
AVE
SPES CARMELI



A picture Therese received from Leonie the day her sister became a Child of Mary (October 13th 1882)

Therese wanted to love Jesus as much as her patroness did. How? In a different way, she would soon say. By a brand new Little Way. Nowhere in her writings does

Teresa of Avila mention an apparition of the Child Jesus which she is supposed to have received. This legend comes from the *fioretti* attributed to her.

I want to love God as much as Saint Teresa did

THERESE AND TERESA

Therese discovered in Carmel an environment profoundly marked by the presence of the Spanish reformer. There were statues, paintings and pictures recalling her ecstasies and her thought. On the wall of her first cell, Therese could read two statements: *Aut*

pati aut mori (To suffer or to die) and Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo (Forever will I sing the mercies of the Lord) (see p. 131).

Apparently, she did not read the works of Teresa of Avila in their entirety. She was familiar, however, with consid-

erable extracts from two volumes in the monastery library. She consulted this work, *The Sacred Banquet; The Daughter of Saint Teresa in the School of Her Mother*, selected Teresian texts arranged by Teresa of Saint-Joseph of the Carmel of Tours (Reims: 1888), from the time that she became responsible for the formation of the novices.

By studying the Rule and Constitutions of Carmel, first as a novice and then as novice mistress, Therese became imbued with the great intuitions of the reformer. In her school, she perceived more and more the missionary dimension of her contemplative vocation. Therese rediscovered in her what she had already begun to realize in November 1887, when she rubbed shoulders with the seventy-five priests on the pilgrimage to Rome: a Carmelite nun must pray not only for the conversion of great sinners, but also for the holiness of the clergy. "How beautiful is the vocation that has as its goal the preservation of the salt intended for souls! This is the vocation of Carmel, since the sole end of our sacrifices is to be the apostle of the apostles, praying for them while they evangelize souls" (Way of Perfection, chap. III, end).

In July 1896, she would pose before Celine's camera, holding in her hand a scroll containing a statement she had copied from Teresa of Avila: "I would give a thousand lives to save one soul" (Way of Perfection, chap. I). This was a statement she often quoted (see p. 267).

In one respect, however, Therese felt that she was very different from her patroness. At the end of the 19th century, great emphasis was placed on the exceptional graces of mental prayer that the Spanish mystic had received. The pious pictures of the times outdid themselves in representing her transverberation or the famous (legendary) scene where the Child Jesus caresses Teresa of Jesus saying, "I am Jesus of Teresa." From this perspective, Therese felt herself to be very little in comparison with her "seraphic" mother, as she was called. She did not consider herself worthy of such favours. When she painted the Child Jesus in 1894, she was satisfied to represent him sleeping at her side. "Though he does not caress me, I try to please him."



The shield of Carmel painted by Mother Agnes in collaboration with Therese who sketched and painted the flowers

ÉVITEZ la crainte et la gêne intérieure, l'âme qui s'y abandonne éprouve de très grandes difficultés pour toute espèce de biens.
Chemin de la perf., ch. xlij.

S'IL est bon que l'âme connaisse que d'elle-même elle ne peut rien, il est très bon aussi qu'elle sache qu'elle peut tout en Dieu. — *Chap. xiiij de sa Vie.*

coucher 4 h. II.



Ste CÉCILE, V. M.

LES visions, les visites et les faveurs du ciel ne sont que pour les humbles.
Ch. ix, Demeure 6.

NOVEMBRE.

Vendredi



Signet de S^{te} Thérèse.

Que rien ne te trouble.
 Que rien ne t'épouvante.
Tout passe.
 Dieu ne change point.
 La patience tout obtient.
 Qui possède Dieu
 Rien ne lui manque.
 Dieu seul suffit.

L. EUDÉ Ed. Tours - 20 - Ste Thérèse

CE n'est pas présomption que de concevoir un grand désir d'acquiescer des vertus héroïques à l'imitation des saints, ni même de souhaiter le martyre.

Ch. xiiij de sa Vie.

S. ISIDORE, Évêque, Docteur.

L'ÂME que Dieu attire à Lui par un degré sublime d'oraison, ne se trouble pas pour les injures qu'on lui fait, et ne se soucie pas plus d'être estimée que méprisée.

Chem. de la perf., ch. xxxvj.

AVRIL.

On calendar pages, Therese sometimes discovered quotations from spiritual writers which touched her. She carefully cut out the quotations and placed them in her books. These were often reflections from Teresa of Avila

LA pensée que nous devons être jugés par Celui que nous aurons aimé par-dessus toutes choses en notre vie, sera pour nous un grand sujet de consolation à l'heure de la mort.

Chem. de la perf., ch. xj.

S. MARC, Évangéliste.

LOIN de vous rendre plus saint, la crainte et les scrupules mettent obstacle au bien que vous auriez pu faire à vous et aux autres avec plus de liberté du cœur et de l'esprit.

Chem. de la perf.

AVRIL.

BIENHEUREUX celui qui aime Dieu véritablement et sincèrement, et qui tâche de L'avoir toujours auprès de soi et de converser avec Lui. *Ch. xxij de sa Vie.*



A picture Therese placed in her cell

Like her Spanish patroness, Therese wrote only in order to sing the mercies of the Lord: *Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo.*

Therese may have been thinking of the verse in this picture ["There are some, Lord, who serve you better than I, but that there should be some who love you more or more ardently desire your glory, I will never abide!

— St. Teresa] when she confided one day to Father Blino, "Father, I want to become a saint, I want to love God as much as Saint Teresa did." When the Jesuit tried to moderate the aspirations of his penitent, she replied, "But, Father, I do not think that these are rash desires since Our Lord said, 'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.' " An entirely evangelical objection!



In her first manuscript, when Therese wrote the account of her reception of the habit, she stated, "After kissing my dear King for the last time, I returned to the cloister, and the first thing I saw there was 'my little pink Jesus' smiling at me from the midst of the flowers and the lights, and then my gaze immediately fell on the snowflakes, the courtyard was as white as I..."

Therese was responsible for decorating the statue with flowers. She particularly liked to place wildflowers in a large basket one metre from the ground. But, in order not to displease Mother Hermance, who said that the scent of the flowers bothered her, she often replaced the flowers with artificial ones.

At that time, the pedestal was round and most often surrounded by paper rocks and branches on which were placed stuffed birds. On feast days, linens and lace were added. Therese painted the tunic of the Child Jesus rose with gold trim. It has been repainted several times since. The present pane of glass did not exist at the time, nor did the pedestal bear the inscription "Jesus of Teresa."

*I loved to decorate little Jesus' altar
with flowers*





A holy card kept by Therese

The text of this card [a conversation between Jesus and a child, in which Jesus tells the child that he accepts every sorrow — exile from heaven, birth in a stable, rejection, pain, tears, blasphemy, etc. — because he loves him] paraphrases a saying of Saint Bernard that Therese freely quoted: "Jesus, who made you so little? — Love!"

In fact, Bernard of Clairvaux wrote in his *Treatise on Charity* (chap. VI): "The greatest of all beings became the littlest. Who accomplished this wonder? Love!"

Statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague

During Therese's time, this statue was on the novitiate altar. In every Carmel, the Infant Jesus of Prague was invoked under the title of the "Divine Little Great One." Therese had several images of it.

By resting the globe in Jesus' hand, the artist evokes the mastery that Christ exercises over the world: "He is before all things and everything subsists in him" (Col 1:17) and "In your hand are power and might" (1 Chron 29:12). Therese may have been thinking about this statue when she proclaimed in one of her poems:

"With the same little hand
that caressed Mary
You upheld the world
and gave it life
And you thought of me."

Brought from Spain more than three centuries ago, the little wax statue has remained ever since in the capital of Bohemia, hence its name. A Spanish noblewoman, Maria Manriques de Lara, had brought it to Prague at the time of her marriage to Vratislav de Pernštejn. Their daughter Polyxena was given this family heirloom as a wedding gift when she married the chancellor of the kingdom of Bohemia.

In 1628, the widowed Polyxena resolved to make the statue available to all the faithful and entrusted it to the Carmelite monastery that had just been founded near the church of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires. The Carmelite fathers spread the cult throughout the world.

When the monastery was closed in 1784 during the reign of Joseph II, the care of the sanctuary of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, where the statue was venerated, was entrusted to the Order of Malta. Today, the metropolitan chapter of Saint-Guy cathedral is responsible for it. The statue is dressed in a different garb on special occasions according to the feast being celebrated.



*The richness of the treasures
hidden in the Holy Face*



The Holy Face pictured on
Veronica's veil (image preserved at
Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome)
and promoted by Monsieur Dupont,
the "holy man of Tours"

Monsieur Guérin had a reproduction of
it placed in Saint-Pierre cathedral in
Lisieux and had a perpetually burning

oil lamp set before it which he main-
tained at his own expense (fourth lat-
eral chapel on the right upon entering).



A picture of Sister Marie of Saint-Pierre made by Sister Agnes and kept by Therese



Monsieur Dupont

A DEVOTION PROMOTED BY THE "HOLY MAN OF TOURS"

From her youth, Therese had been accustomed to venerating the Holy Face of Jesus, as it was represented on Veronica's veil which was preserved at Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome.

On April 26th 1885, Therese, along with her father and her three sisters who were still in the world, were en-

rolled in the Atoning Confraternity of the Holy Face, whose headquarters were located in Tours, near the Oratory founded by Monsieur Dupont (1797-1876), named by his contemporaries "the holy man of Tours." In 1851, this layman from Tours became aware of the revelations received by Sister

Marie of Saint-Pierre (1816-1848), a Carmelite nun in Tours who had died in the odour of sanctity three years earlier. He devoted the rest of his life to spreading the cult of the Holy Face in the spirit of Sister Marie of Saint-Pierre — that is, with the goal of making reparation for the outrages and blasphemies that disfigured and continued to disfigure the face of the Saviour.

SISTER THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS AND OF THE HOLY FACE

Mother Genevieve of Saint Teresa, the foundress of the Lisieux Carmel, was very fond of this devotion and encouraged her novices to adopt it. At the time of her entrance into Carmel, Therese was in turn initiated

into it by Pauline who showed her young sister that the disfigured face of the Saviour must encourage her to live in humility, to remain well hidden, and to become progressively the "enclosed garden" in which the Lord could

take delight, a 'little Veronica' who would console him. Therese was so impressed by this devotion that on January 10th 1889, the day she received the habit, she added to her religious name the title "of the Holy Face." She often used stamps bearing the image of the Holy Face.



"These words from Isaiah, 'Who has believed your word?... He is without comeliness, without beauty..., his face was as hidden,' made up the substance of my devotion to the Holy Face or, rather, they were the basis of all my piety. I too wanted to be without beauty, to tread alone upon the grapes in the winepress, unknown to all creatures" (admission made by Therese on August 5th 1897).

An envelope placed by Therese under Sister Genevieve's door the eve of her profession (February 24th 1896)



This prayer on parchment (7 x 4.2 cm) was found in a small pouch Therese always carried over her heart. She had also inserted her formula of vows, written in September 1890 (see p. 169), and Mother Genevieve's last tear collected on a cloth. It included as well a case containing two medals (a Miraculous Medal and one of Saint Benedict) and five 'relics' including a lock of hair from Sister Marie of Saint-Pierre, the Carmelite from Tours.

This prayer probably dates from 1895 or 1896. It expresses in a very concise fashion Therese's fundamental desire: to remain well hidden in imitation of Jesus whose Holy Face, during the Passion, was "without beauty."

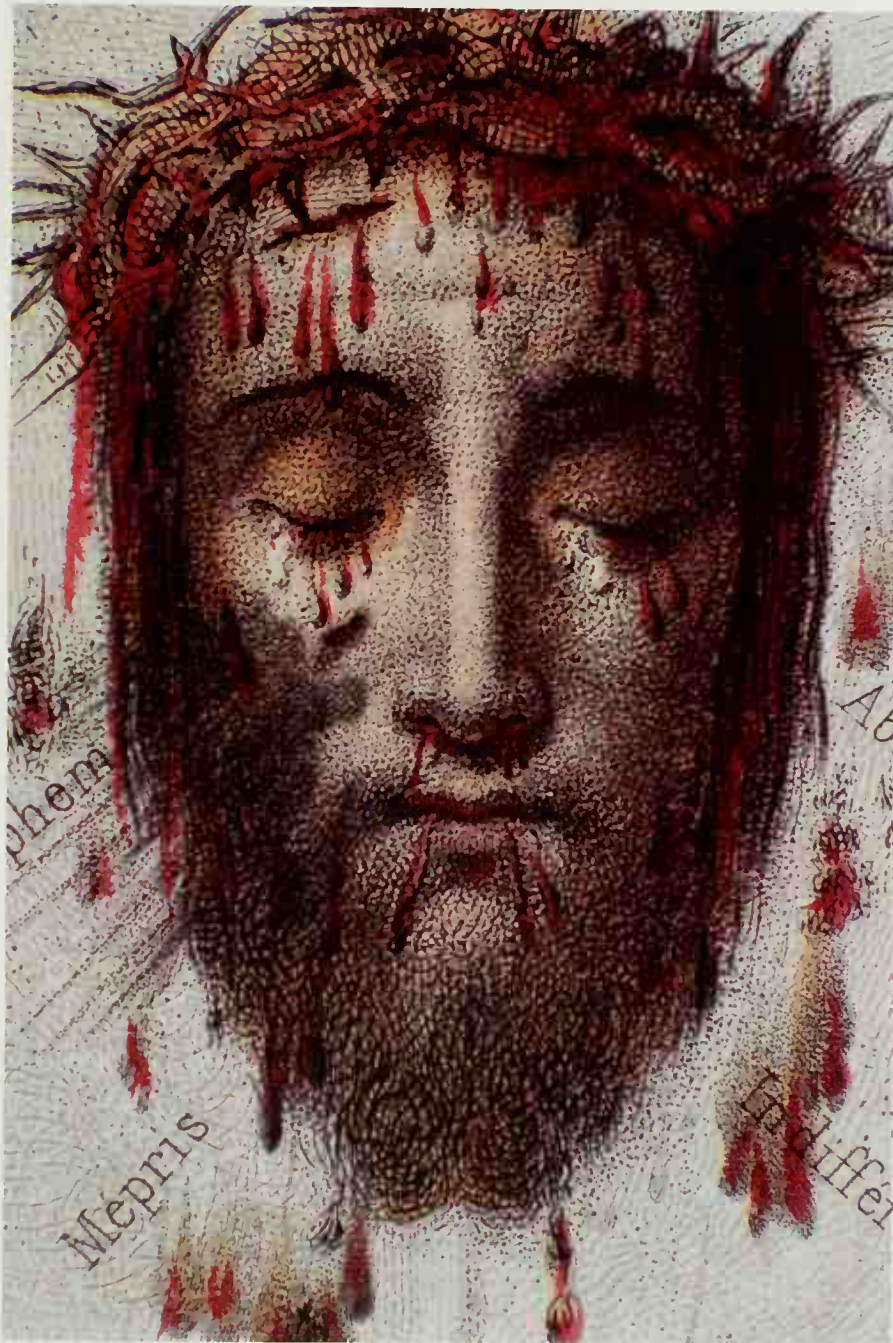


Therese's shortest prayer

"Jesus, make me like you."

One month after Therese's investiture, on February 12th 1889, Monsieur Martin was committed to Bon-Sauveur asylum in Caen. The contemplation of the Holy Face would progressively assume a more prominent place in Therese's prayer. In her mind, she would constantly associate the Holy Face of Jesus with the unrecognizable face of her father.

Through this family ordeal which touched her so closely, Sister Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face grasped more clearly the abyss of humiliation into which the Saviour was willing to descend. In contemplating the Holy Face, she reminded herself that her father remained, in spite of everything, the Father's beloved child. Disfigured today, he too would be transfigured like Jesus.





In January 1889, Father Gombault, the bursar of the Minor Seminary, entered the cloister to give his advice about some technical construction problems. He took advantage of the opportunity to photograph Therese, now a novice, in her brand-new habit. As soon as he left the Carmel, he went to Les Buissonnets where he photographed Monsieur Martin and Leonie.

Therese's hair was visible in outline under the white veil she wore as a novice. Her mantle was brand-new. When giving it to her on January 10th, Bishop Hugonin recited this formula from the ritual: "Those who follow the spotless Lamb will go with him, clothed in white. May they always be clothed in innocence as a sign of inner purity."

What a beautiful celebration

After her nine-month postulancy, Therese received the Carmelite habit on January 10th 1889. The ceremony took place in the presence of Monsieur Martin. Despite the rather serious health problems he had endured during the preceding months — in particular the loss of memory — he was considered to be strong enough to withstand the emotional stress relating to the ceremony for his youngest daughter's reception of the habit. This would be his last celebration on earth.

Therese's hair was not cut on January 10th. Because of the political situation — there was talk about the expulsion and exile of religious communities — Mother Marie de Gonzague preferred that the novice keep her hair for as long as possible. The cutting did not take place until the following year, on Therese's own insistence, six weeks before her profession (September 8th 1890). When carrying out the task, Sister Agnes noticed a tear in Therese's eyes: despite Therese's generosity the sacrifice remained difficult.

The present arrangement dates from 1913. Following a traditional procedure of the time, Celine reconstructed her sister's hair by using pieces that came from various cuttings. The upper part, forming the crown, came from the hair that was cut at the time of the reception of the habit. Since most of it was used in different compositions, Celine had to make use of hair that came from other cuttings in order to refashion these long tresses.

Because of the threat of expulsion which weighed on them, the nuns still did not cut their hair very short. Sister Marie of the Trinity, Therese's hairdresser, kept an abundant amount! The curls were formed from rather short strands of hair, 15 to 20 centimetres long, threaded into a wig by Sister Teresa of the Holy Face in 1913.



Therese's hair

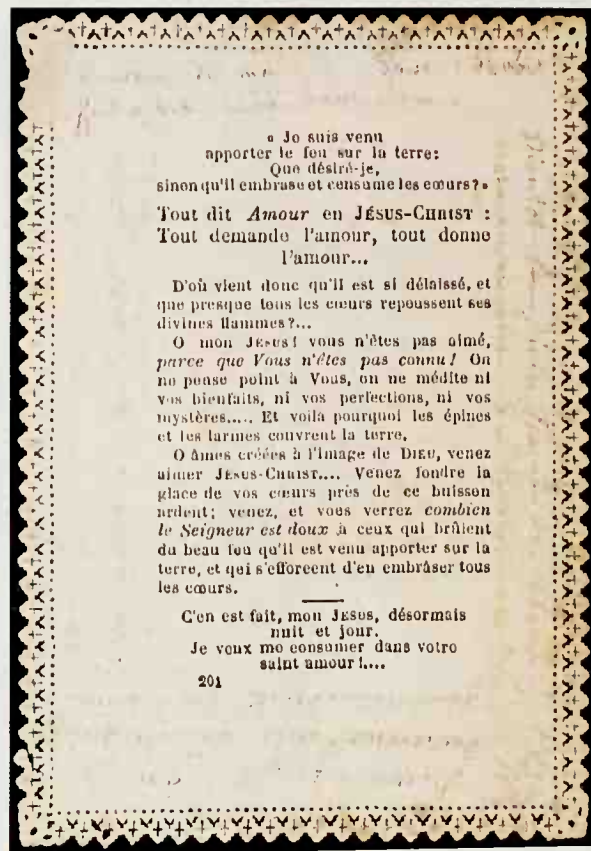


Both sides of a holy card Therese gave Sister Marthe in remembrance of Therese's reception of the habit

Jesus came to earth to love us and to spread the fire of his love in us. "To become a great saint," as Therese desired the day she received the habit, was to consume oneself in love for Jesus "day and night."

In giving this picture to Sister Marthe, Therese was trying to console her for not yet being allowed to receive the Carmelite habit. The signature of her definitive name appears here for the first time: Sister Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face.

A holy card made and illuminated with flowers by Therese in remembrance of her reception of the habit



A photograph of the novice taken in January 1889 by Father Gombault (see p. 142)

From the time of her childhood, Therese greatly loved this picture. It sustained her desire for the eucharist. Mother Agnes remembered that, while looking at it, her little sister said joyfully, "He is stopping... O what happiness... He is coming to me."

There existed at the time small, thin sheets of images which made it possible for anyone to design their own personalized pictures. While at Les Buissonnets, Therese had already drawn a design around a glued-on image. She did the same thing in January 1889 to give her family remembrances of her reception of the habit.

The response for the office of Saint Agnes, written on the picture ("I will be the bride of the One whose Mother is a Virgin!"), clearly shows the place occupied by Mary in the offering Therese made of herself to the Lord that day: for her, Mary was the "Virgin" par excellence. With the help of her Heavenly Mother, she will be faithful to her vow of virginity.



*Our Dear Father must be
very much loved by Jesus
to have to suffer so*

Scarcely twelve days after his daughter received the habit, Monsieur Martin's health suddenly deteriorated. He was delirious: he saw carnage and battles, he heard cannons and drums. To defend his daughters, he took up his revolver and refused to put it down.

Called immediately, Uncle Guerin disarmed his brother-in-law. The doctor decided to hospitalize him at Bon-Sauveur asylum in Caen. Under the pretext of going for a walk, attendants took the calmed man to the hospital. It was snowing. They stopped briefly at the Carmel. Pauline alone saw her father and received the fish from his last outing. He was hospitalized that very evening in Caen. He would remain there three years, until the time when, paralysed in the lower extremities, he was no longer capable of dangerously wandering off.

A week later, Leonie and Celine took up residence with the Daughters

of Saint Vincent de Paul near Bon-Sauveur and, from February 19th to May 5th, they would get daily news of their father and transmit it to Lisieux. They could see him only once a week.

In Lisieux there was no end to the gossip. Some claimed that by entering Carmel so young, Therese was responsible for Monsieur Martin's mental illness; the sadness had driven him insane. Today most physicians believe that his troubles were caused by cerebral arteriosclerosis — an obvious diagnosis if the earlier strokes and transitory paralyzes suffered by Monsieur Martin are taken into account.

Monsieur Martin had long periods of lucidity. He astonished the medical team by his kindness and docility. "I know why God gave me this ordeal," he confided to his doctor on March 9th. "I never had any humiliations and I needed one." The doctor replied, "Well, this one should count!"



The garden
of Bon-Sauveur
Hospital
in Caen



The main altar of Saint-Pierre cathedral

It was donated by Monsieur Martin in 1888. The clergy of the cathedral had launched a campaign for the purchase of a new altar. Monsieur Martin went to find the archpriest and gave him the 10,000 francs needed. Some time later he understood that having given the altar, it remained for him to provide the victim. One day in May 1888, in the parlour of the Carmel, he said to his daughters, "Children, I am just back from Alençon where I received so many graces, so many consolations in the church of Notre-Dame, that I made this prayer: 'My God, it's too much! Yes, I am too happy. It is not possible to get to heaven like this. I want to suffer something for you! And I offered myself...'"

THE COMMUNITY OF BON-SAUVEUR IN CAEN

Because it had benefited from the direction of a remarkable priest from the diocese of Bayeux, Father Pierre-François Jamet, the inventor of a system of signing for deaf-mutes, this religious community was truly exceptional.

After caring for prostitutes, then deaf-mutes, the women religious of Bon-Sauveur agreed to accept the mentally disturbed — not as insane people to be locked away, but as sick people to be cared for and, if possible, cured. Their house became a pilot program for the care of the mentally handicapped.

Nonetheless, admittance into Bon-Sauveur was considered an extreme humiliation at the time. This newspaper clipping from *La Croix du Calvados* (July 1891), that Therese carefully kept on account of an article about Father Loyson printed on the other side, gave evidence of the fact (see p. 179).

Anne-Marie Roule, whom Leon Bloy had thought of marrying in 1878 and who lost her mind in 1882, was hospitalized here until her death in 1907.

Fous. — Mercredi dernier, le train partant de Paris à 11 heures emportait 180 aliénés, hommes et femmes.

Un certain nombre de ces malheureux sont descendus à Caen et ont été immédiatement dirigés sur le Bon-Sauveur. Les autres continuent leur route et ont été internés à Pont-l'Abbé.

Chaque mois la ville Lumière expédie ainsi en province le trop plein des asiles où doivent fatalement venir échouer tant de ces pauvres hères que la misère et l'alcoolisme réduisent à ce triste état.

A clipping from
La Croix du Calvados
(July 1891)

Le castique de la souffrance unie à ses souffrances
 est ce qui avait le plus son cœur! ...
 Jésus frêle d'amour pour nous... regarde sa
 face adorable! ... Regarde ses yeux étants et
 baignés! regarde ses plis... Regarde Jésus dans
 sa face... La tu verras comme il nous aime.

Cher de l'enfant Jésus
 de la face
 no - un - ni.

A letter to Celine on April 4th 1889

Therese invited her sister more than ever to contemplate the adorable face of Jesus as the sun that would enlighten

her night and enable her to maintain peace. "Whoever says peace, does not say joy, or at least, not joy that is felt," she wrote above.

How did Therese react to this ordeal that touched the deepest recesses of her soul? By looking more than ever at the Holy Face of Jesus whose name she has borne from the time of her reception of the habit. Disfigured, like Christ during his Passion, Monsieur Martin remained, like Jesus, the Father's beloved child.

Therese reread what Father Pichon had taught during the retreat of 1887. To suffer according to the heart of God, one need not suffer with courage like a hero. It is enough to suffer as Jesus did at Gethsemane. There is a sorrow that is not sinful. "Let us suffer bitterly," she wrote to Celine on April 26th 1889, her twentieth birthday. "Jesus suffered sorrowfully. Without sadness could the soul suffer? And we would wish to suffer generously, greatly! Celine, what an illusion!"

Jours de Grâces, accordés par le Seigneur à sa petite épouse

Naissance 2 Janvier 1873 — Baptême 4 Janvier 1873 — Soin de la Sainte Vierge Mai 1883
 Première Communion 8 Mai 1884 — Confirmation 14 Juin 1884 — Conversion 25
 Décembre 1886 — Audience de Léon XIII 20 Novembre 1887 — Entrée au Carmel 9 Avril 1888
 Prise d'habit 10 Janvier 1889 — Notre grande richesse 12 Février 1889 — Examen canonique
 Bénédiction de Léon XIII Septembre 1890 — Profession 8 Septembre 1890 — Prise de voile 24
 Septembre 1890 — Offrande de moi-même à l'Amour 9 Juin 1895.

When writing, at the end of her first manuscript, the list of the important dates in her life, Therese did not fail to mention the day her father was hospitalized at Bon-Sauveur: February 12th

1889. By allowing this ordeal, God permitted all the members of the family to participate more closely in the Passion of Jesus. Consequently, she dared call it "our great richness."

Parchment (10.3 x 6.5 cm)
given to Celine by Sister Agnes
on April 27th 1890

Sister Agnes commented on her composition as follows, "You are the beautiful white lily whose petals support the Holy Face. Yours is the honour since this is your name [Celine expected that her religious name would be Marie of the Holy Face]. The stem is our little Mother in heaven and Papa [implied: the thorny branch] is the beloved Victim Jesus chose from our family. The four little buds are the four angels who flew away."

The saying, beautifully inscribed on the picture and signed PP, is a quotation from Father de la Colombière made by Father Pichon during his retreat in October 1887.

Therese made this symbolism her own in a letter addressed to Celine the same day.



Let us suffer bitterly

Sister Marguerite-Marie of the Sacred Heart (1850-1926)

From Colombiers-sur-Seulles, a village tucked away near a river that winds towards Courseulles, its estuary. Lea Nicolle was born here one day in May 1850. She was baptized in a splendid church: the bell tower was built in pure Romanesque style, the choir dated from the 12th or 13th century. Her father was a stone cutter: there were plenty of stone quarries in the area. Her mother was a lacemaker at a time when the area around Bayeux counted nearly 15,000 lacemakers.

In 1872, Father Hodiérne, who had been the chaplain of the Carmel of Lisieux for the last ten years, became the pastor of Crepon, a parish near Colombiers. He had his "penitent" enter Carmel on July 15th 1873. On that day Sisters Saint John the Baptist and Aimee of Jesus received the veil. Therese was being nursed as Semalle. Twenty years later, Sister Marie of the Angels described Sister Marguerite-Marie as "God's little daisy [marguerite], with all the simplicity of this flower." This robust country girl was as strong as an ox.



With Sisters Marie-Philomene and Aimee of Jesus, she completed the trio that always volunteered for the heavy work.

In 1886, she began to suffer from disturbing mental problems. The community stalled for a time but, in 1890, it became necessary to hospitalize her at Bon-Sauveur in Caen, one year after Monsieur Martin. She came out almost completely recovered. We can imagine the Martin sisters asking her for details about daily life at Bon-Sauveur. Early in 1896, she suffered a relapse. It was suggested to Sister Genevieve that everyone pray for the sick woman's recovery on February 24th 1896, the anniversary of her profession. Therese assured the community, however, that no miracle would take place, for she saw her at that time in a dream, entering the community room with a luminous cross on her shoulders. In fact, on March 14th 1896, she was re-hospitalized. In June, her brother brought her to his home in Colombiers. In 1922, she was admitted to the Little Sisters of the Poor in Caen where she died in 1926. Surely Monsieur Martin's illness helped Therese and the whole community to accept better Sister Marguerite-Marie's ordeal.

*Allow me to hide
under your veil*



Cloistered walk
along the Carmelites' choir.
The statue of the Virgin
is located near
the sacristy and the entrance

Therese lived her cloistered life under the gaze of Mary and in the radiance of her smile, which she had glimpsed when she was ten. When she spoke or wrote, she constantly referred to the Virgin: there are two hundred thirty-nine allusions to Mary in Therese's works. Of the fifty-four poems she composed, eight are dedicated to Mary and sixteen mention her, once or several times.

The statue of the Virgin which she joyfully greeted when passing through the cloister bore a surprising resemblance to the one at Les Buissonnets: the same smiling face, the same position of hands, the same gesture of welcome.



Maria
P. H. Fleur
M. A. F. L.

Maria
M. J.

Maria
L. R.

Maria
M. J.



One of Therese's favourite pictures:
Mary holds in her lap
the Child Jesus who holds
another child in his arms

Through this representation of Mary sheltering Jesus and her other children under her veil, Therese grasped the heart and the fruit of Marian devotion: the more I live in Mary, the more I am united to Jesus. The more I make myself little, the more Mary can carry me and unite me to him. She proclaims this in a Christmas 1894 poem:

"I will hide you under the veil
Where the King of heaven is sheltered
My Son will be the only star
To shine henceforth before your eyes

But that I might always shelter you
Under my veil, close to Jesus,
You must remain little
Adorned with childlike virtues."

During her novitiate year, Therese received a great Marian grace. In July 1889, while she was praying in the hermitage of Saint Mary Magdalene, she felt herself suddenly covered with the Virgin Mary's veil. She confided this to Mother Agnes on July 11th 1897, three days after she was admitted to the infirmary. "It was like a veil thrown over all the things of earth for me... I was entirely hidden under the Blessed Virgin's veil. At that time, I was in charge of the refectory and I remember that I was doing things as if I weren't doing them: it was as if I had been lent a body. I remained this way for an entire week."

All of Therese's Marian piety was marked by this experience. She understood forever what Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort explained in his writings: we must live our Christian life "in Mary." Hers is the maternal womb to which we have the right and duty to abandon ourselves so that we may be formed there in the image of Jesus.

In her poems, Therese often proclaimed her joy at being covered by Mary's virginal veil:

"O Immaculate Virgin! You are
my sweet star
Who gives me Jesus and unites
me to him
O Mother, let me rest under
your veil
Only for today."



Behind the cemetery,
the hermitage of Saint Mary Magdalene
with a statue of the Virgin above

J. 16. J. V. (Ch. Minut. Julien)

La Rose Divine on le lait
virginal de Marie

Mon Dieu Jésus sur le sein de ta Mère,
Tu m'apparais tout rayonnant d'amour
Daigne à mon cœur révéler le mystère
Du trône du céleste séjour
Ah! laisse-moi me cacher sous le voile
Qui te drapè à tout regard mortel
Et près de toi, ô maternelle table!
Je trouverai mon vivant goût du Ciel.

The first poem
composed by Therese

At the insistent request of Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine, Therese wrote her first poem for the feast of the Presentation (February 2nd 1893).

Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine greatly appreciated the reflections of Sister Marie of Saint-Pierre — the Carmelite of Tours — on how the Incarnate Word lowered himself, "A few days ago, after holy communion, the Child Jesus strongly instructed me to consider the honour and homage of perfect praise he gave to his heavenly Father during the time he was nourished by his most holy Mother's virginal milk. He made me realize that he wants me to adore him in this humble state, in union with the holy angels, so that his mercy might fill me with innocence, purity and simplicity." Thanks to the reading of Dom Gueranger's *L'Année liturgique*, Therese knew that the Fathers of the Church were familiar with this approach.

As does the Christian tradition, Therese marvelled at the humility of the Word who needed milk to live, but she also thought of the eucharist she herself needed to live the very life of Jesus: the virginal milk that is appropriate for the children of God is the "white Host" — the very body of Jesus which Mary prepared for us by nourishing it with her milk.

Therese used to say to Celine, "This Virgin reminds of a mother nursing her child." Most likely Therese looked at this picture when she composed her first poem.

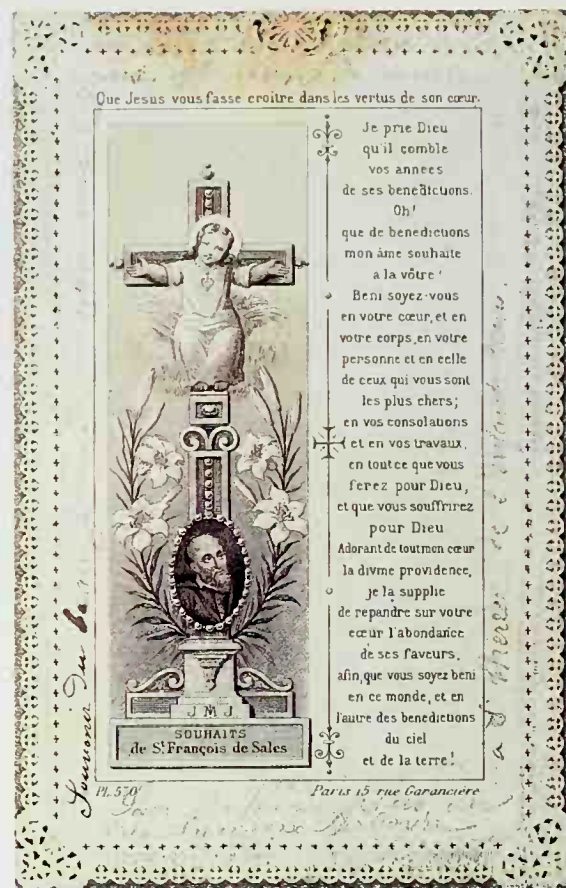
The lily seems to have served as a model for the painting she did in 1892 (see p. 197). It symbolized the virginity of the one who had the honour of nourishing the Divine Child with her "virginal milk."

A picture from Therese's cell





A picture done by Celine in 1894
at Therese's request.
Celine was inspired by Raphael's painting,
The Granduca Madonna



From the crib to the cross
A picture Therese received
from Sister Marthe on the day of her
investiture (September 23rd 1890)
inscribed on the back
"to Sister Therese of the Child Jesus"

Sister Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face

Here we find the theme so dear to Cardinal de Berulle: from the time he came into the world, Jesus offers himself to his Father: "Here I am, O God, to do your Will." In his crib he holds a cross; better still, he stretches his arms out on a cross.

The picture probably gave Therese the basic idea for her painting *The Dream of the Child Jesus*. The tracing has been recovered with her art supplies.

It also suggests the paraliturgy she conceived for Christmas 1895. Each Carmelite was invited to give Jesus a note offering him a cake, some honey or a smile... (see p. 162).

Given our custom of meditating successively on the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries of the rosary, we spontaneously think of the birth of Jesus as a joyful event, while the Saviour's Holy Face, disfigured by the crown of thorns, seems to sum up the entire painful Passion.

This dichotomy did not exist in the minds of the Christians of the 19th century. When they looked at the Child Jesus in the crib, they contemplated in him the future Victim of Calvary. When, on the other hand, they raised their eyes to the crucified One, they already acclaimed in him the risen One.

In examining more closely the way Therese viewed the crib, we will better understand that she could easily associate in her name the joyful mystery of the childhood of Jesus and the sorrowful mystery of his Holy Face. The holy pictures of the 19th century often represented Jesus dreaming about his future Passion while in his crib. At first glance, this appears to us as contrary to the Christian faith, and especially to what the Church defined at the Council of Chalcedon (451), namely that the Christ, fully Son of God from the first moment of his conception, lived our human condition fully, and consequently had a mind like ours, capable of growth. Do we not

see him in the gospel astonished by the faith of the centurion? To imagine that he could be aware of his future when he was still a baby, is this not to make him an exception to the condition of every child ever born?

Absolutely not. It was in the very depths of his human consciousness, there where he knew himself to be the beloved Son of the Father from the first moment of his conception, that Jesus could offer himself to his Father in an outpouring of incomparable love.

This offering of the incarnate Word to his Father from his mother's womb — the offering that saved us — was the great object of contemplation for Cardinal de Berulle, the 17th century theologian. He exercised a very great influence on his time and, most notably, on the first French Carmelites since he had played a decisive role in the foundation in Paris of the first reformed Carmels. Cardinal de Berulle was also their first superior. We know that he also introduced to France the Congregation of the Oratory, founded in Italy by Philip Neri.

To support his thought he relied on a verse from Psalm 40 taken up in the Letter to the Hebrews (10:5-7). In coming into the world, Christ said: "You wanted neither sacrifice nor oblation, but you fashioned for me a body. You were pleased with neither holocausts nor sacrifices for sins. Then I said: I have come to do your will, O God, as is said of me in the scroll of the book."

For Cardinal de Berulle, Christ's entire life was the accomplishment of the primordial "yes" he had said to his Father after Mary had uttered her "yes" to the angel. This theological vision is that of the entire French school of spirituality — that is, it was shared by Vincent de Paul, John Eudes, Monsieur Olier, etc.

Therese easily made it her own. At the beginning of 1894, she did a painting representing the Child Jesus in his crib dreaming about his future Passion. And so, she sketched on the same canvas the face of the Child Jesus and his sorrowful face.

In the collection of holy pictures that she had at her disposal, there were many that illustrated the same theme. Sometimes Jesus was represented holding the cross or the crown of thorns in his hand, sometimes he was laid to rest in a crib that was already in the form of a cross. The painters of icons

followed the same inspiration when they composed a Nativity scene. They placed the newborn Child in a completely darkened grotto to evoke the Holy Sepulchre where he was placed at the end of his life. As for the swaddling clothes, they prefigured the shroud from which the Lord would rise.



The coat of arms designed by Therese at the end of her first manuscript in January 1896.

Therese wrote the commentary on it herself: "The device JHS is the one Jesus deigned to bring as a dowry to his unworthy bride. The orphan of Beresina became Therese of the CHILD JESUS and of the HOLY FACE — these are her titles of nobility, her wealth and her hope. The vine that divides the shield in two is again the image of the One who deigned to say to us: *I am the vine and you are the branches, I want you to*

bear much fruit. The two tendrils surrounding the Holy Face and the little Jesus symbolize Therese herself who has only one desire here below: to offer herself as a little cluster of grapes to refresh the child Jesus, to amuse him and let herself be pressed by him according to his whims, as well as to be able to quench *the ardent thirst* he felt during his Passion. The harp represents Therese again, who wants to sing melodies of love to Jesus eternally."

The picture that inspired Therese in the composition of her painting. The graph she drew on the picture is visible

The picture had been given to her on April 17th 1888 by Sister Anne of the Sacred Heart, a Carmelite who returned to Saigon in 1895.



Therese did not follow the model completely; she preferred to represent the Child Jesus with eyes lowered. She herself explained the reasons when she wrote to Sister Marie-Aloysia: "I painted the divine Child in this way to show how I see him. In fact Jesus is almost always sleeping." Therese knew very well that even if Jesus is sleeping, "his heart is keeping watch." He is constantly thinking of us.

Furthermore, the lowered eyes of the Child Jesus, like those of the Holy Face, made her desire more intensely the day when the Lord would finally reveal his gaze. Only "in the homeland" will we see in his eyes what love he has for each of us.

A reliquary made by Therese

Therese herself provided the commentary on the painting when she gave it to Mother Agnes. "While playing with the flowers his beloved brought him in the crib, Jesus is thinking about what he will do to thank her. Above, in the heavenly gardens, the angels, the servants of the Divine Child, are already weaving the crowns that his heart has reserved for his beloved.

"However, night has come. The moon sends its silvery rays and the gentle child falls asleep. His little hand does not let go of the flowers that delighted him during the day and his heart continues to dream of his beloved's happiness.

"Soon he glimpses in the distance strange objects that bear no resem-

blance to the springtime flowers. A cross! A lance! A crown of thorns! Yet the Divine Child does not tremble. These are what he chooses to show his beloved how much he loves her! But this is still not enough. He sees his childish, beautiful face disfigured, bleeding, unrecognizable! Jesus knows well that his beloved will always recognize him, that she will be at his side even when everyone else abandons him. And the Divine Child smiles at this bloody picture. He even smiles at the chalice filled with the wine that brings forth virgins. He waits for the shadows to decline, for the night of life to be replaced by the radiant day of eternity! [...]

"Then he will turn his radiant, glorious, divine face to her and his beloved will taste eternally the ineffable sweetness of his divine kiss!"





"The Dream of the Child Jesus"
An oil painting done by Therese
at the beginning of 1894
which she gave to Mother Agnes
on January 21st, for her first
feast day as prioress

The following April, Mother Agnes sent
it to Sister Marie-Aloysia Vallee, her
former teacher at the Visitation in Le
Mans. In 1927, Sister Genevieve sent
for the painting and significantly
retouched the face of the Child Jesus.
The elderly religious of the Visitation
remember that it used to look much
more like a "chubby baby," with
stronger features.

The monastery in Le Mans has since
closed, and the painting is now at
the Visitation in Chartres.

THE CHILD JESUS OF THE CARMEL OF BEAUNE

Therese knew the origins of the cult of the holy Child Jesus of Beaune promoted by the Carmels of her time. In 1630, a young girl, Marguerite Parizot, entered the Carmel of this city after her mother's death. She was only eleven and a half, but her spiritual precocity had led those responsible to make an exception in her favour.

There she learned to venerate the Child Jesus according to the custom of the Spanish Mothers who had just

founded the first French Carmels. There was a celebration on the 25th of every month to honour the Incarnation of the Word, a celebration at midnight to venerate his birth, etc. Before long, the Child Jesus appeared to her and helped her do her work. Her prioress and novice mistress were obliged to recognize that the girl was telling the truth. She was given the name Sister Marguerite of the Blessed Sacrament and, at the age of sixteen, she consecrated herself definitively to God. The Child Jesus continued to appear to her and taught her the way to honour him from the moment of his Incarnation to his twelfth year. This was the starting point for a rosary of fifteen beads — the "little crown" — which, within a few years, would be taken up by thousands. The Our Father is said on the first three beads and, on the twelve others, a Hail Mary in honour of the first twelve years of Jesus' life.

A chapel was also built near the Carmel where pilgrims prayed to the Child Jesus held in his mother's arms. In 1643, this was replaced by a little statue representing Jesus standing, wearing a crown and carrying a royal sceptre. In 1632, during another apparition, Marguerite understood that the Child Jesus wanted to be honoured as King of kings and Lord of lords. The wonders — conversions and cures — that took place before the statue of the "Little King" in this chapel were numerous. It had been sculptured by a great convert, Baron de Renty, the founder of the well-known Society of the Blessed Sacrament, who became one of the most ardent propagators of this cult.

Therese does not explicitly refer to this devotion but, like the Carmelite of Beaune, she was pleased to contemplate in Jesus the One who claims all our love. He is the "Divine Little Beggar of Christmas." This was the title of the paratiturgy she composed and had performed the evening of December 25th 1895.

the fifteen beads of the crown propagated by the Carmel of Beaune. They invite us to keep "in royal Jesus' court," the office of the angels, the shepherds, the stable, the ox and the donkey, the Virgin, Saint Joseph and the Magi.

The theme of this picture reflects the cult of the "Little King." The Child of the crib lays claim to our love. Following the example of the Christmas shepherds, we must adore him. The fifteen medallions surrounding the crib — which has become a throne — recall





Following the example of Margaretta of the Blessed Sacrament, Therese also applied herself to living the virtues of childhood, especially the complete abandonment to the Father's will. Jesus was of course the perfect model of these virtues. While Therese did not encourage the disciples of Our Little Way to multiply vocal prayers or devotional practices to the Child Jesus, as did the Carmelite of Bourges, neither did she discourage external signs of veneration. She too loved to decorate the statue of the Child Jesus with flowers or other petals to the crucifix in the courtyard.

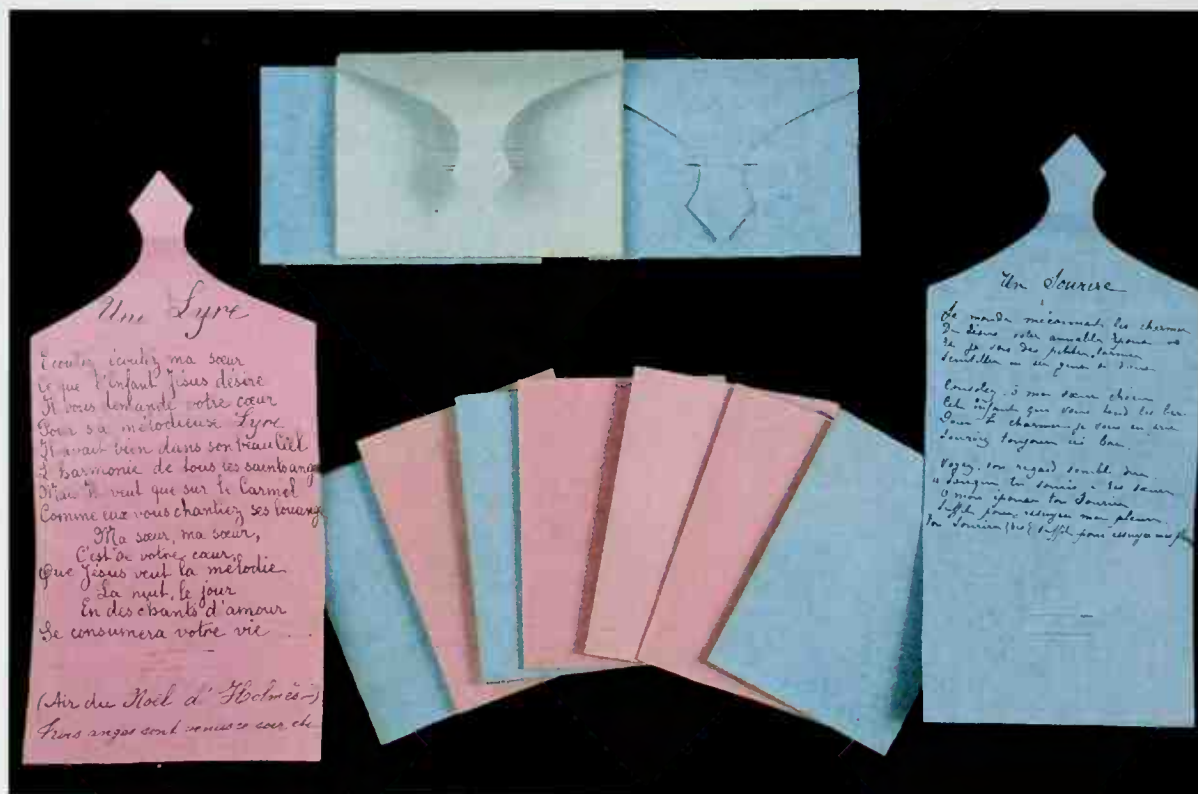
The Child Jesus of the Carmel of Bourges

The statue was at the rear of the public gallery overlooking the Carmelites' choir. One day before this statue, Sister Agnes explained to Therese how wonderful it would be if she added the title of the Holy Face to her religious name. This readily indicates that the representation of the Child Jesus at that time easily evoked the remembrance of his Passion.

It was before this Child Jesus that the community gathered in the chapter room on the evening of December 25th 1895 for a paraliturgical celebration designed by Therese. Each sister presented herself according to her "rank in religion," beginning with the prioress. Kneeling before the Child Jesus, she drew a folded note from a basket and handed it to an angel (Sister Marie of the Eucharist) who sang the verse. Each sister thus received, in the presence of all, a personal invitation to offer the Lord the best of herself: her smile, her song, her heart. Therese truly

marvelled at the idea that, in coming to earth, the Omnipotent One calls for our simple love.

That evening the Carmelites accomplished after a fashion the gesture made by the child in the picture Therese had received from Sister Martbe on September 23rd 1890. They all offered the divine Child the gift of themselves which they wanted to give him. On the evening of December 25th 1895, at the Carmel of Lisieux, took place a truly "festive offering of letters" (see p. 156).



Some of the letters composed by Therese for the paraliturgy of Christmas 1895, "The Divine Little Beggar of Christmas." The pink notes were written out by Sister Marie of the Trinity, the blue ones by Sister Genevieve and the green one by Sister Marie of the Eucharist

The wax statue that the Carmelites placed in their crib

The Child is laid in a crib lined with swan down from the dress Therese wore the day she took the habit; the tunic was cut from the same dress. The doll's hair was made from Therese's hair, cut when she was a child. The Alençon lace was made by Madame Martin.



In her teens, Therese had sketched the Sacred Heart of Jesus (see p. 64). Pictures in his honour were numerous and Father Pichon, her spiritual director, made frequent allusions to the Sacred Heart in his correspondence and preaching.

Therese, on the contrary, seldom spoke of it. She used the expression "Sacred Heart" only once in her three manuscripts. Only one of her twenty-one prayers was addressed to the Sacred Heart. The few poems that refer directly to it were composed at the request of her godmother, Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart.

How can we explain this "omission"? Therese did not actually feel the need to consider the heart of Jesus in

order to appreciate his love. She greatly preferred to evoke the Child Jesus in his crib or the Holy Face. What bothered Therese about the representations of the Sacred Heart around her was that while Jesus shows his heart, symbol of his love, he does not sufficiently invite us to rest there as Saint John did during the Last Supper. And that was what interested Therese:

*"To sleep on his heart,
so close to his face,
Such is my heaven!"*

Therefore she preferred pictures in which Jesus lets a child climb up on his lap or rest against his chest. She explained this to Celine who was with

Leonie at Paray-le-Monial on the occasion of the second centenary of Saint Marguerite-Marie's death: "I do not see the Sacred Heart as others do," she wrote to her on October 14th 1890. "I think that my Spouse's heart is mine alone, as mine is his alone and I speak to him in the solitude of this delightful heart-to-heart exchange, waiting for the day when I will contemplate him face to face."

We can thus understand that Therese favoured the pictures whose inscriptions explicitly affirmed that the heart of Christ is "our refuge," the "hollow of the rock" where we can remain forever, to savour there the infinite tenderness of God.

I do not see the Sacred Heart as others do



The inscription on this picture was more agreeable to Therese: the heart of Jesus is presented as the "hollow of the rock" where we can rest



A picture Pauline had brought from the Visitation in Le Mans and which Therese liked a great deal (testimony of Sister Genevieve on the back of a photograph she had taken of it)

Therese wanted to lose herself in the heart of Christ just as she wanted to hide herself in the mystery of his face. She often meditated on the verse of the Song of Solomon in which the bridegroom invites his beloved — his dove — to come curl up against him.

In her second play on Joan of Arc, she put these words in the mouth of Christ, when he welcomes into his kingdom the young martyr who has just died on the stake whispering his name. For Therese, the heart of Christ was also the fire of love, alone capable of consuming all our sins.

“I choose for my purgatory
Your burning love, O heart
of my God!
My exiled soul leaving this life
Would like to make an act
of pure love
And then flying to heaven,
its homeland,
Enter into your heart
straightaway.”



A picture Sister Genevieve gave Therese on the day of her profession

Therese liked this picture very much. In it she saw the illustration of a gospel saying she found inspiring: “Those who love me, my Father will love and we will come to them and make our home with them” (Jn 14:23). The first two stanzas of her poem “To Live by Love” proclaim this presence of the Holy Trinity in the soul of the Christian. By opening herself to Jesus, Therese knew that she welcomed in her heart the Father and the Holy Spirit and that she was ablaze with the fire of their love:

“O Trinity, you are prisoner
of my love.”



The heart of Christ
in the bosom of the Trinity

This picture which Therese especially liked is theologically most appropriate. As pilgrims we are invited by Mary and Joseph to stop along the way to prostrate ourselves before Jesus, their Child. He is the Christ, the One who receives the fullness of anointing by the Holy Spirit communicated to him by the Father so that he, in turn, may extend it to all of us who confidently come to him.

Christ is both at the centre of the Holy Family and at the heart of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Family directs the Christian to enter fully into the depths of the life of the Trinity.

A picture painted by Therese at the Carmel. Sister Agnes wrote the text

The theme of surrender into the hands of Jesus: there we have nothing to fear.



*Christe, moi et ne craigne
rien. — Chaque fois que vous
dites: noté avec vous moi vas
aimer. je le tiens dans mes
mains alors il est en danger.*



The chapter room where Therese prostrated herself on Monday, September 8th 1890

My wedding dress was ready

Therese could have made her profession in January 1890, a year after her entrance into the novitiate, but Canon Delatroette thought she was too young. Furthermore, Monsieur Martin's illness did not help the matter: Disappointed at first by the delay, Therese made the best of the situation by preparing herself even more fully for her wedding to the Lord. The definitive commitment of a Carmelite called for two ceremonies. The first, in private, took place in the chapter room on September 8th, the feast of the Nativity of Mary. The second, in the monas-

tery chapel, in the presence of the faithful, was called the "veiling," because the Carmelite exchanged the white veil of the novice for the black veil of the professed nun. This second ceremony took place on September 24th. On the eve of the ceremony, Therese still hoped that her father would be able to attend, but Monsieur Guerin thought it more prudent not to expose his brother-in-law to such an emotional experience.

On September 2nd, Therese went to the chapel and responded to the questions of the canonical examina-

tion posed by Canon Delatroette: "Why have you come to Carmel? — I have come to save souls and especially to pray for priests."

The night before her commitment, a wave of panic suddenly overwhelmed her: "I don't have a vocation!" she said to herself. She confided her anguish to her novice mistress and was quickly reassured. Informed of the difficulty, the prioress merely laughed. The next day, Therese pronounced her vows in profound peace. Hers was the forty-eighth profession in the Carmel of Lisieux. She would be eighteen in four months.



A picture given to Therese
by Father Reverory,
the vicar general of Bayeux,
on the occasion of her profession

The picture alludes to the transver-
beration of the heart of Teresa of Avila
and recalls one of her favourite sayings:
Aut pati aut mori (To suffer or to die).

A picture given to Therese on the day
of her profession by Sister Agnes
and Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart



The picture of the Presentation of the
Virgin Mary was glued to a piece of
cardboard. The inscription printed by
Sister Agnes was a response for the feast
of Saint Agnes. This was a discreet way
of recalling that, by her vow of chastity,
the Carmelite seeks to imitate the Virgin
Mary and live her religious consecration
as a true marital union with Jesus.

Later Therese wrote: "What better
feast than the Nativity of Mary to be-
come the bride of Christ! It was the
little day-old Blessed Virgin who pre-
sented her little flower to little Jesus...
That day, everything was little, except
the graces and the peace I received."

On April 30th 1896, Therese gave
Sister Marie of the Trinity the same pic-
ture for her profession, commenting:
"You are the little Mary who is climbing
the steps of the Temple. On the high
priest's left, I am the child waving her
hand to you; Celine is leaning against
her shoulder, and on the other side is
Sister Marie of the Eucharist."

The remembrance of her profession that Therese carried on her throughout her life

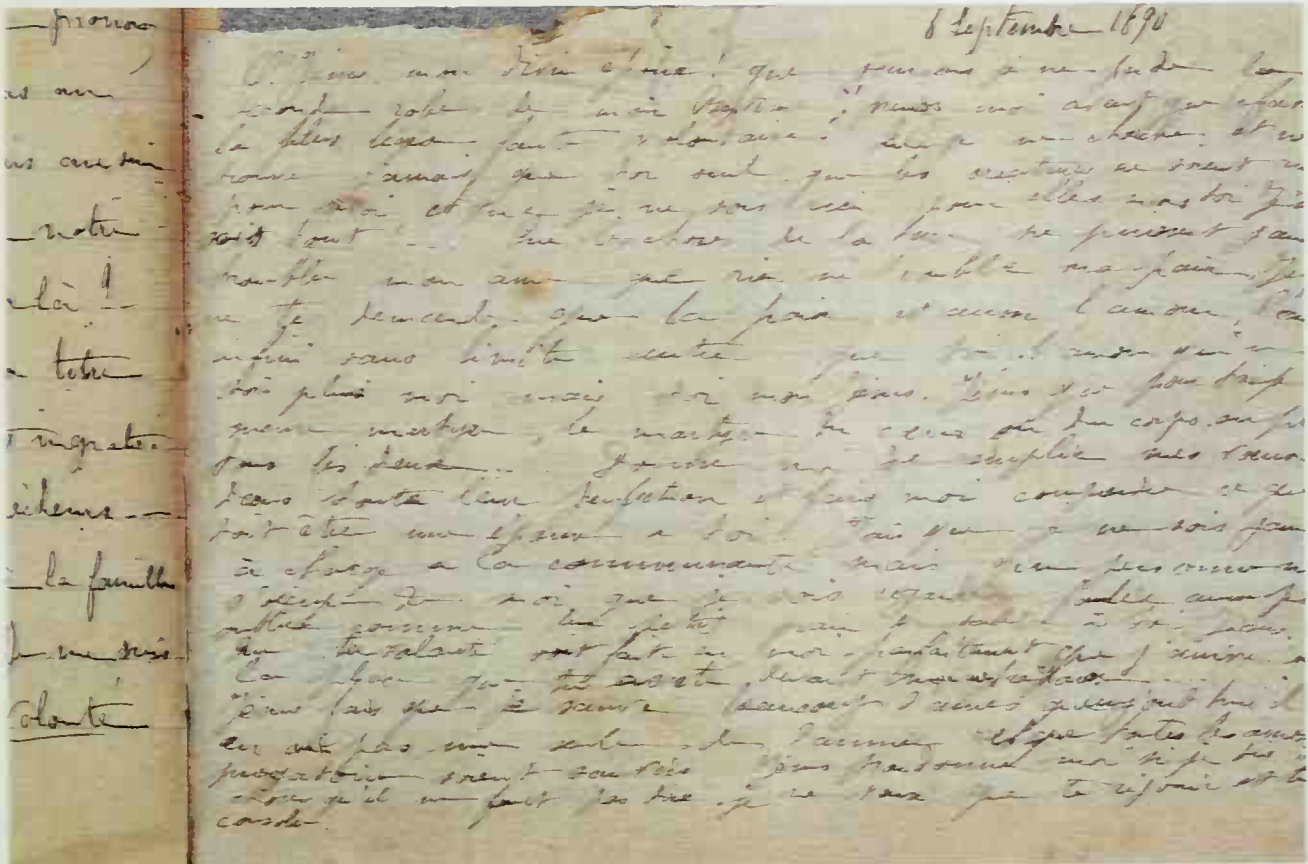
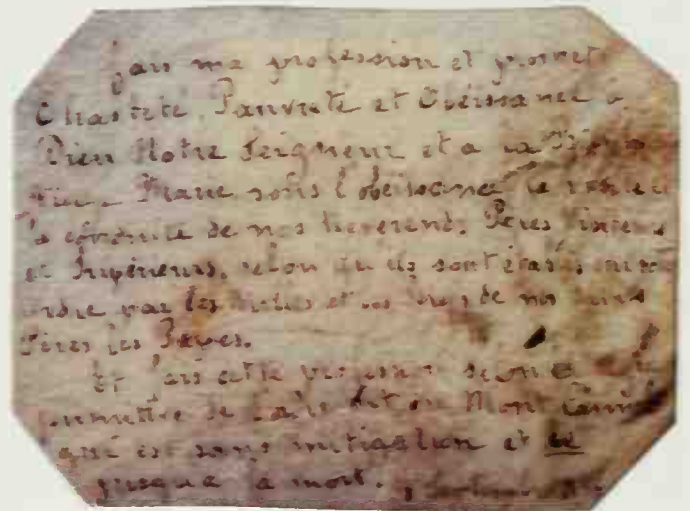
It measured 4.4 x 5.9 cm. She wanted to live her vows of poverty, chastity and obedience under the gaze of Jesus, in the light of his Holy Face.



The note that Therese carried on her the day of her profession

She gave herself completely to Jesus (whom she addressed in the familiar form), and asked him to spare her from committing even the smallest voluntary faults. She asked for the martyrdom of heart or body, or rather both, and that many souls be saved that day.

A handwriting analyst described this note as "touching." It is evident that she was very impressionable, weak, fearful and overly sensitive." But her "unwavering commitment, her iron will and her boundless energy are also evident. There is both the fear of the child and the commitment of the warrior in these lines."



A painting by Mother Agnes



A picture probably given to Therese by Mother Marie de Gonzague (Celine had received an identical picture from the prioress)

Therese often quoted this saying of Saint John of the Cross (see p. 173): "When your days are done, you will be examined on love. Therefore, learn to love God the way God wants to be loved, and let yourself be loved."

Therese was aware that she owed him a great deal: "At seventeen and eighteen, I had no other spiritual nourishment."

The passages from *The Living Flame* on the purifying value of trials helped her greatly at the time of her father's mental illness. She explained to Marie of the Trinity, "accepting suffering graciously merits us the grace of a greater suffering, or rather of a deeper purification, so we can arrive at the perfect union of love. Ah! When

I understood that, I was given the strength to suffer anything."

The Doctor of Carmel also encouraged her "to go down into the valley of humility" to arrive at the summit of union with God. She often mimed, for her novices, three Sanjuanist verses that celebrate the value of this humility: "Lowering myself so low, so low / I lifted myself so high, so high / That I could reach my goal" (A lo divino).

John of the Cross taught her that, in the spiritual life, it is more impor-

tant to eliminate all obstacles to God's invasion of us than to acquire new virtues. She wrote out several of the saint's thoughts expressing this conviction. "The one who truly loves God sees what a gain and reward it is to lose everything, even oneself, for God."

"To find something hidden, one must hide oneself." She particularly appreciated the contrast he emphasized between the nothingness of the creature and the all of God.

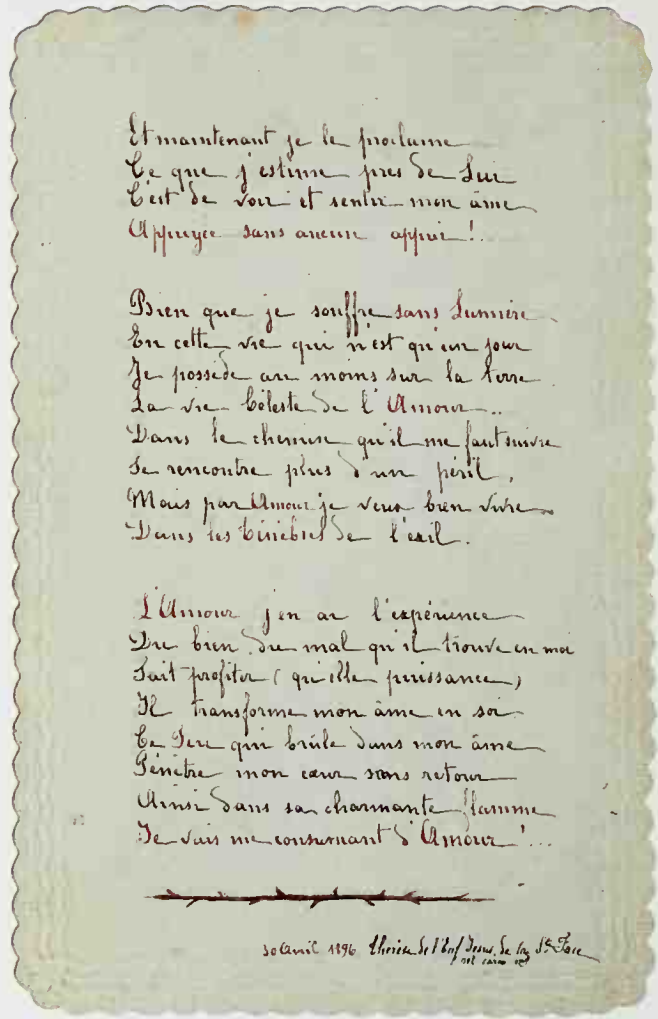
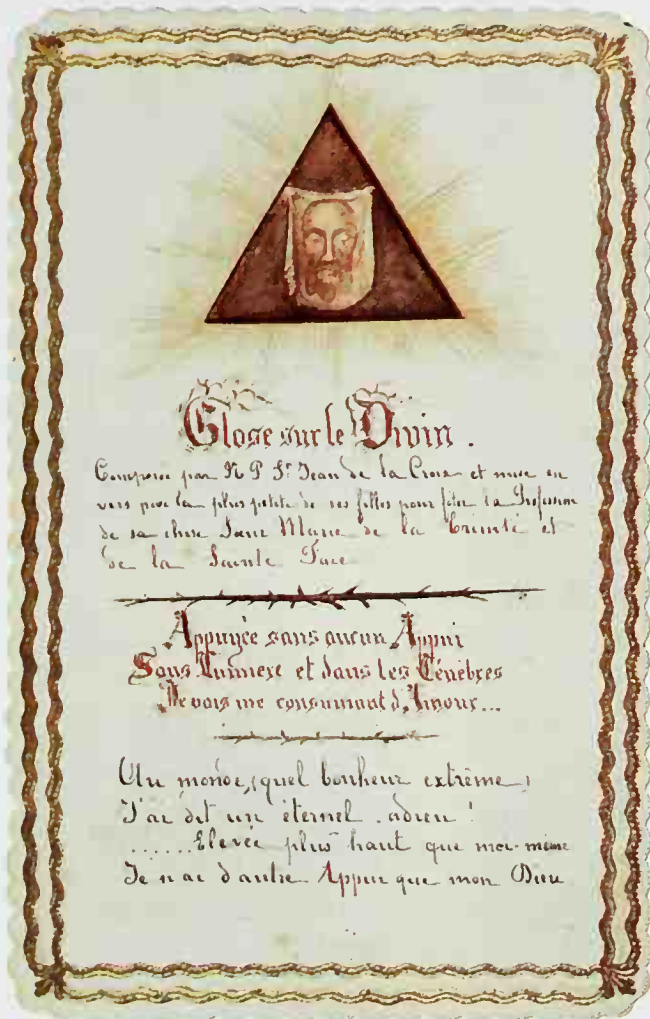


A picture illuminated by Therese

Dedouit, a publishing house in Caen, printed these pictures on the occasion of the third centenary of the death of Saint John of the Cross (1891) and asked the Lisieux Carmel to illuminate them. Therese and Mother Agnes devoted themselves to this task. Several pictures of this type, with incomplete illumination, can still be found in the archives of the Carmel of Lisieux.

The statue of Saint John of the Cross which stood in the heated parlour in Therese's day

It was especially in Saint John of the Cross that Therese found the fundamental intuition of what she would later call her "Little Way." To offer oneself to merciful love, one need not be a perfect victim. It is sufficient to present oneself to God as is. The depths of one's poverty attract the depths of his mercy. Instead of relying on one's own spiritual accomplishments, one must rely only on the strength of his arm.



A poem Therese gave to Sister Marie of the Trinity on the occasion of her profession (April 30th 1896)

Therese put into verse a poem of Saint John of the Cross that she particularly liked. In giving it to the newly professed

nun, Therese noted the part she liked best, the idea developed in the third verse: to show the extent of his mercy, the Lord was pleased to transform into flames of love those who humbly recognize all the evil that still remains in them.

Sister Marie of the Trinity was certainly a privileged witness of the influ-

ence exerted on Therese by the writings of Saint John of the Cross. Therese had confided to the novice her desire to see him declared a Doctor of the Church, so that a greater number of Christians might have recourse to his teachings.

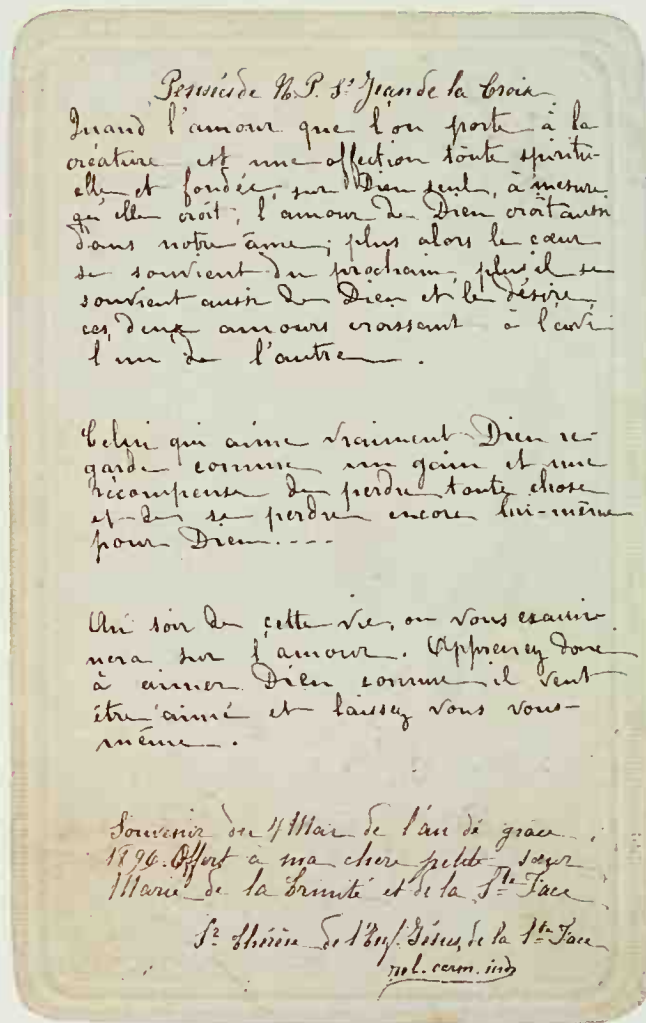


A picture Therese gave to Sister Marie of the Trinity on the occasion of her reception of the veil (May 7th 1896).

From a photograph of Mother Agnes' painting (see p. 170)

Here Therese wrote under the picture of Saint John of the Cross the reply he gave to the Christ of Segovia: "To suffer and be despised." This was a maxim that she and Celine had often meditated upon in the belvedere at Les Buissonnets. Therese added "for love!"

Therese was not unaware of the severe comments that certain sisters in the community had made about the newly professed nun: they found her not as recollected as a Carmelite should be! Therese encouraged her to bear these criticisms with the humility dear to Saint John of the Cross.



On the back, she copied three thoughts taken from a work that was dear to her: *Maxims and Spiritual Counsels of our Blessed Father Saint John of the Cross*. Therese wanted to be photographed with this collection in July 1896.

By the first of these sayings, Therese reminded Sister Marie of the Trinity that she must not be worried over the growing affection she felt for her novice mistress. The friendship that united them was very pure and could only help them in their desire to love God above all else.

The winter of 1890-1891 was very severe. It would not be the only one, and the lack of heat in most of the rooms of the monastery made things more difficult. "I thought I would die of the cold," Therese admitted much later. Through the simplest daily actions, she lived out her desire not to refuse Jesus anything, "Folding the mantles forgotten by the sisters, profiting from the smallest things and doing them out of love." She ate everything given to her without protesting. Sister Marthe often passed her the leftovers no one wanted. Sister Saint Raphael, who sat next to her in the refectory, inadvertently drank her portion of cider.



Ciborium cover painted by Therese

Shortly after her eighteenth birthday, her assignment was changed and she was appointed to help Sister Saint Stanislaus in the sacristy. For two years, from February 10th 1891 to June 1893, she devoted herself to cleaning the candles and the censer and to preparing the sacred vessels. She always willingly did all the work she was asked to do. She applied literally the advice she had received in the novitiate and performed her tasks without hurrying: is this not a good way to remain always in the presence of God? Her perfect obedience and her calm manner earned her a nickname. Sister Saint Stanislaus called her "little Sister Amen."

I was happy to touch the sacred vessels

The sacristy 'turn'



Sister Saint Stanislaus (1824-1914)

The six children of the Gueret family were born in Saint-Jacques parish in Lisieux. The oldest sister, Caroline, had participated in the foundation of the local Carmel. With the two Gosselin sisters, she went to Poitiers to do her novitiate and returned in 1838 with several companions. They lived on rue de Beuvillers in Lisieux (see p. 100). She was professed on September 16th of the same year under the name of Sister Saint John of the Cross.

Her younger sister, Rosalie, joined her in Carmel in 1845 at the age of twenty-one and took the name Sister Saint Stanislaus. Rosalie wanted to go to Saigon but it was Caroline who went in 1862 to replace one of the foundresses who had been overcome by the climate. Caroline returned in 1868 only to leave again almost immediately to restore the Carmel in Caen.

Sister Saint Stanislaus exercised several responsibilities over the years, in particular that of bursar from 1868 to 1874.

From 1891 to 1893, she was senior sacristan, in charge of Therese. After the influenza epidemic that resulted in the deaths of four Carmelites in Lisieux (and of her sister Caroline at the Carmel in Caen), Sister Saint Stanislaus found herself, in February 1892, the oldest in the community. In 1896, she became first infirmarian — a responsibility that had often been entrusted to her.

In February 1897, Therese composed her last play, *Saint Stanislaus Kostka*, to mark the golden jubilee of profession of the senior sister. Two months later, Therese would be grateful for the gentle care she received from her. In April–May 1897, when vesicatories and ignipunctures lacerated her back, Therese was moved by the kindness of Sister Saint Stanislaus, "She bandages the wounds with such gentleness! She chooses the finest cloths and applies them with a velvet hand!" For her part, the infirmarian admired her patient's forbearance, "Never a complaint."

Sister Saint Stanislaus outlived Therese by seventeen years; she died on May 23rd 1914.





The sacristans of Carmel (November 1896)

This family photograph was taken to be sent to Madame Guerin for her feast day (November 19th). It was taken in the sacristy courtyard, as were the photographs of Therese as Joan of Arc; we see the same wall here, but the ivy has grown. Some doctors say that Therese's strabismus was probably due to the progression of the tuberculosis in her system.

Therese worked in the sacristy from 1891 to 1893. She returned there in March 1896 and worked with her cousin (the sister in the white veil of a novice).

Therese's three sisters (from left to right: Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, Mother Agnes and Sister Genevieve) were "bakers" in this period. They helped Sister Marie-Philomene in the making of the altar breads — a rather lucrative enterprise at the time. Here they are working the irons for the hosts.

Therese envied priests their vocation. She wrote this again several weeks earlier in her second manuscript. She was happy to associate herself closely with their ministry by her work in the sacristy.

To fill the ciborium was a priestly act, but also an expression of her apostolic ideal: we must fill heaven!

Therese proclaimed her joy at being so closely associated with the priestly ministry in a November 1896 poem entitled "The Sacristans of Carmel," which she composed for Sister Marie-Philomene, her former novitiate companion:

"Our happiness and our glory
Is to work for Jesus.
His beautiful heaven
is the ciborium
We want to fill with elect!"



On the glass negative, Therese's face was intentionally scratched by her sisters. In these lines written on the back of a print found at the Visitation in Caen, Leonie explains, "We like this group very much and we would like to have it in our archives (at the Visitation). You all look fine, except for our Saint who leaves a great deal to be desired. I would like you to retouch her, my dear artist, before sending this charming picture

back to us. Thank you." We have reproduced here an original print that has not been scratched.

We know that the work of a sacristan was not limited to preparing the sacred vessels. There were many tasks to be performed. On free days, Therese deliberately went to the sacristy area so that Sister Marie of the Angels could ask her to perform some additional service.

THERESE IN JULY 1891

July 1891. Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart completed the novitiate. Therese remained there for three more years to complete her formation, in the company of Sister Martbe who was obviously too attached to the prioress. Therese noticed this but thought it inopportune to speak to her about this for the moment. She was satisfied to pray for her. Two years later, she felt that the time to intervene had come. Courageously, she made her see that her attachment to Mother Marie de Gonzague was too much like that of a dog for its master... The novice agreed. Therese marvelled at the Lord's action in her companion's heart.

This was also the time when Father Loyson gave several lectures in Normandy. His presence made quite a stir in the local press. The religious newspapers called him the "renegade monk," but Therese considered him her true "brother." Had he not belonged to the Carmelite Order? Could he not be converted in an instant, as Pranzini was?

"Confidence brings about miracles," she wrote to Celine, "and Jesus said to Blessed Margaret Mary, 'A just soul has so much power over my heart that it can obtain the pardon of a thousand criminals.' Though Therese

would not see his conversion, she never tired of praying for him.

On August 19th 1897, on the feast of Saint Hyacinthe, she offered her last communion for him. She was also concerned about the Guerin family. One of their consins, Marguerite-Marie Mandelonde, had married Rene Tostain, a magistrate who was an atheist. The young woman was influenced by her husband's ideas and began to doubt her faith. Therese asked Celine to lend her Arminjon's book, which had pleased her greatly at Les Buissonnets. A great concern truly took hold of her heart: that Jesus be known and loved!

To save a soul that seems forever lost

Father Hyacinthe Loyson (1827-1912)

Successively a Sulpician, a Dominican novice for a few months, then a Discalced Carmelite for ten years, Father Hyacinthe, a renowned preacher, had drawn crowds to Notre-Dame de Paris, before breaking with his Order in a stinging letter on September 20th 1869. On October 10th, a major excommunication was leveled against him. Montalembert and Newman tried in vain to reconcile him to the Church. His extreme liberalism put him in conflict with the ultramontanes — the "unconditional supporters" of the pope — and especially with papal infallibility, a much debated issue even before the opening of the First Vatican Council which proclaimed a dogma.

In a new public letter dated July 30th 1870, Loyson declared himself definitively separated from the Church and, on September 3rd 1872, he married Mrs. Meriman, an American Protestant widow whom he had converted to Catholicism four

years earlier. Paul Sabatier, the famous liberal Protestant, said of 'Mother Hyacinthe,' "he converted her to Catholicism, she converted him to marriage."

In Geneva, he organized a free worship group (1873-1874), then in 1879 he founded the Gallican Catholic Church in Paris. He gave numerous lectures throughout France in the hope of spreading his ideas, but seeing that his Church was stagnant, he turned it over to the Old Catholics of Utrecht in 1893. Father Hyacinthe did not take advantage of his rebellion to advance a political career. When Gambetta offered him a seat in the National Assembly or in the Senate, he refused.

On November 12th 1897, a few weeks after Therese's death, he visited Father Huvelin who was already quite sick. This was the beginning of a true friendship. Like Charles de Foucauld eleven years earlier, Hyacinthe greatly appreciated the charity, intelligence and complete absence of proselytizing which were the distinguishing



— Pour le grand pèlerinage de Rome, deux départs ont été demandés à la Direction générale en faveur des pèlerins de Calvados. Le premier aurait lieu le mercredi 16 septembre, de Paris avec les pèlerins du Nord, et le second le lundi 12 octobre, de Paris également, avec les pèlerins d'Orléans. Ainsi chacun pourra choisir l'époque qui s'accommodera le mieux avec ses occupations et sa profession.

S'adresser à M. le dr La Néelle, rue de l'Oratoire, ou à M. l'abbé L. Garnier, à Caen.

La Croix of Calvados (1891)

Therese received from Celine many newspaper clippings about the lectures given by Father Legrand, pastor of Saint-Pierre's parish in Caen, to refute Father Loyson's statements. The subject here is Loyson's attack against the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Note in the preceding article the mention of Doctor La Neele, Monsieur and Madame Guerin's son-in-law, who was taking an active part in organizing a pilgrimage to Rome.

M. le Curé de St-Pierre et Loyson
(3^e CONFÉRENCE)

L'apostat a osé traiter de nouvelle, de grossière, de ridicule la dévotion au Sacré-Cœur. Pour mieux faire comprendre sa réponse à ses auditeurs, M. le Curé de Saint-Pierre a distingué dans cette dévotion la cause, l'objet et le signe extérieur; la cause qui l'a fait naître, c'est la reconnaissance des chrétiens envers leur Sauveur; l'objet réel, c'est l'amour de J.-C. pour les hommes; le signe extérieur, sensible, c'est le Sacré-Cœur de Jésus. C'est surtout contre ce signe extérieur et les hommages qui lui sont rendus que s'é-

apparitions les expliquent et les justifient surabondamment. Jésus-Christ instruisait ses apôtres et les armait pour le salut du monde. St-Michel encourageait Jeanne d'Arc, et l'armait pour le salut de la France. Aujourd'hui la Très-Sainte Vierge qui aime notre patrie et la regarde toujours comme le soldat de Dieu, voyant entre quelles mains elle est tombée, la Très-Sainte Vierge veut l'en arracher.

M. le Curé de St-Pierre a terminé sa 3^e conférence par un apostrophe au blasphémateur. Vous constatez, s'est-il écrié, qu'il y a un réveil religieux en France; et vous adjurez vos auditeurs de ne pas le laisser tomber entre les mains de l'Église catholique. Eh bien oui, nous aussi, nous avons constaté ce réveil depuis les apparitions de la Très-Sainte Vierge en les grands pèlerinages qui remuent le monde. Mais nous ne laisserons pas la Franc-Maçonnerie mettre la main dessus. Trop longtemps, nous avons gardé le silence, aujourd'hui, après le Pape, après nos Evêques, nous parlerons, nous agirons; et nous ferons tout pour ramener au Dieu de ses pères et à la Sainte Eglise notre chère patrie, qui ne s'en est éloignée que pour son malheur.

characteristics of the vicar of Saint Augustine's. He wrote to him on October 18th 1899, "I need to tell you, a true priest of God, that 'I could belong with my whole soul to the Church as it lives in your soul.'" He was deeply saddened by Father Huvelin's death in 1910.

In January 1911, the Lisieux Carmel sent him a copy of *The Story of a Soul*, adding that the Carmelite had prayed for his "conversion." He replied that he was "truly touched" by many of the things he read in this book, but, he added, "I think I can honestly say, before death and before God, that selfishness, pride and hatred were never the motives of my thought and life."

He died in Paris on February 9th 1912, after murmuring, while kissing his crucifix, "my gentle Jesus."



Rene Tostain, a guest at the Guerin home
(photographed in 1893)

Deputy in Lisieux of the Procurator of the Republic, Tostain had married, on October 14th 1889, Madame Guerin's niece, Marguerite-Marie Maudelonde. A

very upright man, he declared himself an atheist. Therese offered the trial of the last eighteen months of her life specifically for him.

Henry Cheron (1867-1936)

After briefly considering a career as a pharmacist — he did an internship in 1884 under Monsieur Guerin — Henry Cheron became a lawyer and devoted himself wholeheartedly to politics. The leader of the radical group in Lisieux, he picked up the votes of the workers in the town. For many years he crossed swords in the press with his former employer, Monsieur Guerin, who became deeply involved in the political views supported by *Le Normand* precisely in order to oppose the ideas of *Le Progres Iexovien*.

Elected district councillor at the age of twenty-five (1892), Henry Cheron was elected mayor of Lisieux in October 1894. Three times in a row, he was beaten in the legislative elections by the moderate Republican candidate, Henri Laniel, factory owner and mayor of Beuvillers. In fact,



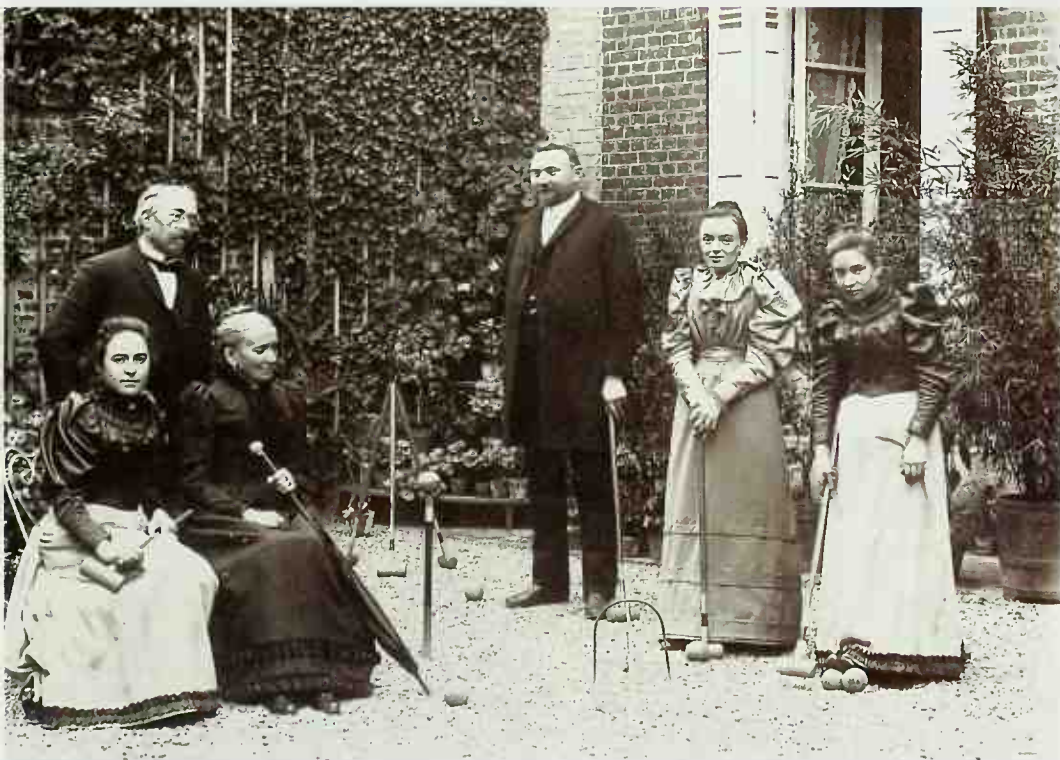
Cheron's anticlericalism was always tempered by opportunism. He never forbade processions and used his influence to ensure that no religious community was expelled from the town.

Cheron became the elected representative of Caen in 1906 and entered government service the same year as Under-secretary of War (1906-1909), then of the Navy (1909-1910). He was elected Senator from Calvados in 1913. After the war, he acceded to the highest governmental responsibilities, becoming in 1922 Minister of Agriculture (at which time he was nicknamed "Cheron – for dear life"), then Minister of Finance (1928-1930) and Minister of Justice (1930-1931 and 1934).

When he spoke of Therese, Cheron enjoyed recalling that, at the back of the Guerin pharmacy, he had played the accordion to the great delight of Therese Martin.

My uncle never stops working very hard

A game of croquet,
rue de la Chaussee
From left to right: Celine,
Monsieur and Madame Guerin,
Francis La Neele,
Jeanne and Marie Guerin



In 1891, Monsieur Guerin took a progressively more active part in the political scene in Lisieux. In 1888, an unforeseen event led him to sell his pharmacy and commit himself to political action. His wife's cousin, Auguste David, former notary in Evreux, named him the sole heir of his huge fortune. Suddenly, Monsieur Guerin found himself the owner of an immense estate, La Musse, near Evreux. He was now completely sheltered from all financial preoccupations. On December 8th 1888, he turned his pharmacy over to Victor Labaye, his first partner, and acquired a mansion in Lisieux, rue de la Chaussee (today 19 rue Paul-Banaston). He moved in towards the end of 1889, after a brief stay on the rue Condorcet and at Les Buissonnets, sadly unoccupied since Monsieur Martin's hospitalization at Bon-Sauveur. More than ever, Monsieur Guerin became a notable citizen of

The three newspapers of Lisieux perfectly reflected the three political trends in public opinion.

Le Lexovien

The voice of the republican and liberal bourgeoisie, somewhat anticlerical, this four-page newspaper was published on Tuesdays and Saturdays, without illustrations. Limited in circulation (2,050 copies in December 1874), it reflected the ideas of the leadership of the city, people like Paul Banaston, the Fleurists, the Duchesne-Fournets, and the three men who succeeded one another as mayor from 1871 to 1894: Prat, Micbel and Peulevey. These liberals were determined not to accept any orders from the clergy. On October 21st 1885, an article protested a circular published by Bishop Hugonin and read from the pulpit on the eve of the elections.

Lisieux. A member, since 1869, of the Cercle littéraire, he contributed regularly to Le Normand, the conservative and monarchist newspaper of Lisieux. In October 1891, Henry Cheron, his former apprentice, wrote an article particularly injurious to Leo XIII in Le Progres lexovien, the radical newspaper he had founded. This was too much! Monsieur Guerin countered sharply and plunged into the fray. Was Le Normand about to founder? He decided to keep it afloat financially and to write the editorial regularly — a task he assumed until 1896.

The numerous articles bearing his signature (seventy-four in 1893 alone) deal with the whole range of domestic problems and international events that stirred up France. Without actually becoming a 'democrat,' Monsieur Guerin nonetheless accepted the directives of Leo XIII on rallying French Catholics to the Republic. He summarized the

Le Progres lexovien

Founded by Henry Cheron, it was the voice of the radical party that separated from the moderate Republicans in 1884. Anticlericalism was one of its principal rallying points.

MERCREDI 27 JANVIER 1892

PRENEZ DES GANTS

La lecture du journal *Le Normand* portant la date d'hier soir est vraiment trop intéressante pour que nous ne fassions pas à cette feuille et à son éminent rédacteur tous les honneurs de la réclame.

Il paraît que la réunion de dimanche soir n'a été qu'un four gigantesque et pyramidal; c'est M. I. Guerin qui écrit cela et il faut l'en croire sur parole.

Mais d'abord, d'irez-vous, M. Guérin était-il présent à la séance? Pas le moins du monde; seulement, cet homme étant porteur d'un binocle perfectionné a le don de double vue: il est à la fois ici et ailleurs. Cette faveur de la science sert même considérablement son naturel prudent; tandis que nous allions en réunion publique nous mettre à la disposition des électeurs, M. Guérin, les pieds sur ses chenets, regarde tranquillement bouillir son pot au feu. Mais c'est ici précisément que se manifeste toute la puissance de son imagination. En voyant bouillir le potage, il se figure être en présence du flot grossissant des fureurs populaires; le pétitement de la flamme lui représente les interruptions dont on bombarde là-bas ses adversaires, et il les voit bientôt « écumer » de rage et d'impuissance.

Alors, inspiré par cet émuant spectacle, il se dirige vers son bureau, prend sa meilleure plume et raconte, sans désespérer, les luttes terribles dont il vient d'être le témoin.

In an article in *Le Progres lexovien*, Henry Cheron inveighs against Isidore Guerin who had the nerve to criticize a political meeting of the left which he had not even attended.

pope's teaching in these terms. "Accept honestly, loyally and without ulterior motives the form of established government, but fight anti-Christian legislation by all legal means."

The polemicist did not for all this forget the duties and joys of family life. In the summer, Monsieur and Madame Guerin were happy to leave for La Musse with their two daughters, their two nieces, Leonie and Celine, and Monsieur Martin, their brother-in-law, who would end his days there on July

On June 22nd 1878, the former Journal de Lisieux et de Pont-l'Évêque became

Le Normand

and likewise appeared on Tuesdays and Saturdays. It was the voice of the monarchist right in Lisieux led by Paul-Louis Target, a friend of Isidore Guerin. Born in Lisieux in 1821, this lawyer had been elected representative of Calvados in 1871, but was beaten in 1874 when he ran in the district of Lisieux.

UN AMI DU PEUPLE

Les répliques de M. le rédacteur en chef du *Progres*, à notre adresse, dépourvues de ce calme et de cette possession de soi-même, qui doivent être la première qualité de celui qui se destine à commander aux foules, nous dépeignent l'emballement du consier piqué par un frelon.

Au moindre obstacle, il se cabre, à la plus petite contradiction, il s'irrite; il devrait cependant savoir que les hommes d'ordre et sensés qui, Dieu merci, forment encore l'immense majorité de la population lexovienne, ne sont pas disposés à se laisser entraîner sans résistance dans la politique de casse-cou, où sa juvénile ardeur l'emporte étourdiment.

Si nous ne partageons pas les convictions d'un grand nombre de nos concitoyens, nous rendons cependant hommage à leur modération, et de concert avec eux, nous repoussons avec énergie les menées turbulentes de tous les politiciens sans lest, véritables haunetons bourdonnant dans un tambour, qui inconsciemment peut-être, parviendraient à jeter le trouble dans notre cité.

Comme par le passé, nous eussions répondu par un dédaigneux silence à la dernière élocution du *Progres*, s'il ne s'était permis de dénaturer nos paroles et de nous attribuer des intentions et des sentiments que nous repoussons avec indignation, en notre nom et en celui de la rédaction du *Normand* et de nos lecteurs.

The following Saturday, January 30th 1892, Monsieur Guerin responded to Henry Cheron's attack, on the front page of the newspaper *Le Normand*.

29th 1894. On October 1st 1890, Jeanne Guerin, their oldest daughter, married Francis La Neele, pharmacist in Caen and physician; they had no children. On August 15th 1895, Marie, the second daughter, joined her cousins in the Carmel of Lisieux, taking the name Sister Marie of the Eucharist.

When Father Alexis arrived at the Carmel on Thursday, October 8th 1891, to preach the annual retreat, Therese expected the worst because the Franciscan did not have a great reputation. It was rumoured that he did very well when it came to converting great sinners, but he seemed much less qualified when it came to understanding contemplatives.

Therese feared his teachings even more because she had been preoccupied for several months with a saying she had heard in a sermon, "No one knows whether one is worthy of love or hate." She was concerned that the Franciscan's talks might awaken her scrupulosity. In order to avoid this, Therese prepared for this retreat by a novena of prayers. She went to confession with the strong resolution of not saying much to Father Alexis: she always had such difficulty expressing her "inner dispositions."

However, contrary to all expectations, Therese felt that she was truly understood, "My soul was like a book which Father read better than I... He launched me full sail on waves of confidence and love which drew me so strongly, but on which I did not dare advance... He told me that my shortcomings did not cause God any sorrow and, in his place and on his behalf, he told me that God was very pleased with me."

Suddenly, for the first time in her life, Therese had a great desire to see the preacher again before the next round of confessions.

The custom at the time was that the Carmelites would go to confession twice: at the beginning of the retreat and towards the end. They also had the option of meeting with him in the course of the week. Unfortunately, Mother Marie de Gonzague advised her sisters not to consult a religious who seemed not to understand Carmelite life! Therese obeyed this unjustified recommendation of her prioress to the letter. This was an even



Photo taken in late March or early April 1896

Therese most likely had this astonished expression when Father Alexis spoke to her.

more meritorious obedience because, as second sacristan, she would bear the preacher coming and going in the outer sacristy reciting his breviary. He was waiting for a possible visit from a retreatant. Therese would only have had to ask to meet the priest in the confessional, but she did not do it.

We do know that at the end of the retreat, when her turn came to meet the preacher for the second time — it was during the 11 a.m. meal — Therese permitted herself to stay in the confessional for a long time. The prioress could not forbid this! Although Sister Agnes warned her that, in the refectory, Mother Marie de Gonzague seemed to be annoyed to see her staying in the confessional so long, Therese took her time to speak with the one who understood her so well.

When the first edition of *The Story of a Soul* was published in 1898, Father Alexis — who had become superior of the friary in Caen — was given a copy of it. Tactfully, Mother Agnes of Jesus marked in the margin those passages that had to do with him even though his name was not mentioned.

The priest appreciated the book but never made the slightest allusion to the influence he had exerted on the Carmelite's spiritual life. When people said to him that he must have met her, he was content to reply, "She was the holiest soul I ever saw, she is certainly a great saint!" He willingly added, "Ah! the poor little one, how mistaken she was about me!"

*No sooner had I entered
the confessional
than I felt my soul breathe*

Father Alexis Prou (1844-1914)

Originally from the diocese of Nantes, the young Alexis was always at the top of his class in the Minor Seminary. In the Major Seminary, he was chosen for the solemn defence of his thesis at the end of the year. At the age of twenty-five, he entered the Franciscans — the Recollects, as they were then called. Ordained to the priesthood in the Bayeux cathedral on June 29th 1871, he exercised his ministry in three areas: preaching parish missions, preaching to religious communities, and directing Franciscan confraternities. From 1887 to 1898, he wrote many articles for the *Annals of the Third Order* in which he often spoke about the confidence and surrender that a child of God must have toward his Father.

For a quarter of a century he evangelized Brittany and Normandy. His sermons were carefully prepared, completely written out and frequently revised. His emotion, ordinarily contained, was freely expressed when, in imitation of the Poverello, he spoke of Love who is not loved. Thus it was said that he preached "fire and brimstone."



— vos inquiétudes. Dieu le veut
Il se l'ordonne. Croyez moi
sur parole : Jamais, jamais,
Jamais vous n'aurez fait un seul
petit mortel. Allez vite vous
prosterner devant le Cober.
neule pour remercier N.S.
Couvrez-vous tranquille et
serrez entre les bras de Jésus.

Therese would again be prey to scrupulosity as we see from this letter which Father Pichon addressed to her on January 20th 1893, more than one year after her liberating encounter with Father Prou



Portrait of Mother Genevieve
 painted by Celine in 1888

During the exceptionally severe winter of 1891-1892, death took its toll on the Carmel. First Mother Genevieve of Saint Teresa died at the age of eighty-seven, on December 5th 1891, after a bitter agony. The foundress had just celebrated sixty years of religious life. At the time of her entrance, Therese had been struck by the serenity of this eighty-three-year-old religious. She had written in a notebook the memories she had collected from her: "It was an invaluable grace," she wrote, "to have known our saintly Mother Genevieve and to have lived with a saint, not at all inimitable, but one sanctified by hidden, ordinary virtues. Jesus lived in her and in her actions and words. Ah! this sanctity seems to me to be the truest, the holiest, and it is the one I desire, for there is no illusion found in it."

This death, the first she witnessed in Carmel, seemed ravishing to her. Unknown to the others, Therese collected the last tear of the one in whose steps she wanted to follow. Some time later, she dreamt that Mother Genevieve said to her: "To you, I leave my heart!"

Mother Genevieve's heart

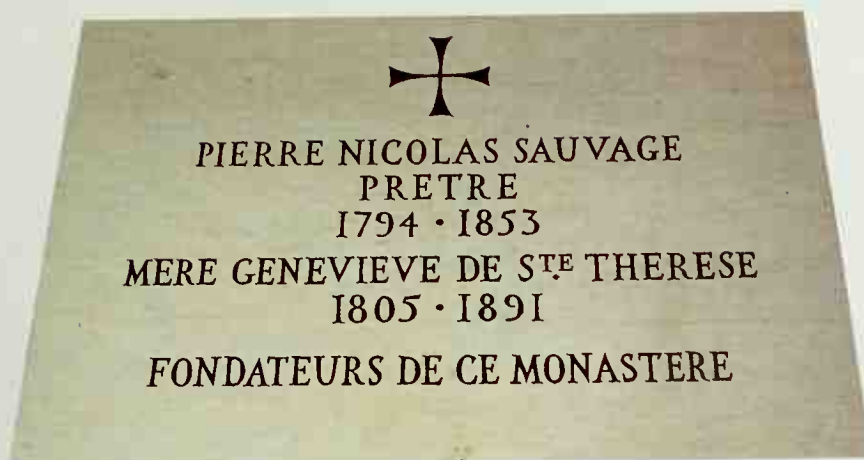
For three weeks the Carmelites of Lisieux were uncertain whether they would be permitted to bury their foundress in their chapel (see p. 185). Therefore they asked Doctor de Corniere to remove Mother Genevieve's heart so that, whatever the outcome of their request, they could venerate a special relic of the one they all considered to be a saint.



A l'age de 17 ans M^{re} G. alla dans la premier fois au
 Carmel je ne sais si c'était pour parler de sa vocation
 mais ce n'était pas certainement pour demander ce qu'elle devoit
 que c'était afin de recevoir M^{re} Dulys de sa protection. Elle
 vit plusieurs M^{res}. je crois que c'est au tour et non pas au
 parler. d'une d'elle lui dit s'abandonnant quel age aviez vous.
 — Madame je suis bien née j'ai 17 ans.
 M^{re} Guerin était alors environ 20 ans quand son enterrement fut décidé.

The last of the twenty-four sheets
 on which Therese noted
 Mother Genevieve's memories.
 Here she recounted the first contacts
 she had made, at the age of seventeen,
 with the Carmel in Poitiers.

*God wanted me to live
 with a saint
 sanctified by hidden, ordinary virtues*



Tombstone, sanctuary of the Carmel

Under the Third Republic, municipalities
 authorized burial in a cloister only in
 exceptional circumstances. The last one
 in the Lisieux Carmel was in 1877. An
 intervention by Paul-Louis Target, elective
 representative from Calvados and Mon-

sieur Guerin's collaborator on the news-
 paper *Le Normand*, was required to ob-
 tain permission to bury the foundress of
 the Carmel next to Father Sauvage, who
 had built the chapel (see p. 100). The au-
 thorization was slow in coming and the
 burial of the foundress could not take
 place until December 23rd.

Mother Genevieve, foundress of the
 Carmel of Lisieux, had just died. Therese
 was given the responsibility of placing
 around the casket of the deceased the
 bouquets of flowers that arrived from
 every quarter.

Sister Saint Vincent de Paul, who had
 been watching her for a moment, cried
 out suddenly, "You certainly know how to
 place the wreaths sent by your family in
 the front row and the bouquets from the
 poor in the back." She had no doubt seen
 among the bouquets the one sent by her
 older brother Louis, who was then work-
 ing on the construction of the building
 for the extern sisters. Very gently, Therese
 replied, "Thank you, Sister, you are right.
 I'll put the moss cross sent by the work-
 ers in the front. That's where it belongs. I
 hadn't thought of it!"

No sooner was Mother Genevieve buried than an influenza epidemic, which was ravaging France, swept through the community. Three sisters died in rapid succession: the oldest (eighty-two years old) on Therese's nineteenth birthday (January 2nd 1892), the subprioress on the 4th and a lay sister, who was found dead in her cell, on the 7th.

The whole community was bedridden, with the exception of three young sisters: Marie of the Sacred Heart, Marthe and Therese. Community life was completely suspended: no bells, no divine office, no meals in common in the refectory. Therese acted calmly: she shrouded the dead, cared for the sick, prepared the funerals. Father Delatroette, the superior, was obliged to note the strength of soul with which the youngest sister faced the situation. "She is a great hope for the community," he would say from then on.

There was no question of constantly going to the prioress to ask permissions during those days. Therese took advantage of it to receive communion daily. One of her greatest desires!

*Jesus is there
in the tabernacle
expressly for you*

Sister Febronie of the Holy Childhood
(1819-1892)

Born in Paris, Marie-Julie Malville lost her mother at the age of five. Her father, a tailor, remarried and moved to Lisieux. The young woman was accepted for the Carmel by the foundress, Mother Elizabeth, who died soon after. Mother Genevieve, therefore, welcomed her into the cloister on January 15th 1842.

Given the fact that Mother Febronie was sixty-eight years old when Therese entered, she did indeed seem elderly. She was subprioress at the time, an office she held until her death. In no time, the subprioress was able to see clearly into the postulant's soul, as this dialogue reported by Therese herself gives evidence. She

found it difficult to open herself up to Sister Marie of the Angels, her novice mistress. "One day a kindly, older sister understood what I was feeling. Laughing, she said to me during recreation:

— My daughter, it seems to me that you must not have much to say to your superiors.

— Why do you say that, Mother?

— Because your soul is extremely simple; but when you're perfect, you'll be even simpler. The closer one approaches to God, the simpler one becomes."

As subprioress, Sister Febronie was responsible for ensuring that the religious of the community followed the Rule perfectly. She was herself a model of silence and piety. She thought, however, that by so exalting the Lord's mercy, young Sister

Therese was forgetting his justice somewhat. One day they discussed this at length. Having exhausted all her arguments, Therese finally said: "Sister, you want the justice of God and so you will have the justice of God. The soul receives from God exactly what it expects."

Sister Febronie came down with influenza during that bitter winter of 1891-1892. She died on January 4th. On the 15th of the month, she would have celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of her entrance into Carmel.

The tabernacle that was above the main altar in Therese's time is now kept in the sacristy of the Carmel



Therese spent long hours every day in the monastery chapel, for the tabernacle was truly the centre of her contemplative life. In this she again showed herself to be a true daughter of Teresa of Avila. When La Madre was working to set up a new community in a Spanish city, she was eager to have the Holy Sacrifice of the mass offered in it. As soon as the mass had been celebrated and the Blessed Sacrament

placed in the tabernacle, she considered the foundation of the new Carmel established.

During Therese's time, pictures and sermons vied with one another to present Jesus as the One who, out of love, locked himself behind the tabernacle door. The Divine Prisoner waited for the faithful soul to visit him, to thank him and also to be happy to live a humble, hidden life. This ideal was

particularly dear to a Carmelite's heart. Following the example of Jesus in the eucharist, she wanted to live, behind the monastery grills, as a "prisoner of love."

Therese was not the one who remained the longest in chapel. The 'champion' in this respect was a "white-veiled" nun, Sister Saint Vincent de Paul.

Jesus hides himself out of love



A chain links the dove with the heart of the Child Jesus and the heart of the Christian with the ciborium. The faithful are invited to think about the Divine Prisoner of the tabernacle, to love him, to pray to him, but

they are not exhorted to approach the altar. This omission clearly reflects the eucharistic piety of the time, which insisted much more on adoration of the Blessed Sacrament than on communion (see p. 192).

Sister Saint Stanislaus offered this picture on January 15th 1896, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of her reception of the habit. On receiving it, Therese certainly thought of the gesture she had made one day when she was responsible for cleaning the altar in the sanctuary, a gesture caught by Sister Marthe who was with her in the chapel helping her with her work. Seated on the altar, Therese knocked on the tabernacle door whispering, "Jesus, are you there?"

The text printed on the back of the picture presents as a model a child knocking insistently at the Divine Prisoner's door to obtain the conversion of an unbelieving father.



Sister Saint Vincent de Paul (1841–1905)

Born in Cherbourg in 1841, little Zoe was well-named for as a young child she was full of life, carefree and mischievous. Unfortunately, an outbreak of cholera in Normandy in 1832 reached Cherbourg in 1849. Within forty-eight hours, the child lost both her father and mother. Raised in Caen by the Daughters of Saint Vincent de Paul, she became an excellent embroideress. She entered Carmel in 1863 at the age of twenty-two.

Though fragile in health and very small in size, she was an ardent worker. She was also a veritable encyclopedia. She was often teased for the calm assurance with which she felt authorized to speak about everything. But her booming, off-key voice drew irresistible laughter when she intoned the *Gloria Patri* — which she sometimes did even in the midst of washing the laundry! On the other hand, she edified the whole community by the long periods of time she spent before the Blessed Sacrament — a habit she had

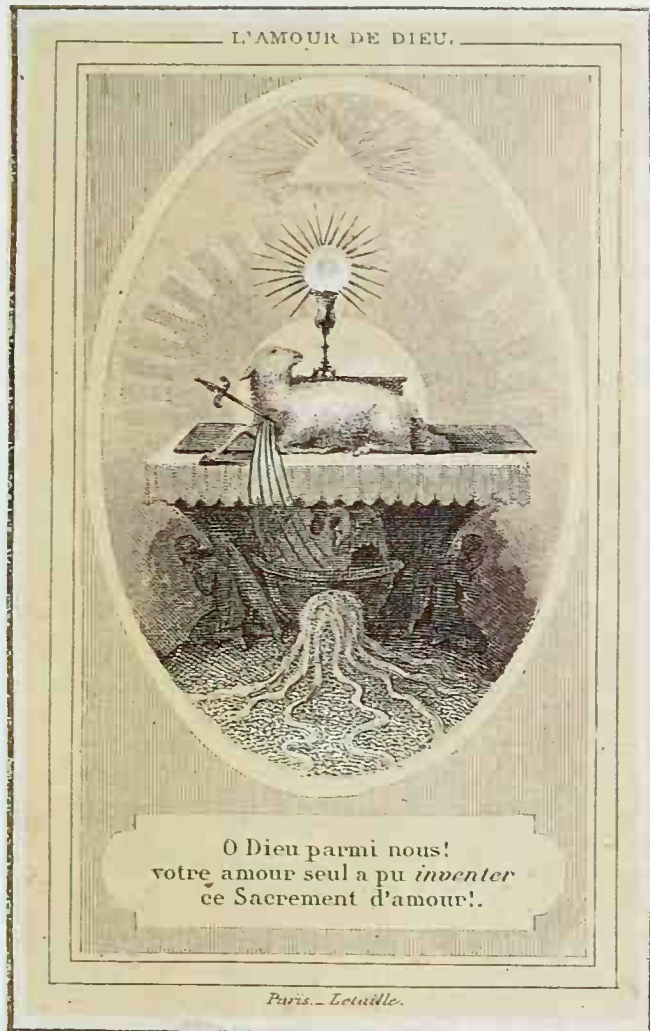
acquired when she lived with the Daughters of Saint Vincent de Paul.

When Therese entered the Carmel, Sister Saint Vincent de Paul appeared to take malicious pleasure in humbling this young middle-class woman who seemed rather awkward when it came to manual work. She nicknamed Therese "the big nanny-goat" — a clear way of making her feel that she worked too slowly. When Therese came into the laundry room, Sister Saint Vincent de Paul said out loud: "Here she comes! She certainly is in no hurry! When is she going to get to work?" Therese certainly suffered from these stinging remarks, but did not let it show. Jesus was simply asking for a new sacrifice. She never failed to smile at Sister Saint Vincent de Paul whenever she came to the laundry room.

Therese was not resentful. Four times, Sister Saint Vincent de Paul asked her for a poem and four times Therese obliged. Knowing this lay sister's eucharistic piety, she expressed in her poems how she herself lived her relationship with the Divine Prisoner of the tabernacle.



I can obtain everything



This picture combines the symbolism of the lamb and of the pelican

From the pierced side of the Lamb of God flow rivers of living water capable of purifying and divinizing the most hardened of hearts. Therese was familiar with the liturgical usage made of the legend of the pelican who "pierces its own flesh to nourish its young." Each time she recited the *Adoro Te*, she would tell Jesus that one single drop of his blood could save the entire world.

Therese was convinced of the apostolic value of her prayer before the tabernacle. She did not forget the resolution she made once and for all in July 1887, before a picture of Jesus crucified: to remain in spirit at the foot of the cross to collect the precious blood of Jesus and offer it to God for the salvation of sinners (see p. 77).

Eucharistic poem
composed at the request of
Sister Saint Vincent de Paul

In the second stanza Therese proclaimed the mysterious richness of the hours of prayer she spent before the Blessed Sacrament. By letting herself be inundated by the torrents of graces that the Lord poured over her, she benefited the whole Church.

By inflaming her heart with love, God also communicated to her his joy — a foretaste of the joy of paradise. On May 15th 1897, Therese would admit: "I do not see clearly what more I can have after death that I don't already have in this life. I will see God, it's true! As for being with him, I already am, fully, on earth." Therese lived this joy in the darkness of faith — a darkness that in the last two months had become a real 'ordeal.' Sister Saint Vincent de Paul obviously did not suspect the heroism hidden behind the sixth verse of the poem. A few weeks before Therese's death, she would say about her: "She is a pleasant little sister, but what will anyone say about her after her death? She has done nothing."

Y 716. 38.

(air: Dieu de paix et d'amour)

Fête du S^t Sacrement 2 Juin 1896.

Mon Ciel à moi !..

Pour supporter l'air de la vallée des larmes
Il me fait le regard de mon Dieu dans
Le regard plein d'amour ma divine eschance
Il m'a fait pressentir le béate bonheur
Mon Jésus me sourit quand vers lui je soupire
Alors je ne sens plus, l'épreuve de la foi
Le regard de mon Dieu, son ravissant sourire.
Voilà mon Ciel à moi !..

Mon Ciel est de par où l'on arrive sur les ailes
Sur l'Église ma mère et sur toutes mes sens
Les grâces de Jésus et ses divines flammes
Qui savent embrasser et réjouir les cœurs.
Je puis tout obtenir lorsque dans le mystère
Je parle cœur à cœur avec mon Dieu Roi

Cette divine Oraison tout près du Sanctuaire
Voilà mon Ciel à moi !..

Mon Ciel, il est caché dans la petite Hostie
Du Jésus, mon époux se vole par amour
A ce foyer divin je vais puiser la vie
Et le mon Dieu d'aujourd'hui me conte tout et plus
Où quel heureux instant lorsque dans ta tendresse
Tu viens mon Dieu aimé, me transformer ta
Celle remède d'amour, cette ineffable essence
« Voilà mon Ciel à moi !.. »

Mon Ciel est de sentir en moi la ressemblance
De Dieu qui me cria de son souffle puissant
Mon Ciel est de rester toujours en sa prière
De l'appeler mon Père et d'être son enfant
Entre ses bras divins je ne crains pas l'orage
Le total abandon voilà ma seule loi
Sommelier sur son Cœur, tout près de son Visage
Voilà mon Ciel à moi !..

Mon Ciel, je l'ai trouvé dans la Brûlée Sainte
Lui reside en mon cœur prisonnier d'amour
Le contemplant mon Dieu, je lui redis sans crainte
Que je veux le servir et l'aimer sans retour
Mon Ciel est de sourire à ce Dieu que j'adore
Lorsqu'il veut se cacher pour éprouver mon foi
Souffrir en attendant qu'il me regarde encore
Voilà mon Ciel à moi !..

(Sens de Saint Vincent de Paul, mis en
vers par sa tante petite sœur Thérèse de l'Enfant
Jésus)

You come to transform me into you

Jesus did not institute the eucharist to remain in a gold ciborium. He did it, according to Therese, to give himself to us and to transform us in him. And she suffered because she was able to receive communion only four times a week. At the end of the 19th century, in fact, religious had to ask their superior for permission to receive communion. They almost never obtained permission to receive daily, for it was a delicate matter for a prioress to grant this 'privilege' to some while refusing it to others.

In order to remedy this situation, Pope Leo XIII had transferred to chaplains of religious communities the 'power' to give this authorization when they judged it appropriate. Father Youf, the chaplain of the Lisieux Carmel, could have permitted Therese to receive communion daily, but he never dared, for fear of displeasing Mother Marie de Gonzague. "When I think," he confided one day to Father Lemonnier, "that I do not have the freedom to permit daily communion to so perfect a religious!"

Elle crain à cause par le martyre de
scrupule mais Jesus lui a fait la
grâce de communion quant même,
abas même qu'elle croyait avoir fait
de grands péchés. -- et bien j'espère
qu'elle a reconnu que c'était le seul
moyen de se débarrasser du démon,
car quand il voit qu'il perd son temps
il s'en va tranquillement.

Letter from Therese to her cousin,
Marie Guerin (May 30th 1889)

Marie Guerin was in Paris to view an exhibition which was taking place there from May 23rd to 31st. She confided to Therese the scruples that prevented her from receiving communion although she desired it. She feared in fact that she had sinned against purity every time she looked at the nudes in the museums. "How do you expect me to receive holy communion tomorrow and Friday? I must abstain from it."

Therese firmly replied to her cousin: "Go! Do not listen to the devil. Make fun of him and go receive without fear the Jesus of peace and love." Therese invoked her personal experience: she too knew this "martyrdom of scrupulosity," yet "Jesus gave her the grace of communion nonetheless, even when she thought she had committed serious sins."

This letter is one of the 'arguments' that Father de Teil presented to Pope Pius X, on October 29th 1910, to spark

his interest in the cause of Sister Therese of the Child Jesus. The vice postulator suspected that such a eucharistic text could only please the pope who supported frequent communion and communion for children. He was not mistaken. But what really impressed the pope was the recent submission of Marc Sangnier who had just been condemned by the Vatican: the founder of *Le Sillon* had been overcome on reading *An Unpetalled Rose*.



One of Therese's favourite pictures

While preparing for the “happy moment” of communion, Therese did not think of it as a time when the “veils are lifted.” Jesus remained hidden at the communion table, just as in the tabernacle.

Moreover, the back of this picture recalls the saying of Isaiah: “You are truly a hidden God” (45:15). Therese often quoted this saying: “The hidden God draws me to him.”



Picture Therese had received from Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart

Therese liked this picture. It reminded her that at the moment of communion she always had the possibility of welcoming Mary into her soul in order to receive Jesus as he deserved. Furthermore, she could read on the back a prayer by Saint Gertrude who prepared to receive communion by offering Jesus all his mother's love. Therese took up this idea in her last poem:

“The mother's treasure belongs
to the child
And I am your child, O dear
Mother,
Are not your love, your virtues,
mine?
So when the white host enters into
my heart,
Jesus, your gentle Lamb, feels
he is resting in you.”



In the Lourdes courtyard
at the end of 1894

Mother Agnes is fingering her beads. Mother Marie de Gonzague — whose face was erased — looks on, her gaze remaining as overbearing as ever. As for Therese, she found herself between the devil and the deep blue sea. She was responsible for the novitiate without being in charge of it. This was a delicate situation that called for much diplomacy.

A letter from Therese
to Mother Agnes the very evening
of her election (February 20th 1893)

Fully aware, Therese added: "No doubt
you will suffer."

February 1892. Reduced to twenty-two nuns on account of the influenza epidemic which left it in mourning three times, the community slowly recovered emotionally. Because of the circumstances, the superiors decided on a one-year extension of the second term for Mother Marie de Gonzague and her council, which otherwise would have ended in February 1892.

On May 10th, Monsieur Martin returned to Lisieux after thirty-nine months internment at Bon-Sauveur. On the 12th, he saw his three daughters once again in the parlour. The first time in three years... and the last. On that day he was clear-minded but did not speak. When it was time to leave, he pointed upward and through his tears managed to say: "In heaven!"

At first, Monsieur Martin moved in with the Guerin family, then in July to the nearby rue Labbey with Leonie and Celine. The two sisters were helped by a maid and a male servant, both necessary for the sick man's legs would

no longer carry him. They had to move him, feed him, and be near him constantly. Celine was still thinking about religious life, but for the moment devoted herself to the care of her father.

February 1893. Therese had just turned twenty. The religious were finally about to choose their new prioress. Mother Marie de Gonzague, who was no longer eligible, promoted the election of Sister Agnes. She thus hoped to continue to rule over the community through this intermediate. Sister Agnes, she thought, was a 'lamb,' young and docile enough to let herself be guided. On the 20th, Pauline was elected, but the ballot was not kept secret and it was quickly learned that the vote was very divided. Very moved, the young prioress, thirty-one and a half years old, could only cry when her family congratulated her in the parlour. As for Therese, she was delighted, as the note she wrote to her new prioress that very evening indicates.

18
J. M. J. L. 20 Février 1893

Jésus +
Ma Mère chère;

Qu'il m'est doux de pouvoir vous dire
ce nom!... Depuis longtemps déjà vous
êtes ma Mère, mais c'était dans le secret
du cœur que je donnais ce doux nom
à celle qui était à la fois mon ange
gardien et ma Sœur, aujourd'hui le
bon Dieu vous a consacré... vous êtes
habilement ma Mère, et vous le savez plus
bientôt l'éternité... Oh que ce jour est
beau votre enfant! Le voir que Jésus

On that day
Pauline became my living Jesus

Mother Agnes had difficulty asserting herself because the outgoing prioress was unhappy at not being able to control the newly elected prioress as she would have liked. Respecting the custom of alternation, Mother Agnes named Mother Marie de Gonzague novice mistress, and dared ask Sister Therese of the Child Jesus to help her in her assignment. Therese would have to give evidence of a great deal of tact not to offend her former prioress, who was unpredictable and touchy.

The two novices — two lay sisters — whom she was to look after were not easy to deal with. Sister Marthe — whom she had known for a long time — had great confidence in her, but the other one, Sister Marie-Madeleine of the Blessed Sacrament, who arrived on July 22nd 1892, did not open up. Since she felt that the novice mistress could see through her, she avoided the meetings proposed to her.



Sister Marie-Madeleine
of the Blessed Sacrament



The community gathered
on the feast of the Good Shepherd
(April 28th 1895)

Mother Agnes holds the crook of the Good Shepherd, covered with flowers, according to custom, by the novices whose feast it was. In 1895, there were four novices. On Therese's right, Sister Marthe and Sister Marie of the Trinity

(who entered on June 16th 1894); on her left, Sister Marie-Madeleine of the Blessed Sacrament and Sister Genevieve (who entered on September 14th 1894) who was celebrating her twenty-sixth birthday that day. In a long poem of fifty-five stanzas, Therese invited her sister to marvel at Jesus' constant gaze on her:

"You whose hand upholds the worlds,
Who plant the forests deep,
Who by a single glance render them fruitful—
You follow me with a look of love
Always!"

Ah!

*How happy I would be
to be able to paint!*

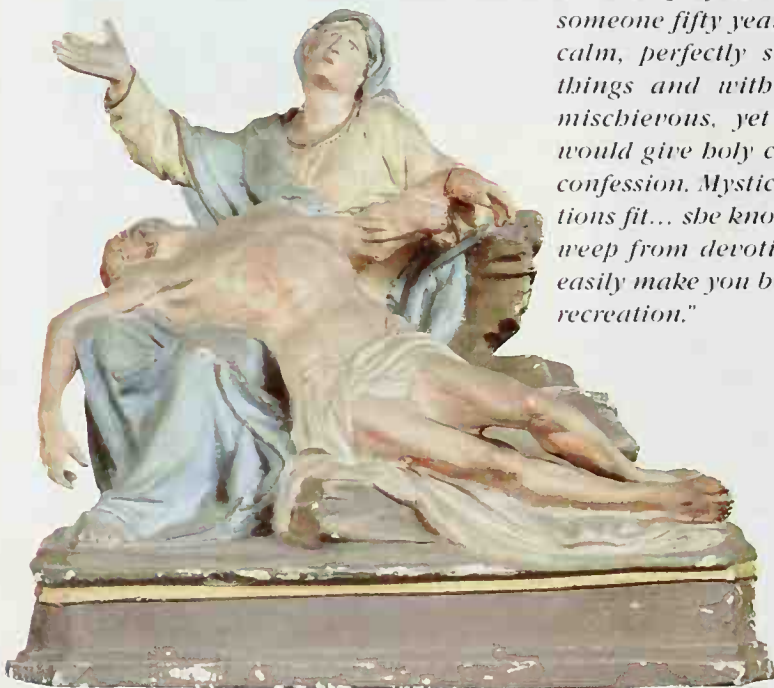


Saint Germaine de Pibrac,
died in 1601, at age 21,
canonized in 1867 by Pius XI

Although she was responsible for the novices, Therese also did some painting. This was the 'obedience' she received in June 1892, to replace her work in the sacristy.

Gradually, Therese began to express herself more and more in community. Not only through her painting, but through poetry as well. On February 2nd 1893, she wrote her first poem at the request of Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine (see p. 154). Soon Mother Agnes would ask her to compose poems, hymns and playlets — tasks that she herself had assumed until then.

The portrait that Sister Marie of the Angels, then subprioress, sent in April-May 1893 to the Visitation in Le Mans — one among twenty-three — clearly expressed the effect that Therese was having on her community: "Tall and strong with the look of a child and a tone of voice and expression to match. They conceal in her the wisdom, the perfection, and the insight of someone fifty years old. A soul always calm, perfectly self-possessed in all things and with everyone. Playful, mischievous, yet one to whom we would give holy communion without confession. Mystic, comic, all descriptions fit... she knows how to make you weep from devotion and can just as easily make you burst into laughter at recreation."



The Pieta



The prophet Elias



A painting Therese finished in 1892 and gave to Celine. It was modelled on a similar picture

which was in her cell (see p. 119). She added the lily from another picture (see p. 154).



Detail of the pall given to Father Roulland (see p. 265)



Alms purses



Pages of a missal illuminated by Therese



A hanging that went around the communion grill (see p. 104)



A stole



Therese worked diligently in Carmel. She would have considered herself unfaithful to her vow of poverty had she not devoted herself to some specific work in her free time. The reflection she shared a few months before her death clearly expressed her thought on this subject: "I always need to have some work ready to do; that way I am not preoccupied and I never waste my time."

In keeping with the great monastic tradition, Therese tried to accomplish her task without becoming absorbed by it. She began and pursued

her work in the sight of God and to please him alone. The advice she gave to her novices was along the same lines: "You did not come here to get through a lot of work," she said to Sister Genevieve. "Nor is success the goal of our work. Are you concerned at this time about what is taking place in other Carmels? Whether the religious are in a hurry or not? Do their works hinder you from praying, from meditating? Similarly, you must separate yourself from your personal tasks, use the time prescribed for them conscientiously, but with detachment of heart."

The angels in this picture served as models for Therese's fresco in the Oratory



Christ's tunic venerated at Argenteuil

The graph, done by Therese on the picture to facilitate the reproduction of the two angels, is still visible. The angels are located at the bottom of the fresco holding an inscription: "If only you knew the gift of God."



Summer 1893. Therese was given the responsibility of painting a fresco on the wall of the invalids' oratory, located to the left of the sanctuary. Therese's fresco surrounded the tabernacle where the chaplain placed the

monstrance on the days when the nuns had adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Sister Marie of the Trinity pronounced her Act of Offering to Merciful Love, beside Therese, in front of this fresco on December 1st 1895.

The fresco in the Oratory

Retouched twice by Celine, the present fresco is quite similar to the one Therese did in 1893.

Saint Cecilia and Saint Valerian
crowned by an angel

A picture made using a photographic
reproduction of the painting by
Il Domenichino in the sacristy of
Saint Cecilia's Basilica in Rome.
The photograph had been sent,
in January 1897, by Brother Simeon
of the Christian Schools,
a friend of the Martin family.

According to legend, after his baptism
Valerian found Cecilia, his wife, at
prayer. At her side stood an angel hold-
ing a crown in each hand. The angel
gave one to Cecilia and the other to
Valerian, telling them that the crowns
could be seen only by those who lived
in chastity like them. Therese liked to
compare her friendship with Celine to
that between Cecilia and Valerian. Thus
she willingly called her sister: "My little
Valerian."



From the summer of 1893, Therese
was assigned to help Sister Saint
Raphael in the gatehouse. This task of-
fered many occasions to practise pa-
tience. Therese did not forget the value
of the little nothings that one inevita-
bly finds in community life. As she
wrote to Celine, if we remain faithful
in "pleasing him in the little things, he
will be obliged to help us in the big
ones." That was in April 1894. Mon-
sieur Martin's days were numbered.
The hour would soon come for Celine
to consecrate herself to God. Therese
strongly exhorted her sister to remain
faithful to her vocation.

Sister Saint Raphael of the Heart of Mary
(1840-1918)

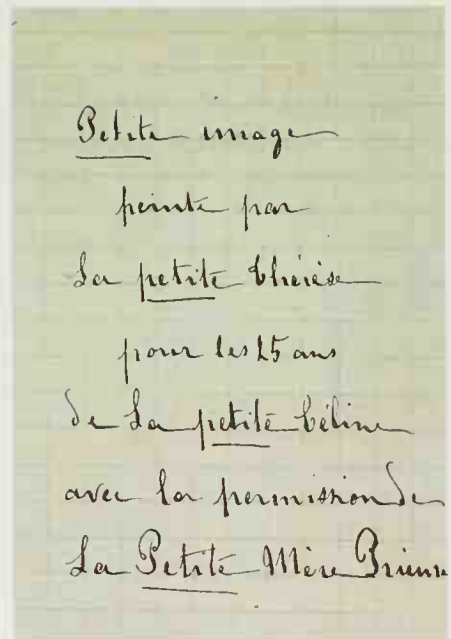
We know almost nothing about the child-
hood and youth of Stephanie Gayat. We
know only that her father, originally from
Honfleur, had been a wood turner before
becoming a cooper, and that her mother
was an upholsterer in Ingouville, the com-
mune overlooking the port of Le Havre,
completely encircled by ramparts. When
she entered the Lisieux Carmel at twenty-
eight, they were completing the building
called "the heart of Mary" (see p. 286). Her
dowry arrived at just the right moment to
help absorb construction costs. We can
easily imagine the young novice happily
adding this Marian title to her angelic
name.

When Therese was appointed 'second
portress' in the summer of 1893, she had
to deploy an abundance of patience with

The repetition of the adjective ("Little picture painted by little Therese for little Celine's twenty-fifth birthday with the permission of Little Mother Prioress") is not a sign of excessive sweetness, but the expression of the "big" discovery Therese was making (see p. 230): one must experience and accept one's littleness to benefit from the Lord's generosity. In sending this picture to her sister, Therese wrote: "This is indeed Jesus' nature: he gives as God, but he wants humility of heart." In the centre of the design that she drew and inscribed, Therese attached an image she particularly liked: the Child Jesus appearing to Teresa of Avila saying, "I am Jesus of Teresa" (see p. 132). The same day Therese gave her sister a poem she had composed in honour of Saint Cecilia, her "favourite saint." In it are brought together the virtues Therese esteemed the most: virginity, apostolic zeal and martyrdom. Above all, Cecilia abandoned herself with complete confidence into the Lord's hands. She dared hope that her most intimate desires would be granted — "Valerian, whom I have just married, will convert and respect my vow of virginity."



A tiny picture (4.6 x 6.9 cm) which Therese gave Celine for her twenty-fifth birthday (April 28th 1894)



To please him in the little things



regard to Sister Saint Raphael who was in charge of the gatehouse. "Everything had to be done in a certain way, without hurrying: the broom had to be placed like this, a piece of paper like that, one box on its side, another always flat." For three years, until March 1896, Therese put up with these innocent manias with a smile. Three consecutive winters, she also accepted the care that her 'first-in-charge' undertook to give her. To treat her chilblains, Sister Saint Raphael thought it wise to wrap up all Therese's fingers in cotton batting. At one point, Therese's fingers were so well wrapped that only the end of her little finger emerged from all these 'cocoon'!

Sister Saint Raphael — elected third counselor of the community in February 1893 — pointed out one day that "the little one was losing her health because she was not served a sufficient amount in the refectory." Ironically, at the same time, she inno-

cently took the little bottle of cider — scarcely two glasses — placed between her and Therese, who refrained from drinking so as not to grieve her diabetic neighbour.

One day, Sister Marie of the Trinity came to her novice mistress to complain that she was exasperated by the 'edifying' pronouncements of Sister Saint Raphael. "You must soften your heart in advance," Therese replied. "After that you will practise patience quite naturally." Therese exhorted her novices not to forget that Sister Saint Raphael suffered from diabetes. "Be very gentle with her, she is sick," Therese would say.

After Therese's death, Sister Saint Raphael began to suffer from a mental deterioration that gradually made her regress into childhood. A kind of paralysis of the legs brought her activity to an end. In August 1918, a serious crisis left her bedridden. She died a few days later.

On June 16th 1894, Marie-Louise Castel, the youngest novice Therese ever directed, arrived at the Carmel. Born in 1874, in Saint Pierre-sur-Dives in Calvados, she had spent her youth in Paris where her father, a former teacher, had put himself at the disposal of Father Roussel, to make known through lectures the Work he had founded on behalf of the abandoned children of the capital — a work that would be taken up and developed by Father Brottier in 1923.

Marie-Louise had already made an attempt at religious life in Paris, at

the Carmel on the avenue de Messine; she had taken the habit there under the name of Sister Marie-Agnes of the Holy Face, but ill health forced her to leave the monastery in 1893. The following year she was accepted in Lisieux. Therese was very happy about her arrival. Finally there was a novice younger than herself! Her integration into the Lisieux community, however, proved difficult. Her impertinent attitude as a "little Parisian" made her appear frivolous. The day before she entered the Carmel on the rue de Livarot, she rode the merry-go-round

at the Lisieux fair! The new novice had great difficulty acquiring the custody of the eyes and gestures that were considered in those days distinctive traits of a Carmelite. Rather than lowering her eyes in the refectory or when she went from place to place, she liked to rummage about. Therese spared no effort to help her novice progress; she even pleaded her case before the sisters in the community who found it difficult to put up with her impetuous temperament. "How I would willingly give up my life for you to be a Carmelite!" she would often tell her.

*I would give up my life
for you to be a Carmelite!*



Therese and her youngest novice, Sister Marie of the Trinity and of the Holy Face

This photograph was taken on March 17th 1896, the day Sister Genevieve received the veil (see p. 254) and six weeks before Sister Marie of the Trinity's profession (April 30th).

Her face was indeed that of an extrovert: large wide-open eyes, turned-up nose and high cheekbones. She registered her novice mistress's every action and after Therese's death great importance was accorded to her testimony.

Marie-Louise Castel had taken up again in Lisieux the name she had at the

Carmel, avenue de Messine, in Paris: Marie-Agnes of the Holy Face. Two months before her profession, however, it was decided that she would be called from then on Sister Marie of the Trinity and of the Holy Face. Why this change? Simply because local Norman pronunciation hardly distinguished between "Marie-Agnes" and "Mother [Mère] Agnes." To avoid any possible confusion between the future professed nun and the prioress, it was thought better to give Sister Marie-Agnes another name, one that had been considered at one point for Celine. Marie-Louise had, like Therese, a great devotion to the Holy Face.

Because Sister Marie of the Trinity had asked Therese to pray for the Work founded by Father Roussel, Father Brottier invited her to become the sponsor of the Orphelins-Apprentis d'Auteuil. In their chapel, the "monument of adoption" represents her bringing two children to Therese (see p. 320).

JE SUIS LE JESUS DE THERESE ...



SI QUELQU'UN
EST TOUT' PETIT OU'IL VIENNIE A MORT

A picture from a breviary (17.8 x 12.3 cm), made from a photographic reproduction of the Child Jesus of Ittenbach, called "of Messine" because it had been brought by Sister Marie of the Trinity from her Carmel in Paris, avenue de Messine

In the three photographs of Therese taken on June 7th 1897, she held in her hand the two pictures that summed up her spirituality: the Holy Face of Tours and the Child Jesus of Messine. She would keep these two pictures before her in the infirmary.

On July 25th 1897, Therese confided her feelings about this picture. In raising his right hand to heaven, Jesus seemed to be saying to her: "You will come with me to paradise, it is I who tell you."



A photograph taken in 1892, rue Labbey. From left to right: Marie Guerin, Leonie, Celine (flanked by the two servants), Monsieur Martin, Monsieur Guerin, Madame Guerin and a friend

*On July 29th of last year,
God broke the bonds
of his incomparable servant*

Since his return from Caen in May 1892, Monsieur Martin lived with Leonie and Celine on the rue Labbey in Lisieux, in a house very close to the Guerin home. There he spent the last two years of his life. He died at the Chateau of La Musse where his brother-in-law insisted on bringing him in July 1894.

Shortly after her father's death, Therese painted the Holy Face on a chasuble. All around, in the form of roses and lilies, she represented Monsieur and Madame Martin and their children. This was her way of expressing that her father's ordeal could only be understood in the contemplation of the Saviour's Holy Face. Furthermore, there is a remarkable resemblance, as far as the shape of the face is concerned, between Monsieur Martin's face and the Holy Face.



The chasuble painted by Therese and made from a dress that had belonged to Madame Martin

The two roses at the bottom represent Monsieur and Madame Martin. The five lilies surrounding the Holy Face are the five Martin daughters (Therese identified herself with the lily on the left, half hidden by Veronica's veil). The four buds symbolize the four little siblings who died at a young age. To paint the chasuble, Therese took as a model the miniature on parchment painted by Pauline in April 1890 and given to Celine on the occasion of her twenty-first birthday (see p. 149). Celine was already represented there by the lily just below the Holy Face, for Therese had called her sister, at the beginning of 1889, Marie of the Holy Face. That was the name Celine would bear on her entrance into Carmel.



Celine Martin

Celine had many suitors, notably Henry Maudelonde, Madame Guerin's nephew. During family dinners, he always managed to sit near her. The meal scarcely over, he would ask her to dance. The temptation was strong, she later confided, to renounce her plan for consecrated life: "I had only to say a word or give a glance!"

Tired of waiting, Henry married Marie Asseline on April 20th 1892. It was during this wedding reception that Celine found herself suddenly unable to dance with a young man who, red with embarrassment, left the celebration. Therese had prayed to the Lord for this — so great was her desire that Celine remain faithful to her vocation.



Monsieur Martin's death allowed Celine to fulfil a long-time desire: to become a Carmelite like her sisters. Father Pichon, however, had something else in mind for her — that she come to Canada to help him with his apostolate. The Carmel, Therese's spiritual father thought, would certainly not admit a fourth Martin girl into the cloister. Therefore, she may as well consider another possibility from the outset.

Therese did not see things the same way. As soon as she learned at the beginning of August about Father Pichon's plan — until then kept secret — she was indignant... and she reacted! She was absolutely convinced that Celine's place was in Carmel. Not that she wanted to resume the long conversations she formerly had with her at Les Buissonnets, but rather Therese, in all simplicity, thought there was so much she wanted her sister to discover.



Sister Aimee of Jesus (1851-1930)

The religious who for a long time opposed to Celine's entrance into Carmel.

Born near the English Channel of parents who were farmers, Leopoldine Marie-Cecile Feron was the second of seven children. In October 1871, she was welcomed into the

Lisieux Carmel by Mother Genevieve and the following year received the name Sister Aimee of Jesus of the Heart of Mary.

Beneath the rough exterior acquired from her rural milieu, Sister Aimee hid a good heart and a solid piety. She never refused to help and was often called upon. Her physical strength was put to good use whenever a patient needed to be lifted. Therese herself suggested one day that she be called to the infirmary to help move Therese to another bed. She was the one who tenderly cared for Mother Genevieve during the last years of her life. The foundress of the Carmel, who had gone blind, was then in almost constant need of help.

Sister Aimee was a trial for others, however, because of her tendency to complicate simple things. She had great difficulty expressing herself; in the best of circumstances her statements were amusing. For example she would repeat at every turn: "My habits are invariable and never change!"

Sister Aimee of Jesus had been in Carmel for more than sixteen years when

Therese entered. Their relationship was not the most cordial! The Martin girls annoyed her by their "bourgeois" ways. Thus in 1894 she was adamantly opposed to Celine's entrance: "Carmel does not need artists," she loudly proclaimed. "It has far greater need of good infirmarians and laundresses!" Seeing only the practical, this country girl would have even preferred planting potatoes around the Calvary in the cloister. What good were rosebushes?

Therese herself related how Sister Aimee's opposition to Celine's entrance ended suddenly after a eucharistic celebration. Therese had asked for this 'sign' from the Lord to be sure that her father had gone straight to heaven.

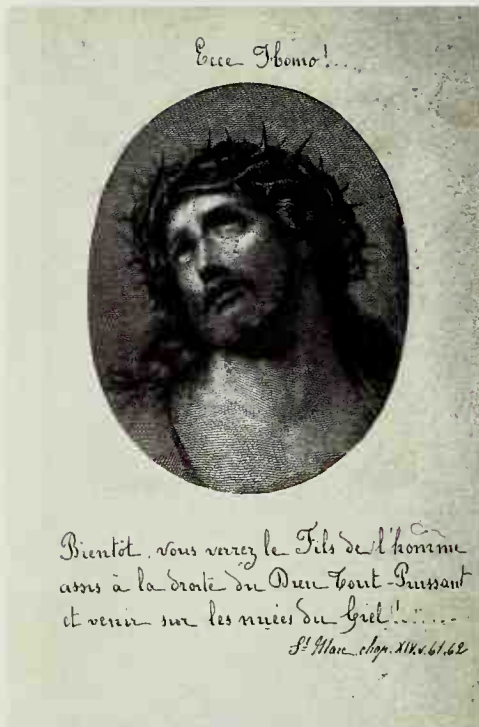
At first strongly opposed to the idea that a sister who had done nothing extraordinary could be canonized, in the end Sister Aimee of Jesus recognized that Therese was remarkably humble and that, had she lived longer, she could have been an excellent prioress.

A letter to Celine dated August 19th 1894

Therese encouraged her sister not to allow herself to be influenced by the remarks made to her: "Why, Mademoiselle, are you going to lock yourself up in a cloister? God does not ask for so many sacrifices or prayers. You would be better off to stay in the world and be useful." Therese referred to the gospel: in responding to Martha's criticism against the peaceful attitude of her sister and in accepting the expensive perfume poured over his feet by Mary of Bethany in the course of a meal, Jesus proclaimed forever the legitimacy of the contemplative vocation.

fut embaumé de la liqueur, mais les apôtres murmuraient contre Madeleine. C'est bien connu pour nous, les chrétiens les plus fervents, les pieux trouvent que nous sommes exagérées que nous devions servir avec Martha au lieu de consacrer à Jésus des vases de nos vies avec les parfums qui y sont renfermés. . . . Et cependant qu'importe que nos vases soient brisés puisque Jésus est consolé et que malgré lui le monde est obligé de sentir les parfums qui s'en échappent et qui servent à purifier l'air empoisonné qu'il ne cessera de respirer.

*My deepest desire...
that my dear Celine
enter the same Carmel*



Appelle toi qui au bord de la fontaine
du voyage fatigué tu cheminas
Et dis-moi ma la Samaritaine
Si l'homme qui renfermait son sein
Oh! je connais celui qui descendit à force
Il est le Dieu de Dieu, la source de la gloire
C'est toi, s'il est que fait-il
Jésus, tu nous as dit:
Allez à moi

Appelle ta, l'innocente folâtre
Qui sur la Croix, s'échappa de ton cœur
Oh! Sans le mien, Jésus elle est impuante
Et de ta Croix, je partage l'ardent
Plus je me sens bruler de tes divines flammes
Plus je me attire, de ta divine des ames
Que d'une soif d'amour
Je brule nuit et jour
Appelle ta

Appelle ta, Jésus, l'âme de vie
Qui tu me amas qui que m'aura pour moi
Je viens avec l'aimée à la folie
Je viens avec vivre et mourir pour toi
Lui de sa, o mon Dieu tout ce que je dis
C'est de te faire aimer et d'être un jour martyr
D'amour, je viens mourir
Signeur de mon Dieu
Appelle ta

A picture given to Celine by Therese who used a photographic reproduction Celine had made of the painting by Guido Reni

Therese went beyond the sufferings of Christ to see in him the Son of Man coming in glory. She was in awe especially at the unheard-of love his Passion revealed to us. Herod treated Jesus like a madman. How right he was! thought Therese. "Our Beloved was mad to come to earth seeking sinners to make them his friends, his intimate companions, his equals. He was perfectly happy with the two adorable Persons of the Trinity... We will never be able to do for him the foolish things he has done for us." She wrote this to Celine on August 19th 1894, just before her entrance into Carmel and repeated it to her in 1895 in the poem "Remember," which she composed expressly for Celine and copied on the back of a holy card (see p. 77).

Die la à les doigts, écrit la sur les table
de son cœur. Dis à la Sagesse: ma sœur
et la prudence appelle le ton amie. Apprenez
à tout petits, la sagesse.

Voilà Sagesse j'aime ceux qui m'aime
ment, et ceux qui dès le matin se lèvent
pour me chercher me trouveront. Celui qui
m'aime trouvera avec moi la vie et la sagesse
le salut dans le Seigneur.

Si quelqu'un est tout petit qu'il
vienne à moi.

Le principe de la sagesse est la
crainte du Seigneur; et la science des saints

Celine's notebook
(12.5 x 7.2 cm)

When she entered Carmel, Celine brought with her a notebook in which she had copied passages from the Old Testament. There she discovered there the verse from Proverbs (9:4) which encouraged her to continue her march toward sainthood despite her awareness of being so small before the Lord.

In another notebook, Celine had transcribed entire pages from various authors, notably poems and maxims from Saint John of the Cross. One saying in particular struck Therese: "The more God wants to give us, the more he increases our desires." Later, this affirmation helped her take very seriously her desire to spend her heaven doing good on earth.



Celine's camera

With Mother Agnes' permission, Celine brought her camera to Carmel: the box was 13 x 18 cm, with a Darlot lens.



The first family photograph (late 1894)

For the occasion, Celine put on the novice's habit which she would not officially receive until the following February 5th. The only ones wearing their choir mantles are Mother Agnes, the current prioress, and Mother Marie de Gonzague, the former prioress. In the centre is Sister Marie of the Sacred

Heart, the oldest of the four Martin Carmelite sisters.

Sister Genevieve was inspired by this photo when she painted the "oval portrait of Therese" in 1899. Father Marie-Bernard, of the Grande Trappe, would likewise use it as a model for his statue of Therese, seated.

Therese's century rediscovered Joan of Arc. In 1841, Jules Michelet devoted the major part of the fifth volume of his *History of France* to a favourable presentation of the epic of the Maid of Orleans. From 1841 to 1849, Jules Quicherat published a critical edition of her trial. The clergy also began to be seriously interested in her. Among them was Bishop Dupanloup, who worked relentlessly for the glorification of the one who, on May 8th 1429, had liberated the city of which he became bishop in 1849. His efforts were crowned with success: in 1869 Pius IX initiated the procedure to prepare for the canonization process.

The defeat of 1870 renewed French interest in the figure of Joan. She suddenly appeared as the symbol of the revenge that the country wanted to take against Germany. Many plays revolved around Joan of Arc and, in 1877, the historian Henri Wallon published a 566-page well-documented volume devoted to her. The year 1894 marked an important stage in the increase in Joan's glory. On January 27th, Leo XIII authorized the introduction of her cause of beatification. By this very act, she received the title 'venerable.' It was henceforth permitted to honour her and pray to her publicly. In France, a parliamentary commission, presided over by Henri Wallon, proposed a law aiming at making May 8th — the feast of the liberation of Orleans — the national feast of patriotism. The proposal easily received the necessary votes. The anticlerical Republicans presented her as the forerunner of free-thinkers: had she not insisted on the rights of her conscience before the judges of the Inquisition? As for Catholics, they obviously considered her as the perfect model to be imitated: under her banner, they were happy to sing their rallying cry: "Catholic and French forever!"



I believed I was born for glory

There was so much enthusiasm that everywhere throughout France people prepared festive celebrations for May 8th, in honour of Joan of Arc. On April 21st, the pastor of Saint-Pierre's in Lisieux established a committee of young women to prepare the celebration. Celine Martin was one of the most active members. With Marie Guerin and

her friends, she made twelve white banners, each measuring 6.50 m long and dotted with fleurs-de-lys, to decorate the building! On May 8th, five thousand people pressed into the cathedral. A few days later, in the newspaper *Le Normand*, Uncle Guerin felt obliged to deplore the fair-like atmosphere the celebration had taken on.

The Feast of Joan of Arc

We remind you that next Tuesday, May 8th, the solemnity in honour of JOAN OF ARC will take place in Saint-Pierre Cathedral at 8 o'clock in the evening. This patriotic and religious feast is expected to be particularly moving. The church will be brightly lit. An elegant banner of the glorious Liberator will be blessed and placed in the chapel of atonement. Amateur performers and the Municipal Music group will enhance the celebration. An invitation has been sent to the officers and soldiers of our city's garrison. A cantata to Joan of Arc, a solemn *Te Deum* and selections of religious music will be heard during the ceremony and the Benediction. The pastor of Saint-Pierre will deliver an appropriate allocution and the collection, to be taken up by the Members of the Young Ladies' Committee, will be ascribed to the poor of our city and shared among the pastors of Lisieux.

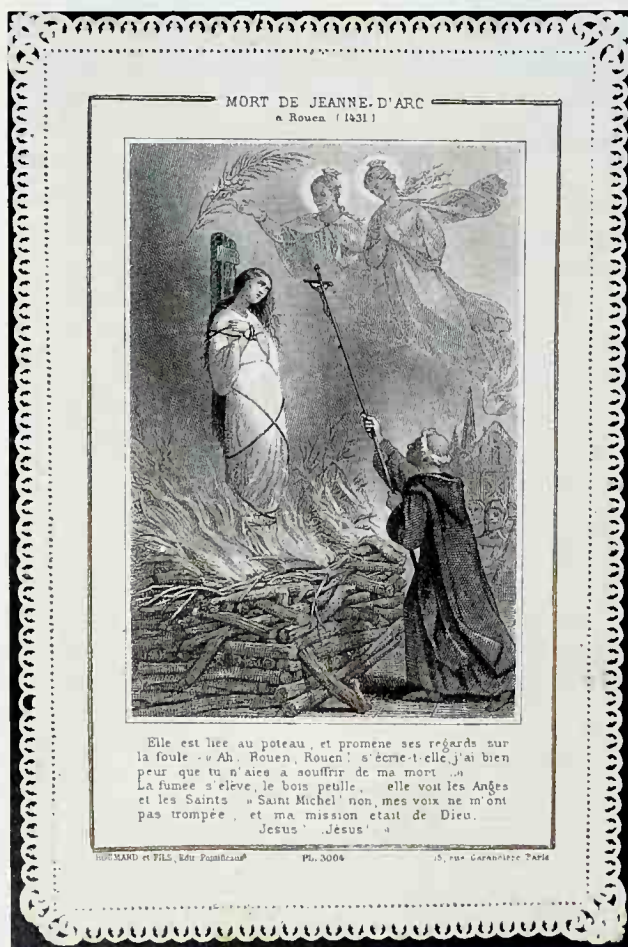
Fête de Jeanne d'Arc

Nous rappelons que c'est mardi prochain 8 Mai, qu'aura lieu à 8 heures du soir, en l'Eglise Cathédrale Saint-Pierre la solennité en l'honneur de JEANNE D'ARC. Cette fête, aussi patriotique que religieuse, s'annonce comme devant être particulièrement touchante. L'église sera brillamment illuminée. Un riche étendard de la glorieuse Libératrice sera béni pour être placé dans la chapelle expiatoire. Des artistes amateurs et la Musique municipale prêteront leur bienveillant concours. Une invitation a été adressée à MM. les Officiers et soldats de la garnison de notre ville. Une cantate à Jeanne d'Arc, un *Te Deum* solennel et des morceaux religieux seront entendus pendant la cérémonie et le Salut. M. le Curé de Saint-Pierre prononcera une allocution de circonstance et le produit de la quête qui sera faite par les Membres du Comité de Demoiselles sera attribué aux pauvres de la ville et partagé entre MM. les Curés de Lisieux.

Le Normand, Saturday May 5th 1894



A picture that was part of
Therese's personal collection



The front and back of the lace-bordered picture prefigure in a way the two plays Therese composed in honour of Joan of Arc:

— The first, *The Mission of Joan of Arc*, performed on January 21st 1894, describes the response of the shepherds of Domremy to her voices.

— The second one, *Joan of Arc Accomplishes Her Mission*, performed on January 21st 1895, describes the taking of Orleans, the coronation of Charles VII, and deals especially with her death at the stake which, according to Therese, constituted the fulfilment of her mission.

In Domremy, as elsewhere, Saint Catherine of Alexandria was a much revered martyr in the 15th century — one of Joan's sisters bore this name. Her cult was associated with that of Saint Margaret, also a martyr. It was said of both of them that before their deaths God had promised them to answer all the requests that were addressed to them. Hence their popularity. Although she gave the voices of the two saints the same reverence, Joan preferred Catherine who played a more active role in her revelations. When she was preparing to leave for Orleans, Joan sent for a sword from the sanctuary of Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois (40 kilometres east of Chinon). Following her instructions, the diggers found the sword buried just behind the altar.

According to legend, Saint Michael had appeared to Catherine to encourage her in her struggle and she successfully resisted the insidious questions of the pagan philosophers who wanted to make her lose her faith. In Rouen, before her judges, Joan would experience a similar struggle.

27th 5.10. 8 Mai 1894

Cantique pour obtenir la Canonisation
de
Jeanne d'Arc.

Dieux des armées, l'Eglise tout entière
Voudrait bientôt honorer sur l'autel
Une martyre, une vierge guerrière
Dont le nom retentit dans le ciel.

Refrain
Par ta naissance
O Roi du ciel!
Donne à Jeanne de France
L'aide et l'armement.

Un conquérant pour la France conquise
Non ce n'est pas l'objet de son desir
De la sauver Jeanne seule est capable,
Tous les héros peussent moins qu'un martyr!

Jeanne, Seigneur, est ton œuvre splendide,
Une flamme de feu, une âme de guerrière
En les domant la vierge terrible,
Ici tu voulais couronner de laurier.

Jeanne entendit dans son humble prière
Des voix du ciel l'appeler au combat
Elle partit pour sauver la Patrie
Sa douce voix à l'armée commanda.

Des fiers guerriers, Jeanne gagna les cœurs
L'écrit divin de l'envoyé de Dieu
Son pur regard... Ses paroles de flamme
Surent courber les fronts audacieux!!!

Par un prodige unique dans l'histoire
On vit alors un monarque tremblant
Reconquérir sa couronne et sa gloire
Par le moyen d'un faible bras d'enfant!

Ce ne sont pas de Jeanne les victoires
Que nous voulons célébrer en ce jour
Nous la savons ses véritables gloires
Ce sont son Dieu, ses vertus, son amour.

En combattant Jeanne sauva la France
Mais il fallait que ses grandes vertus
Fussent marquées au sceau de la souffrance
Du sceau divin, de son époux Jésus...

The hymn Therese composed spontaneously on the occasion of the first national celebration of May 8th (see p. 216)

Therese closely associated herself with the feasts celebrated throughout France in honour of Joan of Arc. For her it was not so much a question of singing the praises of the "illustrious warrior," as of honouring the "martyr," for her "true glories" were her "virtues and her love." Therese autographed the original copy of her hymn, "A French soldier, defender of the Church, admirer of Joan of Arc" and dedicated it to her sister, the "valiant knight, C. Martin."



Episodes from the story of Charles VII and Joan of Arc. Manuscript # 5054, dated 1484, in the Bibliotheque nationale. Miniatures from "Vigils of King Charles VII" H. Wallon, *Joan of Arc* (Firmin-Didot, 1876), p. 52



1. Alone in his oratory, Charles VII asks God to allow him to keep his kingdom. It was this prayer, known to God alone, that Joan later repeated to the dauphin.

2. The Maid is led to the castle of Chinon to meet the king. Her two faithful travelling companions, John of Metz and Bertrand of Poulengy, follow behind.



3. Joan gives the order to throw logs into the moat surrounding Paris in order to seize the city.

Behind the grills of her monastery, Therese wanted to help her Carmelite sisters celebrate in the best possible way the heroine she had admired from her childhood. Moreover, she would write the following year that it was while reading Joan's life that she received one of the greatest graces of her life. While studying Joan's exploits, she felt in her heart a "great desire to imitate them." She believed that she too was "born for glory," but God made her understand that her glory "would not be apparent to mortals and that it would consist in her becoming a great saint." Henceforth Joan would be a "dear sister" to Therese. To die at nineteen whispering the sweet name of Jesus. What a grace!

Therese chose Joan as the subject of her first dramatic composition. The

Mission of Joan of Arc was performed at the Carmel on January 21st 1894 — the first feast of Mother Agnes of Jesus as prioress — a few days before Leo XIII declared the little shepherdess from Lorraine 'venerable.' To create her character — she would play the role herself — she began by studying the history by Henri Wallon that her uncle had given to the Carmel. She obviously projected onto Joan her own Carmelite ideal. She presented the little country girl as a "weak, shy child," attracted by solitude, silence and intimacy with Mary, one who scarcely paid any attention to the national situation. In so doing, Therese presented, unintentionally, a Joan of Arc very close to the historical reality, for the documents show us that between the ages of thirteen and seventeen the parishioner from

Domremy was in no way adventurous.

On May 8th, Therese associated the Carmel with the national feast by composing a "Hymn to Obtain the Canonization of Joan of Arc."

During the summer, she prepared a new play that would be presented on January 21st 1895: Joan of Arc Accomplishes Her Mission. This was the play in which Therese invested the most of herself — it was the longest one in her repertoire — and it was also the one for which she received the most applause from her community. She was perfect in the role of her "dear sister." Everyone admired the accuracy of the historical information, as well as the variety of costumes and sets.



H. Wallon, *Joan of Arc*, frontispiece



H. Wallon, *Joan of Arc*, p. 346



To compose her second play on *Joan*, Therese diligently studied the volume by Henri Wallon, the historian and elected representative who convinced the National Assembly to vote in the law which instituted the national feast in honour of Joan of Arc on May 8th.

The work contained a number of illustrations.

Joan of Arc arrives at the castle of Chinon on March 6th 1428 (H. Wallon, *Joan of Arc*, p. 48)
A tapestry of German origin contemporary with Joan of Arc (Museum of Orleans)





Therese in the role of
Joan of Arc (early 1895)
This is the period when Therese
wrote on the flag on her notebook:
"Long live the God of the Franks"
(see p. 8)

"I want to fight for Jesus
To win him countless souls
I want to love him
more and more!"

Shortly after the presentation of her second play in honour of Joan, Therese was photographed in the sacristy courtyard, next to an old painted wood statue of Our Lady of Providence. Therese is wearing a black wig over her toque (the white linen cloth Carmelites wrap around their heads) and paper fleurs-de-lis sewn on her habit.

This was the costume that almost caught fire at the end of the play. The alcohol stoves used to represent the stake at Rouen set fire to the screen behind which Therese stood. Mother Agnes ordered her not to move while the fire was being extinguished in its early stages. Therese did not flinch... but the incident profoundly marked her. The theme of fire would assume an increasingly greater place in her writings. On the following June 9th, she would offer herself as a holocaust to the consuming Fire of Merciful Love.

H. Wallon, *Joan of Arc*, p. 424



Therese and her sister Genevieve
in their respective roles
as Joan and Saint Catherine

In rereading her second play about Joan in June 1897, Therese was happy to find that it already expressed what she profoundly felt at the approach of her death. In keeping with the fourth chapter of the Book of Wisdom, an important reference for her: she believed with all her soul that her early death, far from being a misfortune, was a true blessing from the

Lord. Like Joan, she had no need to spend long years on earth to accomplish her mission.

"Joan: I am only in the springtime of my life. What reward can I expect after so brief a passage on earth?"

"Saint Catherine: Joan, listen to the words of uncreated Wisdom. She will instruct you in what you desire to know. When the just man dies a pre-

mature death, says Wisdom, he finds rest, because what makes old age venerable is not length of life, nor number of years. The prudence of the just man takes the place of white hair, and a spotless life is a blessed old age. [...] Having lived only a short time, he filled the course of a long life, for his soul was pleasing to God."



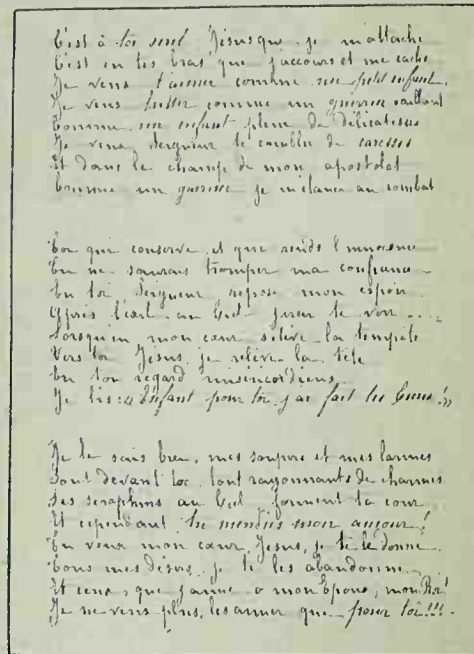
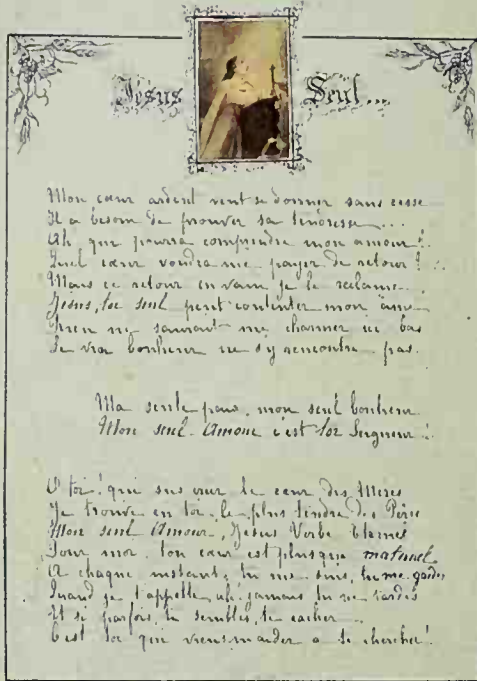
Therese playing the role of Joan in prison
 At the far right, on a pile of stones,
 is seen Joan's 'helmet'
 This is one of the best photographs
 of Therese

Rereading her play two years later, Therese became more and more aware of the similarities between her life and Joan's. Constantly disturbed by sisters who thought they were being kind by visiting her in the infirmary and chatting, she admitted: "They plague me with questions: it reminds me of

Joan of Arc before the tribunal. I think I respond with the same sincerity."

A week later, she asked Mother Agnes not to be discouraged should she run up against problems in the publication of her autobiographical writings. "I agree with Joan of Arc: 'The will of God will be accomplished de-

spite the jealousy of human beings.'" Therese was not quoting an authentic saying from Joan which she might have read in Henri Wallon's book. She was quoting herself by repeating that day, in reference to herself, a sentence she had placed on the lips of her heroine in January 1895.



The original title of this August 15th 1896 poem was "My Only Love"

*I want to love you
like a little child
I want to fight
like a valiant warrior*

Therese in the role of Joan of Arc, crowned in heaven

At the end of the play, Joan of Arc was crowned in heaven by Saint Margaret. In heaven "God's daughter, the daughter with a great heart," has no other desire than to save France again. "Oh! my beloved France! Gladly would I obey my voices which incite me to fly once again to your aid!..." In playing this role, Therese was already thinking that the joy of the saints in heaven is to do good on earth.

The Carmelite greatly longed for the day when the Maid of Orleans would be glorified by the Church. Even if Pope Leo XIII did declare her 'venerable' on January 27th 1894, there would still be a long way to go before she was canonized. Therese longed for Joan's definitive 'crowning.' The canonization did not occur until 1920.

Therese never suspected that Pius XI would one day describe her as a "new Joan of Arc" (May 18th 1925) and that during the dark days of World War II, Pius XII would declare her the "secondary patroness of France" on a par with Joan of Arc (May 3rd 1944).

Though simple, Therese was never simplistic. Her personality offered marvellous contrasts. Her warrior's soul did not prevent her from having a child's heart. The very year she prepared her second play about Joan, she became progressively more aware of the maternal tenderness of God and the truth of Jesus' saying: "If you do not become like little children, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven." When she reflected on the heroism of the Maid of Orleans, she felt herself to be very little. Far from frightening her, however, this littleness delighted her. If she fully accepted her weakness, Jesus would be obliged to carry her. Such

was the Little Way she taught her novices, the Little Way she would soon want to make known to a "legion of little souls," too often discouraged at the sight of their wretchedness.

Therese proclaimed this spirit of childhood in a poem composed on August 15th 1896 for Marie Guerin, her cousin, on the first anniversary of her entrance into Carmel. It is one of Therese's most beautiful poems:

*"I want to love you
like a little child
I want to fight
like a valiant warrior."*



*I am too little to climb
the steep stairway of perfection*



One of Therese's favourite pictures. She had several copies of it. This colour image (5 x 8.5 cm) had been given to her in her childhood

Therese spontaneously identified with the child climbing onto Jesus' lap and innocently hugging him. "The other little one does not appeal to me as much. He is standing like an adult; someone has said something to him... he knows that Jesus deserves respect." This is also one of the ways in which Therese pictured heaven. We will each be "on God's lap," she told Celine.

Beginning in February 1895, Therese signed her letters “the very little Therese.” She had just discovered more profoundly to what degree the Lord is merciful and how pleased he is to transform his creatures when they truly recognize their littleness, their radical powerlessness to reach sanctity by their own efforts. Until then Therese had used the vocabulary of littleness to express her desire to remain hidden from the eyes of the world and her determination not to seek the love and recognition of her sisters. Henceforth, she would use it to express her joyful hope that the more she felt her littleness before God, the more she would enter into his intimate fellowship. Her radical powerlessness in the spiritual realm secured his divine intervention in her heart, since “the characteristic of Love is to humble itself.”



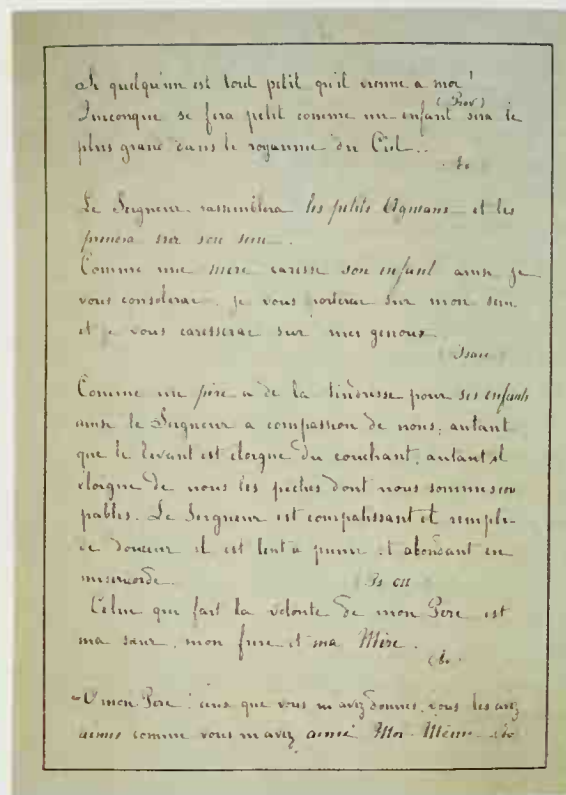
Therese was very fond of Psalm 22. She quoted it at length at the beginning of her first manuscript: “The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want.” And when she wrote to Father Pichon for the last time, it was this psalm she commented on. “My entire soul experienced it,” she admitted. Unfortunately Father Pichon destroyed this letter, just as he destroyed all the others sent by his little “charge” from Lisieux.

Perhaps Therese was thinking of this picture when she wrote: “The elevator that must lift me to heaven is your arms, O Jesus! For that, I do not need to grow up; on the contrary, I must remain little, and become ever more so.”

... les choses de mon ascension de beaucoup plus avantageusement
 ... je voudrais aussi trouver une ascension pour me élever jusqu'à
 ... car je suis trop petite pour monter le rude escalier de la
 perfection. Mais par recherche dans les livres j'ai découvert de l'as-
 cension objet de mon desir et que les saints ont fait de la bouche de
 Sagesse d'Henriette. Lequel on est tout petit qu'il croisse à ma-
 ture je suis venue découvrir que j'avais trouvé ce que je cherchais et
 ... mon Dieu et que vous serez au tout petit que
 pendant à votre appel j'ai continué mes recherches et vous de que
 ... Comme une mère dresse son enfant ainsi je vous
 ... je vous parlerai sur mon sein et je vous balancerai dans
 ... mes bras. Et je vous parlerai plus tendrement plus mélancoliquement
 ... tout comme vous mon Dieu. L'ascension que doit monter par
 ... ce lieu, ce sont vos bras à Jésus! Pour cela je n'ai pas besoin
 ... grandeur au contraire il faut que je reste petite que je le sois
 ... plus en plus. O mon Dieu, vous ne refusez mon attente
 ... mais je vous chanterai vos miséricordes à tout mon instrument. Des ma-

It would be better to take the elevator!

In her third manuscript, Therese revealed her discovery. To become a saint, she must agree to remain very little. Then Jesus would carry her in his arms.



Adoration of the shepherds. Photograph of a painting done by Celine in 1892, inspired by a work by Muller

Just as Therese willingly spoke of God as “Papa God,” she often called the Blessed Virgin “Mama” (testimony of Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart).

In copying her favourite biblical texts on the back of this picture — which she gave to Sister Marie of the

Eucharist — Therese clearly indicated the link she perceived between the mystery of the Incarnation and the spirit of childhood. The Son of God made himself very small in the womb of the Virgin Mary. We are to follow his example and become very small also: the smaller we become, the more the Lord will carry us with an entirely maternal tenderness.

Therese was aware of having discovered a brand new way to go to God — a discovery the importance of which she would progressively realize as she taught it to her novices and spiritual brothers. She spoke of the Little Way to designate her doctrine. It was Mother Agnes who, for the first time in 1907, would use the expression “the way of spiritual childhood” to characterize her sister’s spirituality. This expression was repeated on August 14th 1921 by Benedict XV at the time of the promulgation of the decree on the heroic quality of her virtues. Therese had indeed seriously meditated on the biblical texts in which God proclaims his preferential love for those who have the heart of a child. She copied them on the back of

pictures she slid into her breviary in order to be able to think about them during the recitation of the office.

God calls us all to holiness

First of all, for Therese the Little Way signified a path that everyone can follow, a life without ecstasies or special penances. Fascinated from her youth by Joan of Arc, instilled with the desire to become also a great saint, Therese understood early that “to attain sanctity, it is not necessary to do outstanding works, but to hide oneself and practise virtue in such a way that the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.”

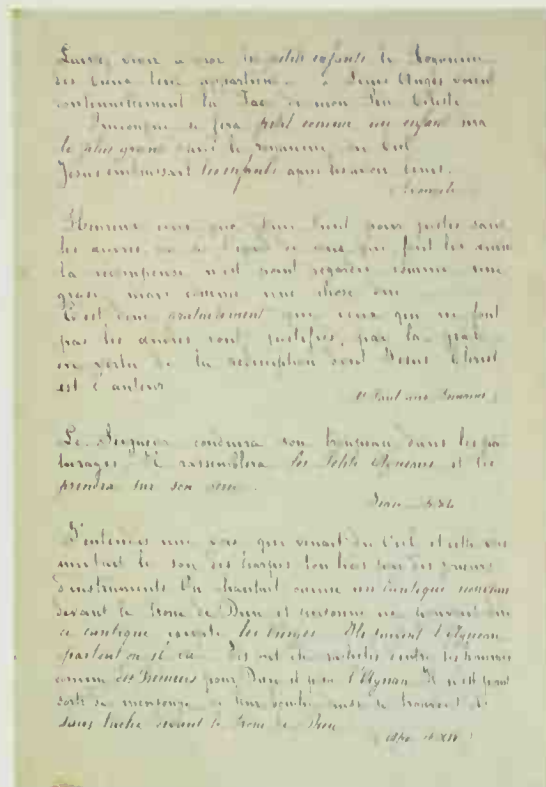
She especially understood that, to unite oneself to God in truth, one must first of all let oneself be found, loved and fashioned by him. His love is the gratuitous love of a father for his children. He always loves us first.

God loves us gratuitously

Therese had a keen sense of the absolute gratuity of the Lord’s love for us. Like Luther, she often meditated on the passages of the Epistle to the Romans where Saint Paul affirms that we cannot acquire salvation by our own efforts: “God has pity on whom he wills and he shows mercy to whom he wants to show mercy. The only thing



A breviary holy card Therese made during the second semestre of 1896 in remembrance of her brothers and sisters who had died at an early age. Therese gave an identical card to Sister Genevieve.



For Therese, these children who died so young were, like the Holy Innocents, “thieves of heaven.” They entered paradise without having merited it. This is true for all, affirms Saint Paul: God saves us gratuitously.

that counts is not what humans do but the mercy of God” (9:15-16).

We can understand why Pastor Marc Boegner could tell the Bishop of Bayeux during the Second Vatican Council that Therese was his favourite saint on the Catholic calendar: “We are all God’s beggars,” said Luther before dying, “I want to present myself before the Lord ‘empty-handed.’” Therese affirmed. To advance along the Little Way, is to let oneself be carried all along the way in the arms of Jesus. The child is too weak to accomplish by his own strength what the Lord expects of him.

For Therese, the spirit of childhood does not consist in becoming ‘innocent’ again like a child. She was too aware

of her condition as a sinner to make that mistake. When she pronounced the word ‘innocent,’ she immediately thought of those children who entered paradise without in any way meriting it: the “Holy Innocents,” massacred on Herod’s orders, and her four brothers and sisters who died at an early age. This is how she too wanted to arrive in heaven: ‘empty-handed,’ devoid of all merit, absolutely gratuitously.

Is this to say that in the end Therese thought she had to eliminate from her spiritual world any idea of merit? Absolutely not. Throughout her life, she was excited by the thought that on the Last Day, when he would return in his glory, the grateful God would cry out: “Now it is my turn! I

owe them my eternal and infinite substance.” This was an expression she had found in 1887 in Canon Arminjon’s *Conférences*. It encouraged her to bear all her sufferings patiently.

In other words, though Therese wanted to work only “to please God,” and not to have a more beautiful crown in heaven, though she expected eternal happiness from him, she also knew she had to ‘earn’ his children’s lives, to obtain their conversion by the fidelity of her love. She went so far as to say: “God must grant all my requests in heaven because I never did my will on earth.”

Admirable equilibrium of this spirituality!



Mary consoling Saint Mary Magdalene
(Monsieur Martin's room
at Les Buissonnets)

On June 16th 1888, Celine went up to the belvedere at Les Buissonnets to show her father the painting she had just completed. Monsieur Martin admired it greatly. He wanted his daughter to take painting lessons in Paris at the studio of a great master: "I have already rented a villa in Auteuil, Celine, so you can go there on a

regular basis. — Thank you, papa! But I want to share with you today a big secret: I too want to become a religious!"

Very moved by this response, Monsieur Martin pressed Celine against his heart and said to her: "Come, let us go together to the Blessed Sacrament to thank God for the honour he gives me in asking me for all my children." Celine would not enter Carmel until six years later, six years spent taking care of her father.

In this painting, Celine followed the iconographic style of the time which dictated that Mary Magdalene should be torturing herself at the remembrance of her past sins. There she did not much appreciate this kind of 'self-torture,' especially when it was attributed to the Virgin Mary at the foot of the cross. Celine later admitted that her painting was "a real daub."

According to the custom of the times, Therese identified Mary of Magdala with Mary of Bethany and the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Jesus with her tears (Lk 7:38). Therese was very fond of Saint Mary Magdalene. She considered her the model of all sinners who, having understood the Lord's mercy, approached him with "loving boldness." She wrote to Father Belliere: "When I see Mary Magdalene go forward before the many guests to anoint with her tears the feet of her beloved Master, whom she touches for the first time, I feel that her heart has understood the depths of the love and mercy of the heart of Jesus and that, despite her sinfulness, this heart of love is disposed not only to pardon her, but even to lavish the blessings of his divine intimacy on her, to raise her up to the highest summits of contemplation."

The spiritual writers of her time did not all share this point of view. Father Emile Bougaud, author of *L'Histoire de sainte Jeanne de Chantal et des origines de la Visitation* [The Story of Saint Jane Frances de Chantal and the Origins of the Visitation] (Paris, 1865) affirmed, for example, that innocent souls have an intimacy and a familiarity with God that penitent souls will never enjoy: these latter must be satisfied with being at the Lord's feet, like Mary Magdalene, while the former, like Saint John, rest against his bosom. Therese must have been startled when listening to the reading of this passage in the refectory in 1893 since the very presence of Mary Magdalene at the foot of the cross, with the Virgin Mary, reminded the greatest sinners that they are all called to remain, their whole lives, at the Lord's feet, in awe of the pardon they have received. "We are not saints who weep for our sins," Therese ventured to say to one of her novices. "We rejoice that they serve to glorify the mercy of God."

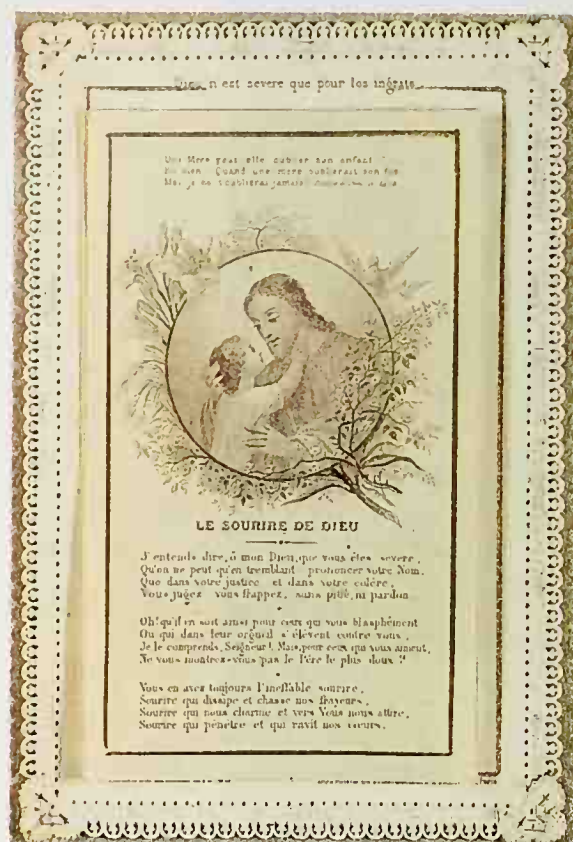


I.' amour fut son seul bourreau.
Mais il la pressait sans relache de souffrir avec Celui
qui avait tant souffert pour elle !...

*I imitate
the behaviour of
Mary Magdalene:
her loving boldness
charmed the heart of Jesus*

*de le punir par un bon. je ne croi pas que de com-
de l'heureux pour punir unite a la confiance filiale a
son enfant est il vraiment la sincerite et l'amour. Et si
grace par cependant que plus d'un fois son fils retomber
dans les memes fautes mais il est dispose a lui pardonner
toujours, si toujours son fils le punit par la grace...*

Letter to Father Belliere (July 18th 1897)



Here is a child who dared approach the Lord confidently. For him the Lord is not a severe judge who must be feared, but a father who is full of goodness, glad take his child in his arms and smile at him.

Perhaps Therese was thinking of this picture when she explained to Leonie or to Father Belliere the way "to capture Jesus by appealing to his heart." When a child misbehaves, he sometimes goes and pouts in his corner and cries even before the punishment comes. But he can also confidently rush into the arms of his father and ask him "to punish him with a kiss." This is how, she explained, we must always act with God. "Before the coming of our Lord, the prophet Isaiah had already said (49:15), speaking in the name of the King of heaven: 'Could a mother forget her child? Even if a mother could forget her child, I will never forget you.'"

Therese often thought of Jesus smiling at her. "God's gaze, his ravishing smile. This is my heaven."



Cover and interior of a holy card entitled "God's Smile"

Therese was aware of having been 'preserved' from certain weaknesses by a very special grace from the Lord. Therefore her gratitude to him could be as great as that of Mary Magdalene.

Her many sins are forgiven because she has loved much" (Lk 7:47). This statement of Jesus occupied an important place in Therese's thought. She expressed her conviction clearly: one must never despair at the sight of one's wretchedness, but have a foolhardy confidence in the Lord's mercy. He did not come to save the just, but sinners.

Therese rebelled against the interpretation that she often heard of this gospel verse: one cannot find a pure soul who loves more than a repentant one! "How I would like to prove this saying false!" she wrote. She even invented a parable to express her thought on this matter. Toward her, the

very little Therese, God acted like a physician who could have shown his love for a child by treating the wounds resulting from a fall, but who preferred to prevent the accident altogether by secretly removing the stone the child might have struck. By preserving her from serious sin, thought Therese, God forgave her more than Mary Magdalene. Therefore, she could love him as much as the great sinners. "He wants me to love him because he forgave me, not much, but everything. He did not wait for me to love him deeply like Saint Mary Magdalene, but he wanted me TO KNOW how he had loved me with ineffable foresight, so that now I love him madly!"



One evening in January 1895, the Martin sisters were chatting happily in the heated parlour during recreation. With her usual story-telling talent, the youngest evoked some memories from *Les Buissonnets*. Suddenly her godmother addressed the prioress: "How is it possible that you allow her to compose little poems to please one or another of us, yet not let her write anything from her childhood memories?" Mother Agnes hesitated. In writing her memoirs, a Carmelite might become self-absorbed. Marie of the Sacred Heart insisted so much that Mother Agnes called her little sister to her office and ordered her to write.

At the end of January 1895, Therese began to write, generally in the evening, after Compline, and on

feast days. She obtained a 30-page school notebook worth about 50 centimes. In her cell, seated on her little bench, the writing case positioned on her lap, she wrote whatever came to her mind, as she was inspired, without an outline, without crossing out, without a rough draft.

Before beginning, she knelt down in the antechamber of her cell before the "Virgin of the Smile," begging her not to allow her to write a single line that would displease her. Then she opened the gospels. Her eyes fell on these words: "Jesus having gone up a mountain, called to him those who pleased him." Therese saw in this an invitation to reread all the events of her life in light of this divine mercy, the fullness of which she probed in 1895.

In all six of her little notebooks — for the first would be quickly filled up — she sang her personal Magnificat. Like her patroness, Therese took up the pen only to celebrate the mercies of the Lord on her behalf.

On January 20th 1896, at first Vespers of the feast of Saint Agnes, Therese placed the manuscript on her prioress' choir stall. Mother Agnes did not realize at the time that she had just received the religious bestseller of the 20th century as a feast-day gift. She buried it in a drawer and waited several months before opening it. During this time, Therese did not seek to know her sister's reactions. She knew that by simply obeying the order of her prioress, she had pleased Jesus. This was enough for her.

j'aurais voulu pouvoir lui dire que j'étais guérie - mais je lui avais fait assez de fausses joies, ce n'était pas mes vœux qui pouvaient faire un miracle, car il en fallait un pour me guérir. Il fallait un miracle et ce fut Notre Dame des Doctores qui le fit. (Mr. Duncan pendant la semaine de messes) Marie sortit dans le jardin me laisser avec Léonie qui était assise près de la fenêtre, un bout de quelques minutes je me mis à appeler presque tout bas: «Mama - Mama» Léonie étant habituée à me entendre toujours appeler ainsi, ne fit pas attention à ce que j'en disais longtemps, alors j'appelai plus fort et enfin Marie vint, j'avis parfaitement entre, mais je ne pouvais dire que j'étais reconnaissante et continuais d'appeler toujours plus fort: «Mama - Mama» J'souffrais beaucoup de cette ^{forte} force et inexplicable et Marie en souffrant peut-être encore que moi, après de vains efforts pour me montrer qu'elle était auprès de moi, elle se mit à genoux auprès de mon lit avec Léonie et béni par tournant vers la Sainte Vierge et la priant avec la fervente d'une Mère demande la vie de son enfant, Marie obtint ce qu'elle désirait.

Ne trouvant aucun secours sur la terre, la pauvre petite chère s'était tournée vers sa Mère du Ciel, elle la priait de tout son cœur d'avoir enfin d'elle... tout à coup la Sainte Vierge, me parut si belle, si belle que jamais je n'avais vu rien de si beau, son visage respirait une bonté une tendresse ineffable mais ce qui me pénétra jusqu'au fond de l'âme fut le ravissant sourire de la S^{te} Vierge. Alors toutes mes peines moururent, deux grosses larmes jaillirent de mes paupières et coulèrent silencieusement sur mes joues, mais c'était des larmes de joie sous un mélange. Ah! pensai-je, la S^{te} Vierge m'a sauvée que je suis heureuse...



Photograph taken on Saturday
April 20th 1895 in Chestnut Tree Lane
(second pose)

The page where Therese tells
about her cure on May 13th 1883
(see p. 52)

Sister Genevieve felt that, of all the
photos that she had taken of her sister,
this one resembled her most. "You see
her as she really was," she said.

Therese's glance to the left here
reminds us of what she wrote at the

beginning of her first manuscript: "I find
myself at a time in my life when I can
look over at the past. My soul has ma-
tured in the crucible of interior and
exterior trials. Now, like the flower
strengthened by the storm, I lift up my
head [...] The Lord has always been
compassionate to me and full of gentle-
ness... slow to anger and rich in
mercy!..."

*These are my thoughts about the graces
God has deigned to grant me*

*My God,
will there be only your justice*

As she discovered more fully the extent to which the Lord is all love and mercy, Therese found herself having to contest radically the concept of holiness held by the religious of her time.

To save the world, consecrated souls were in fact encouraged to offer themselves as victims to God's justice in order to take upon themselves the anger of the thrice holy God which was ready to strike sinners. In accepting God's thunderbolts, they were happy to act in some way like a beneficial lightning rod. Such was the ideal proposed by the book used at that time for the formation of novices: Trésor du Carmel ou Souvenirs de l'ancien Carmel de France [The Treasure of Carmel or Remembrances of the Old Carmel of France]. It read: "The goal of the Order of Carmel is to honour the Incarnation and the humiliations of the Saviour, to unite oneself more closely to the Word made flesh, and to glorify God by the imitation of his hidden, suffering, and immolated

life. It is also to pray for sinners. To offer oneself for them to the divine justice and to make up by the rigours of an austere, crucified life for the penance they do not do. [...] Therefore, this Order calls for generous, mortified and zealous souls, who renounce themselves and offer themselves courageously as victims in place of our divine Master who is now beyond suffering, to be immolated like him to the glory of his Father and for the salvation of souls."

Many Lisieux Carmelites had been generous enough to offer themselves to divine justice in this way, and Therese had often heard their merits exalted. In the middle of the 19th century, Sister Marie of the Cross had offered herself as victim to obtain the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. A few months later, in 1849, she lost her mind and the community saw in this trial the sign that God had accepted her offering. Sister Marie of the Cross lived another thirty-three years. She died in

1882, the year Pauline entered Carmel.

Sister Genevieve of Saint Teresa, co-foundress of the Lisieux Carmel, had not offered herself as a victim until becoming seriously ill, but twenty months before her death, on the evening of Good Friday 1890, an interior voice led her to take this step. "My daughter — it is time — offer yourself as a victim." Soon her sufferings increased. The day of her funeral, Father Robee, the pastor of Saint-Pierre, pointed out the bond between her offering and her terrible sufferings.

Periodically, Therese would hear read in the refectory accounts of the women religious who had offered themselves to divine justice to obtain the conversion of sinners. While listening to M. Faillon's Vie de Monsieur Olier [Life of Monsieur Olier] (Paris, 1873, 3 vol.), she learned how Agnes de Langeac had obtained the spiritual transformation of the founder of Saint-Sulpice by immolating herself as

*to receive souls
offering themselves as victims?*



God prepares to strike France to punish it for its sins. Fortunately, at the bottom of the picture, the Virgin presents her Child to God to appease his justice.

The prayer printed on the back of this picture expresses well this concept of a vengeful God whose anger must be appeased by the offering of Christ. "Holy Father, look at your only Son, the object of your eternal benevolence and, for love of him, save us despite our crimes... Look at Jesus and Mary... and the thunderbolt will fall from your divine hands."

a victim to God's justice and by mortifying her body by all kinds of penances (flagellations, wearing hair shirts and iron belts). Later Monsieur Olier continually thanked God for having "vented his anger" on this nun instead of on him. Therese must have been all the more impressed by this reading in that this 17th-century Dominican nun bore the same name in religion as her own sister Pauline: Mother Agnes of Jesus.

The very evening before her Offering to Merciful Love, June 8th 1895, the obituary of Sister Marie of Jesus, a Carmelite from Luçon, arrived in Lisieux. She had indeed "often offered herself as a victim to divine justice." Her agony, on Good Friday 1895, had been terrible. The dying nun let this cry of anguish escape her lips: "I bear the rigours of divine Justice... divine Justice! divine Justice!..." And again: "I do not have enough merits, I must earn more." Once again, Therese was impressed by the example of a soul offering herself as a victim to God's justice, but it was to the Consuming Fire of Love that she wished to surrender herself the following day.



The community in the Lourdes courtyard
(April 15th 1895)

At the extreme left Sister Saint John the Baptist, the religious who reproached Therese for not giving enough importance to divine Justice

Several sisters moved, so their faces are blurred. Therese and the two novices on either side of her (Sister Marie of the Trinity on her right and Sister Marthe on her left) are looking up to heaven. Mother Agnes placed her hand on the shoulder of another novice, Sister Marie-Madeleine of the Blessed Sacrament. In the centre of the photo, Sister Saint Vincent de Paul, a lay sister in a white veil, pretends to speak with Mother Hermance of the Heart of Jesus, the former prioress of the Carmel of Coutances. On her right, standing in the middle of another group, is Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine. At the extreme left of

the photo, Sister Saint John the Baptist seems very pensive. Her spirituality was the opposite of Therese's. Always serious, she wanted to acquire sanctity by the strength of her own efforts, by multiplying prayers and penances. She found that Therese relied too much on God's mercy and in the end neglected his justice. Therese remarked one day that she saw Sister Saint John the Baptist as the "image of God's severity." Imposing in presence and an expert embroideress, Sister Saint John the Baptist nursed the secret hope of one day becoming prioress, as she had been led to believe. Yet in 1893, at the age of

forty-six, she was still working in the laundry. She had difficulty accepting that Therese was entrusted, so young, with the care of the novices. "If I were novice mistress," she said, "I would not put up with a single black hair on the fleece of my lambs." She thought that Therese was not severe enough and told her this in recreation one day: "You need to direct yourself more than to direct others!" With her customary gentleness Therese replied: "Ah! Sister, how right you are! I am even more imperfect than you think."



Therese certainly did not scorn those souls “who offered themselves as victims to God’s justice.” She even thought this offering to be “great and generous,” but she was not inclined to make it. And since “there are many rooms in the Father’s house” (Jn 14:2) — a gospel passage to which she often had recourse in order to legitimize the originality of her Little Way — she did not hesitate to surrender herself to God, as he increasingly appeared to her to be in that year 1895: an inexhaustible reserve of tenderness and mercy. There was no pride in this attitude, but a perfect docility to an inspiration of the Holy Spirit received on June 9th 1895, the feast of the Holy Trinity. Note, moreover, the boldness of this young professed nun. She dared not to follow the example of Mother Genevieve, whom she did consider to be a saint and whose last tear she had collected with reverence.



A picture given by Sister Saint John the Baptist on the occasion of Therese’s reception of the veil (September 24th 1890)

The dedication on the back is completely in line with the ‘tense’ spirituality of the one who wrote it: “To raise the soul to holiness, God lifts it up on the cross, and to bring it to life, he leads it to death.” The signature, however, did not lack kindness: “Your very affectionate little sister in Jesus, Sister Saint John the Baptist.”

In the description she wrote of her in 1893 (see p. 196), Sister Marie of the Angels emphasized her ‘severe’ nature. “Anchorite saint who would be glad to live like her holy patron on grasshoppers and wild honey. A great mystic always soaring in the heights... A holy emulator of Bishop de Berulle!...”

*I offer myself
as a holocaust victim
to your
merciful love*

June 9th 1895. The end of the Pentecost Ember Days had come. For an entire week the Carmelites begged the Lord to pour forth the Holy Spirit upon the Church. The previous day the liturgy recalled this saying of the apostle Paul: "The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).

On this Trinity Sunday, after receiving communion, Therese received a blinding insight. God is an everlasting Fountain of love, but he is obliged to "restrain the waves of infinite tenderness" that are in him if people do not open themselves to this outpouring. Imbued with the thought of Saint John of the Cross, Therese progressively learned to appreciate that God, the "Living Flame of Love" asks only to inflame the hearts of those who surrender to this fire... "O my Jesus! May I be this fortunate victim! Consume your holocaust by the fire of your Divine Love!" exclaimed Therese.

No sooner had she left the chapel than she ran into a surprised Celine and pulled her along in the wake of Mother Agnes who was on her way to the turn. Her face flushed, Therese stammered that she wanted to offer herself as a victim to the merciful love of the Lord.

The prioress did not realize at all the importance of the intuition that had just taken hold of her little sister's heart... "But of course!" she replied.

Delighted, Therese quickly explained to Celine what this was all about. She began to compose her act of offering. On Tuesday the 11th, kneeling in the antechamber of her cell with Celine before the statue of the "Virgin of the Smile," she pronounced it from the bottom of her heart...

In writing "holocaust victim," Therese expressed her most profound desire, that of being completely 'consumed' by the fire of divine love. This is why she used the term holocaust: unlike the other offerings of the Old Covenant, the victim offered as a holocaust was completely burned on the altar of sacrifice. Therese wanted to be completely immersed in the fire of love.

Five months earlier, on January 21st 1895, while playing the role of Joan of Arc, she was almost burned alive: as a result of carelessness, the modest stage set caught fire when it came into contact with the flame from the stove intended to represent the stake of Rouen. Therese remained calm and motionless in the midst of this fire. Today, she wants to be entirely consumed — and truly so — by the flames of divine love. Her life could thus become an "act of perfect love."

The back of the Act of Offering written by Therese on graph paper, June 9th-11th 1895

Yellowed, folded in four and worn-out along the folds, the sheet was reinforced with tape by Therese. At the top right, there is a trace of a burn. Father Lemonnier, a missionary at the Delivrande responsible for the examination of the text, brought a candle too close to the paper and damaged it.

At the end of her first manuscript, Therese revealed the grace of the insight that came to her on Sunday, June 9th 1895

Therese did not feel at all moved to offer herself as a victim to God's justice, since it is his merciful love that he is especially happy to "bestow" on the world.

Cette nuit le 9 Juin fête de la Sainte Trinite j'ai eue la grace de
comprendre plus que jamais combien j'avois besoin d'être aimée
Je pensais avec anxiété au sacrifice comme victime a la Justice de Dieu afin
de debarrasser et d'attacher sur elles les châtements réservés aux coupables, cette offre
de ma part semblait grande et généreuse mais plus loin de ma sainte patrie
la face de mon Dieu me vint au fond du cœur avec un regard qui me dit que
cette Justice qui veut des morts s'immolant en victimes... Votre Amour Miséricordieux
recorde-moi à ce point pas besoin lui en faire. De toutes parts il est reconnu
rejeter les cœurs aux pieds de son Dieu le prodigier se tournant vers les créatures
deux commandant le bonheur avec leur miséricordieuse affection, au lieu de
se jeter dans vos bras et d'offrir votre Amour infini... "O mon Dieu! votre
Amour infini est-ce le votre en votre honneur?" Il me semble que si vous
trouvez des âmes s'offrant en victimes d'holocaustes à votre Amour sans les en
susciter rapidement - il me semble que vous serez heureux de ne point voir
jamais le flot d'infimes victimes qui sont en vous. Si votre Justice aime
à se débarrasser elle ne s'occupe que sur le feu combien plus votre Amour
Miséricordieux desire-t-il embrasser les âmes, puisque votre Miséricordieuse s'élève
jusqu'à bien... à mon Dieu! que ce soit votre cette humble victime
comme votre holocauste - par le feu de votre Dieu Amour... "

Offrir de vivre dans un acte de purifiant Amour. Je m'offre en
victime d'holocauste à votre Amour miséricordieux, vous
plaisant de me consumer sans cesse, laissant déborder en moi
des flots de tendresse infini qui sont renfermés en vous ^{et qui m'aiment}
Je suis Martyre de votre Amour o mon Dieu! ...
Que ce martyr après m'avoir préparé à paraître devant vous
me fasse enfin mourir à qui mon âme s'élève sans retard
dans l'éternel embrassement de votre Miséricordieux Amour.
Je vous o mon Dieu Amour, à chaque battement de mon cœur
vous renouveler cette offrande un nombre infini de fois, jusqu'à
ce que les ombres s'éclaircissent et qu'alors je puisse vous adorer mon
Amour dans un Feu à l'éternel.

M. P. Clérice De l'Enfant Jésus de la 1^{re} Rue
(et carm. 2nd)

Site de la Vierge Sainte Trinite.
Dimanche: 9 Juin 1895

In the course of the week, probably Friday June 14th, while making the Way of the Cross privately in the choir, Therese was "seized with so violent a love for God" that she believed she was entirely immersed in fire. "I was burning with love and I felt that one minute, one second more, and I would not be able to bear this ardour without dying." She interpreted this as the sign that God had indeed accepted her offering.

She thought it prudent to inform Mother Agnes who pretended to pay no attention to it because she greatly feared that her sister would follow extraordinary ways. Mother Marie de Gonzague felt the same way. She wrote to Therese that the wounds that came from community life did not present

the same possibility of error as did the so-called wounds certain Carmelites received from a mystical spear. What she liked best about Saint Teresa of Avila were her cheerfulness and simplicity: "Long live her drum and its beating!" Therese, who so loved to contemplate Mary of Nazareth's life of faith, had no difficulty accepting these words. She would not exchange the three painful years she experienced at the time of her father's mental illness for all the ecstasies of the saints.

Therese never alluded to this "wound of love" in her autobiography. Nonetheless, at the explicit request of Mother Agnes, she spoke of it again on July 7th 1897, the day before she was taken down to the infirmary.

Photographed on the steps
Easter Monday, April 15th 1895



The transverberation of Saint Teresa of Avila. Breviary picture (13.5 x 9 cm)

Corridor located behind the Carmelite choir

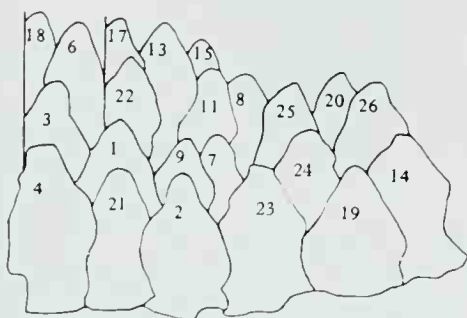
Here Therese confided to Mother Agnes, on June 14th 1895, the grace she had just received while making the Way of the Cross. It was also here, on June 9th, that she had asked her for permission to offer herself to merciful love.



Therese knew the Bible well enough to know that she must never judge by appearances. "Man sees the face, but God sees the heart."

She also realized that "charity must not remain enclosed in the depths of the heart." Jesus asks that the flame of our charity "enlighten and give joy to all those in the house." This is why, she told her novices, we must always try to smile. "The face is the reflection of the soul," she said to Sister Marie of the Trinity.

Photograph taken
Easter Monday, April 15th 1895



The Carmel of Lisieux

1. Sr. Therese of the Child Jesus
2. Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart (Marie)
3. Reverend Mother Agnes of Jesus (Pauline)
4. Sr. Genevieve of the Holy Face (Celine)
5. Sr. Marie of the Eucharist (Marie Guerin)
6. Reverend Mother Marie de Gonzague

Others, in the order of profession:

7. Sr. Saint Stanislaus
8. Mother Hermance of the Heart of Jesus
9. Sr. Marie of the Angels
10. Sr. Saint Raphael
11. Sr. Saint John the Baptist
12. Sr. Aimee of Jesus
13. Sr. Teresa of Jesus
14. Sr. Marguerite-Marie
15. Sr. Teresa of Saint Augustine
16. Sr. Saint John of the Cross
17. Sr. Marie-Emmanuel
18. Sr. Marie of Saint Joseph
19. Sr. Marie of Jesus
20. Sr. Marie-Philomene
21. Sr. Marie of the Trinity
22. Sr. Anne of the Sacred Heart
(Carmel of Saigon)

Lay Sisters:

23. Sr. Marie of the Incarnation
24. Sr. Saint Vincent de Paul
25. Sr. Marthe of Jesus
26. Sr. Mary Magdalene

Four of these sisters (5, 10, 12, 16) are not shown in the photograph. Sr. Saint-Pierre was in the infirmary and Sr. Marie of the Eucharist entered on August 15th 1895.





Love is repaid by love alone



Coat of arms drawn by Therese at the end of her first manuscript

We noted above (p. 157) Therese's commentary on the device on the left half of the coat of arms. Here, in summary, is how she explained the one on the right.

FMT (Marie-Françoise Therese) is a little flower exposed to the beneficial rays of the Virgin Mary, the gentle Morning Star. Transplanted on the mountain

of Carmel, she aspires to the palm of martyrdom, even though she is only a weak reed. "The luminous triangle represents the adorable Trinity ceaselessly bestowing its priceless gifts on poor little Therese's soul." As for the spear that separates the two parts of the device, it is the "flaming spear of love" of which she desires to burn for her God. In drawing it, Therese certainly thought of the wound of love she had received in June 1895 (see p. 240).

To let oneself be loved and pardoned by the Lord, to open oneself to the torrents of infinite tenderness that flow from his heart, to let oneself be consumed by the fire of his love, all this is fundamental in Therese's thought. Yet we might seriously distort her Little Way were we to forget her desire to return to the Lord "love for love." "Love is repaid by love alone." These were the only words she wrote beneath her coat of arms, at the end of her first manuscript. In other words, Therese did not always present herself with empty hands before God. She was also concerned to come before him hands filled with the flowers of her love: "with the one goal of pleasing him and saving souls" — as she stated in her Act of Offering. Until the end of her life, she believed it was her responsibility to win the lives of his children, poor sinners. She was their sister, seated at their table, calling down upon them, as upon herself, the same outpouring of the torrents of divine mercy. She was also their mother and responsible for obtaining their salvation by her unflinching love.

When, on August 6th 1897, Therese explained, at the request of Mother Agnes, what to live like a child before God meant for her, she began by saying that it meant "to recognize one's nothingness, to expect everything from God, as a child expects everything from his father, to feel incapable of earning one's life, the eternal life of heaven." But the child, she added, is also the one who "has no other occupation but to pick flowers, the flowers of love and of sacrifice, and to offer them to God for his pleasure."

Therese already realized that one might misinterpret her Little Way by underestimating the place of "spiritual combat" in the Christian life: "Many souls say: 'I do not have the strength to accomplish such a sacrifice.' But let them make the effort! God never refuses the first grace which gives the courage to act," she said two days later.

Vivre d'Amour!

De quelqu'un m'Amour il garda ma Parole
et mon Dieu, l'Amour et nous serons à lui,
et nous serons en lui notre salut...
Je voudrais ma vie... d'Amour...
S. Marie de la Visitation

Vivre d'Amour, parlant sans parabole,
Jeune de voir de quelque un sent m'Amour,
et toute sa vie, qu'il garde ma Parole,
« Mon Dieu et moi, voudrais le visiter,
« Et de son sang, faisant notre demeure,
« Venant à lui, nous serons toujours!...
« Temple de paix, nous voulons qu'il demeure
« en notre Amour! »

Vivre d'Amour, c'est te garder toi-même,
Verbe moi, Parole de mon Dieu,
Ah! tu le sais Dieu Jésus je t'aime,
L'esprit d'Amour, m'embrasse de son feu!
C'est en t'aimant que j'attire le Père,
Mon faible cœur le garde sans retour...
O' brant! vous êtes Présomptueux
De mon Amour!...

Vivre d'Amour, c'est vivre de ta vie,
Roi glorieux, Dieu des cieux
En ses jours, ma cache dans une hostie,
Je suis pour toi une cache à Jésus!
« Des amants, il faut la solitude,
Un cœur à cœur, qui dure nuit et jour
Bon seul regard est ma béatitude,
Je vis d'Amour! »

Vivre d'Amour, c'est pas sur la terre
Sans sa toute au sommet du Calvaire
Avec Jésus, c'est qu'on le balance
C'est regarder la croix comme un lieu
Avec lui, je suis avec de jansonne
Avec l'Esprit, avec son feu pour toujours
Mais cela, je suis dans le souffrance
Vivre d'Amour

Vivre d'Amour, c'est donner sans mesure,
Sans réclamer de salaire au bar
Avec moi, c'est je donne et tout bien me
En l'âme en amour, en un culte sans
Avec lui, Dieu, Dieu, Dieu, Dieu, Dieu
Je suis tout d'Amour, légèrement je cours!
Je suis plus que moi, que moi, que moi
Vivre d'Amour!

Vivre d'Amour, c'est donner tout entier,
Tout donner, des fentes de la terre
De mes pechés, je ne suis nulle compagnie
En un moment l'Amour a tout brûlé!
« Humain, Dieu, a les deux hommes!
En ton foyer, je suis mon regard
C'est en ta force que je cherche à mon aide
Je vis d'Amour

Vivre d'Amour, c'est garder en soi-même,
Un grand cœur, en son vase, mortel
Mon Dieu, Amour, ma faiblesse est extrême
Ah! je suis ton Dieu, mon ange du ciel!
Mais si, je tombe à chaque heure qui passe
Avec réclamer, tu viens à mon secours
Et chaque instant, tu me donnes ta grâce
Je vis d'Amour

Before the beginning of Lent, the religious prayed for three days before the exposed Blessed Sacrament. This was called the 'forty hours adoration.' In 1895, on the evening of Shrove Tuesday

(February 26th), Therese wrote from memory and without a rough draft the verses she had composed during the day, the fruit of her eucharistic meditation. The poem was sent during her life-

time to various religious communities. In February-March 1897, she included it in a notebook intended for Father Maurice Belliere, in which she had copied eighteen of her poems.

Vivre d'Amour lorsque Jésus sommeille
C'est le repos sur les flots orageux!
Ah! ne réveille pas Seigneur que je t'éveille
J'attends en paix le voyage des cieux



The calming of the storm

Unlike the apostles when surprised by the storm, Therese did not want to awaken Jesus who seemed to be asleep, who appeared not to be worried about what was happening to his spouse. "I want to let him sleep," she said one day to Celine when commenting on this picture.

We can guess Therese's joy when she received this picture from Sister Genevieve. It corresponded well to what she had proclaimed in a verse of her poem "To Live by Love."

A picture given to Therese by Sister Marie of the Angels, her novice mistress

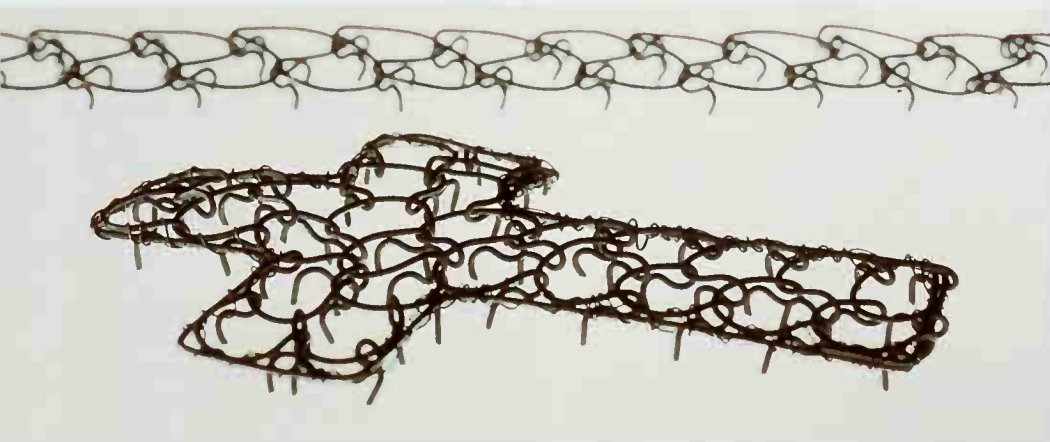
Therese knew fragments of the life and works of Blessed Henry Suso thanks to a copy that Celine had made. In particular, she was pleased to read that one day an angel had pointed out to the Dominican the superiority of the spiritual combat over the corporal penances he had undertaken until that time. While these had made him a soldier, spiritual combat would make him a knight.

This anecdote helped Therese to accept the concessions she was asked to make when she was ill. During the winter of 1896-1897, Mother Marie de Gonzague had insisted that she warm her 'alpargates' — the cord sandals worn in Carmels at the time. Therese, however, let the embers go out when she decided the weather was no longer cold enough to use a foot-warmer. "Others will go to heaven with their instruments of penance," she said one day to Sister Genevieve, "but I will go with a heater! However, it is love and obedience alone that count!"



Instruments of penance
used by Therese

When Therese took the discipline, she forced herself to keep smiling to show Jesus that she was happy to suffer in union with him and to save souls for him.



The iron cross worn by Therese
(12.3 x 8.5 cm)

Therese became sick because she wore this iron cross for too long. During her convalescence, she realized that she was not to undertake these kinds of corporal penances. Moreover, she had noticed that the religious who were most inclined to physical austerities easily sinned through pride.

From her youth, Therese had learned to express her love for God by multiple acts of charity. The night of her conversion, she crossed a new threshold when she discovered the joy of truly forgetting herself for others. This joy would continue to deepen. By studying the Rule and Constitutions of her Order, she saw the importance given by Saint Teresa of Avila to the daily practice of kindness to others: "Consider yourself to be the servant of all others and see in each of them Our Lord Jesus Christ."

As a novice, Therese offered to escort to the refectory Sister Saint-Pierre, a religious whose limbs were painfully deformed by gout. While writing her memoirs, Therese recognized with simplicity that she had succeeded in

completely earning Sister Saint-Pierre's good graces the day she realized there was one more little service she could render before going to her own seat: she could help by cutting sister's bread and carefully arranging the pieces in her bowl. The elderly sister was especially amazed — Therese learned this only later — by the smile with which the novice greeted her:

There were, on the other hand, some smiles Therese had difficulty giving, such as those she gave until the end of her life to Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine, who had "the ability to displease her in everything." Sometimes the temptation to be disagreeable to her was so strong that Therese would leave the room where she was working, to avoid being near her. Therese

overcame this antipathy. She forced herself to sit near her in recreation and to do all sorts of favours for her. She also forced herself to give her her finest smile — one that was not hypocritical since it was the expression of an authentic love. Therese 'loved' Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine from the bottom of her heart. She sought "Jesus bidden in the depths of her soul." What she proclaimed in her poem "To Live by Love," she put into practice:

*"To live by love is to navigate
endlessly.
Sowing peace and joy
in every heart.
Beloved Pilot, love presses me
For I see you in my sister-souls."*

Beloved Pilot, love presses me For I see you in my sister-souls

Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine
(1856-1929)

Only daughter of Monsieur and Madame Leroyer, Julia was born in the Chateau de la Cressonniere, near Orbec, where her parents were, respectively, a servant and a chambermaid. At fourteen, the desire for Carmel took hold of her heart, but she did not enter until she was nineteen, after the death of her father from smallpox.

Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine edified the community by her recollection, but there was something rigid about her that rather annoyed Therese. She reminded her of a "potted lily," she once confided to one of her sisters. Yet Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine never realized how she tried Therese's patience. She even imagined herself one of Therese's favourites. Did

Therese not dedicate her first poem to her? Did she not seek her out at recreation?

Later when she read *The Story of a Soul*, she went so far as to wonder who the religious was for whom Therese felt so deep an antipathy. In testifying at the process in 1915, she candidly gave the following testimony: "When the servant of God met a sister for whom her nature felt some aversion, she would pray for her and offer to God the virtues she saw in her."

It was only a month before she died on June 9th 1929 that she learned to her great embarrassment how wearisome she was to her sisters and in particular to Therese. Nonetheless, she cast her burden into the fire of merciful love. Therese had often told her that she was not to fear purgatory.



Leonie

July 1893. Leonie, who had just turned thirty, made a third attempt at religious life at the Visitation in Caen. She multiplied her efforts to follow as best she could all the observances of the Rule, but quickly ran out of energy. Nonetheless, once again she took the veil of the novice on April 6th 1894, taking the name Sister Therese Dosithee. Unfortunately, the headdress she wore day and night caused a severe case of eczema which spread over her whole head resulting in terrible itchiness. In her many letters filled with affection, Therese encouraged her sister to persevere in her vocation, but weak health and a still unstable character forced Leonie to leave the monastery on July 20th 1895.



July 1895. Sister Therese of the Child Jesus was in a period of full spiritual blossoming. One month earlier, on June 9th, Trinity Sunday, she realized how much the Lord desired to pour out on the world the torrents of his mercy. She offered herself to the outpourings of this mercy. When she learned, on July 20th, that Leonie had once again left the Visitation in Caen, Therese was deeply distressed. She, who for several months had known the great joy of initiating Celine into the secrets of the Little Way — a way she herself was just discovering — and of praising the mercies of the Lord on her behalf in compiling her childhood memories, was obliged to acknowledge that her prayers had not obtained for Leonie the grace of perseverance in

*There are far more
differences between souls
than there are
between faces*

Marie Guerin

On September 24th 1890, while attending Therese's reception of the veil, Marie — who had just turned twenty — felt herself inwardly confirmed in her vocation. She decided to become a Carmelite like her young cousin. When she entered Carmel on August 15th 1895, she brought with her a whole repertoire of contemporary songs which served as the musical background for Therese's poetry. Marie played the piano very well and had a lovely voice.



her recent attempt at religious life. This was her third failure in conventual life and she was now thirty-two years old.

In the letter she wrote that very day to Monsieur and Madame Guerin — who took Leonie into their home — Therese dared to compare her suffering to Christ's agony. The only prayer she was able to recite, she wrote, was that of Our Lord on the cross: "My God, my God, why?" This why was made all the more painful by the fact that the family was preparing to celebrate, a week later, the first anniversary of Monsieur Martin's death. Even his heavenly prayer did not obtain Leonie's perseverance. What went wrong?

Two weeks later, on August 15th 1895, Marie Guerin entered the

Lisieux Carmel to join her four cousins. Why did God permit such differences among the members of the same family? Why did Leonie apparently not receive the same graces?

Therese was not worried. From the time that she had taken charge of the novices, she fully ratified Father Pichon's saying: "There are far more differences between souls than there are between faces." God made her understand "that there are souls for

whom his mercy does not tire of waiting, to whom he gives his light only by degrees."

In fact, of all the Martin sisters, Leonie would perhaps be the one who best assimilated the Little Way. On January 28th 1899, she would again enter the Visitation in Caen and would there marvellously put into practice the encouragements that her little sister had never ceased to lavish on her: "I assure you that God is indeed much

better than you think. He is satisfied with a glance, with a loving sigh... For my part, I find perfection very easy to practise because I have understood that we have only to capture Jesus by appealing to his heart." We know what Therese meant by this: after every failure, we must go to Jesus, like a child, and say: "Hug me, I will not do it again!"



Celine and Marie Guerin on the grounds of the Chateau de la Musse

From 1889, Marie Guerin often went with her parents, her sister Jeanne, and her brother-in-law, Doctor La Neele, to the Chateau de la Musse.

There with Celine she had organized many games. In July 1894, a few

weeks before Monsieur Martin's death, the two cousins had even set up a series of "living tableaux" — The Eccentric Journey to the Andean Cordillera — which Celine photographed.



My dear little brother...

Maurice Belliere (1874-1907)

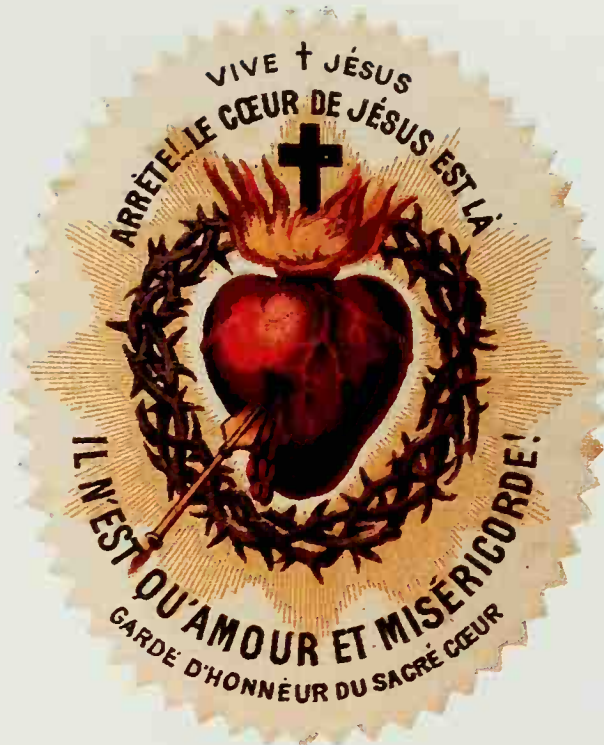
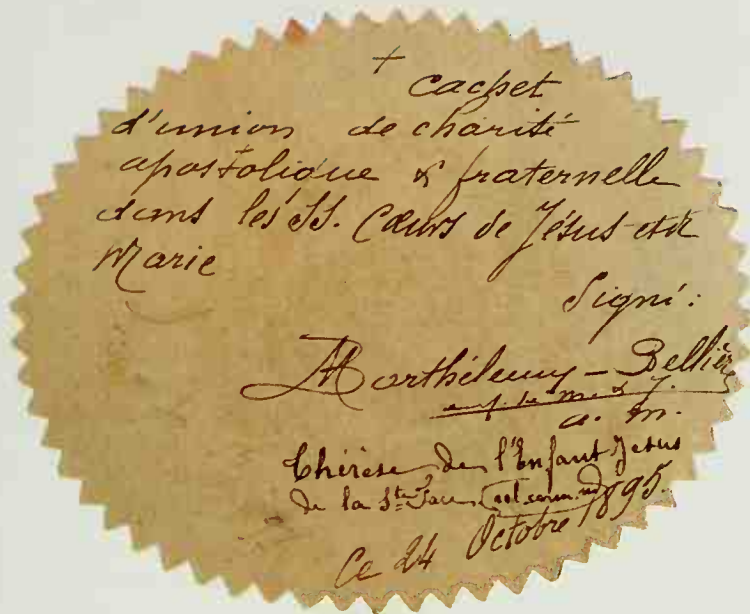
A seminarian in October 1894, he left by boat on September 29th 1897 for the novitiate of the Missionaries of Africa in Algiers. There he received the habit a few days after Therese's death. Ordained in 1901, he exercised his apostolate in Nyassa from 1902 to 1904. Due to poor health he returned to France in 1906 and died in Caen, his birthplace, the following year.

On October 17th 1895, Mother Agnes received a letter from a seminarian asking that a Carmelite sister help him persevere in his vocation and especially take in charge his future priestly apostolate. The prioress immediately thought of Therese. She went to the laundry to find her and entrusted this seminarian to her. His name was Maurice Belliere.

Two days earlier, the sisters had celebrated the feast of Saint Teresa of Avila. Therese could not help but see in this coincidence a magnificent gift from her patroness. She had always dreamed of having a brother priest, an impossible dream since her two brothers died very young. Now, at the age of twenty-two, she received from heaven a brother her own age, a future priest and, what's more, a missionary. "Not for years had I enjoyed this kind of happiness. I felt that in this respect my soul was like new. It was as if, for the first time, someone had touched musical chords hitherto forgotten."

The prayer she composed at that time began with these words: "O my Jesus, I thank you for fulfilling one of my greatest desires: to have a brother, priest and apostle." She intensified her ardour, offering for him all her prayers and acts of renunciation. As for the young priest, he did not overwhelm his little Carmelite sister with mail. He was satisfied to send her a card in November to inform her of his departure for military service. It was only the following July that he resumed contact with her. In the long letters she wrote in response to his, Therese did not hesitate to call him "My dear little brother."

Both sides of a seal given to Therese
by Father Belliere on October 24th 1895



Maurice's mother died eight days after his birth on June 10th 1874. His father, a dyer in Caen, widowed at twenty-six after only one year of marriage, soon remarried. His sister-in-law, Madame Barthelemy, herself widowed the following year when her sailor-husband died, raised the child on her own. At about eleven years of age, the boy suddenly learned that he was born Belliere. His father then re-entered his life. From then on, he signed Barthelemy-Belliere. Here, he added initials meaning "Child of Mary and Joseph, candidate for the missions." Ashamed of his family situation, Father Belliere never told Therese about his background: she always believed he was an orphan.

The last picture painted by Therese and given to Father Belliere (letter of August 10th 1897)

On the back, the dedication in unsteady handwriting: "The last memento of a sister soul to yours." To compose her picture, Therese used the photograph of a picture she liked (see p. 274). The two hands of the priest holding the sacred host clearly express her hope for Father Belliere: that he would later become a priest filled with love for Jesus! As for the text she printed, it proclaims for the last time the boundless confidence she wanted to see develop in her dear little brother's heart.





Three weeks after her profession (February 24th 1896), on the day of her reception of the veil (March 17th 1896), Sister Genevieve was photographed with her sister at the foot of the cloister crucifix

Mother Agnes, the prioress in office, is not in the photo, as one would have expected. It was a delicate issue! Mother Marie de Gonzague would have liked to delay Sister Genevieve's profession by a few weeks so that it would take place "under her administration," for indeed she hoped to be re-elected prioress in the next elections set for the following March 21st. Therese reacted strongly to Mother Marie de Gonzague's completely unjustified desire, for there was no reason to put off her sister

Celine's profession. "There are trials one must not give," she permitted herself to say one day in January in the laundry room while the sisters were discussing this matter.

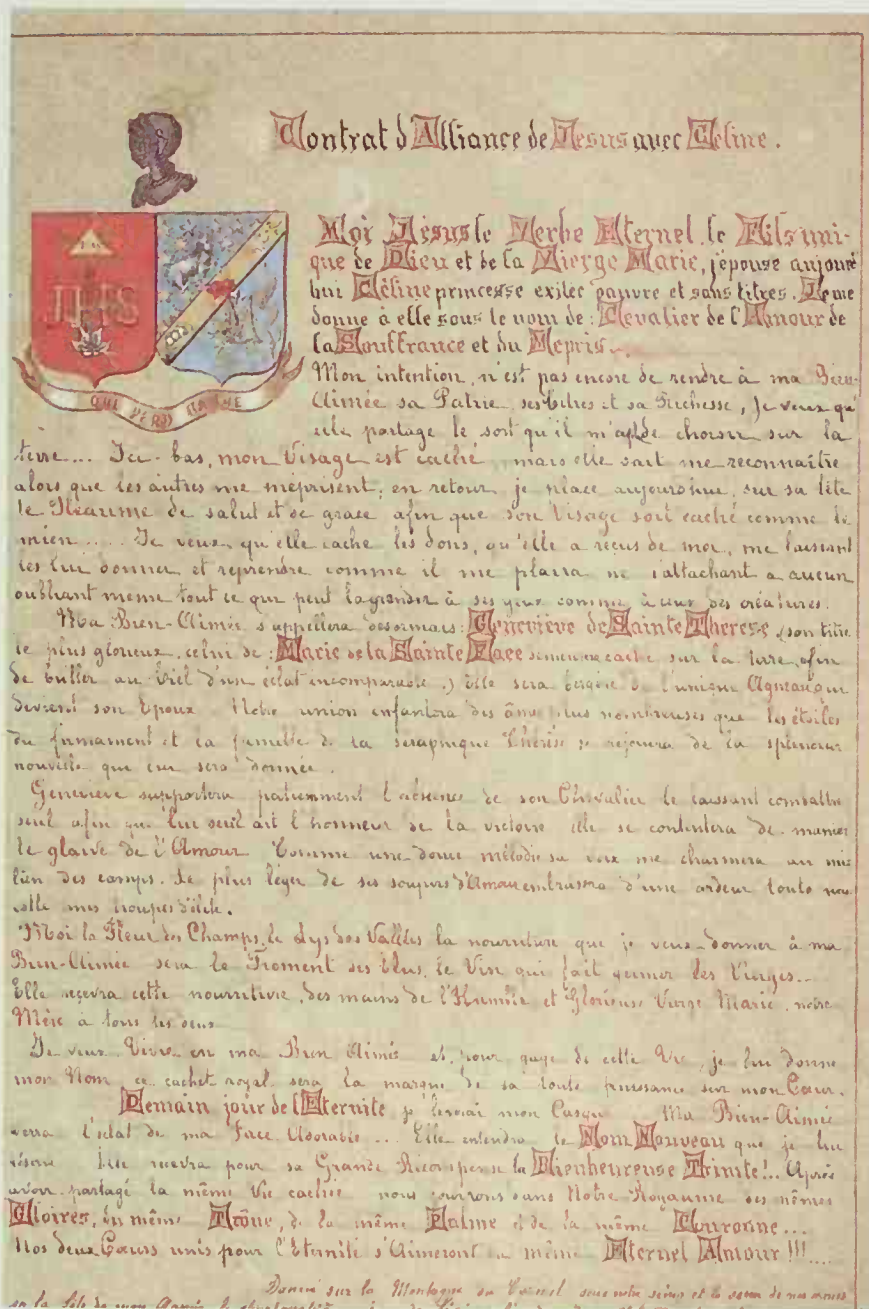
Mother Agnes did not want to appear in the photo because she did not want to make the day look like a victory of the "Martin-Guerin clan" over the "Mother Marie de Gonzague clan." Even though they were professed, neither Therese nor Sister Genevieve would ever participate in the voting since two Martin sisters already had a "voice in chapter."

As for Therese, she was already very sick. Her first lung haemorrhage would take place in two weeks during the night of April 2nd-3rd.

At the time of her own profession, Therese amused herself by composing an "invitation to the wedding of Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face" with the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The idea came to her when she read the announcement of the wedding of her cousin Jeanne Guerin to Dr. Francis La Neele (October 1st 1890).

She took up and developed this idea as Sister Genevieve's profession drew near. She drew up a contract in which "Jesus the Knight" reminds his beloved spouse of the demands and the richness of the nuptial union that he is entering into with her. Sister Genevieve — who loved stories of chivalry even more than her sister — willingly thought of Jesus as her knight. It was the custom, on the eve of profession, to pray in the choir until midnight — as did the men of the Middle Ages who spent the night in prayer before being knighted.

*I have no wedding gift
to give my Celine, but...*



Whoever loses wins! This motto had been suggested by Sister Genevieve herself. At the beginning of the contract, Jesus invites his spouse to live a hidden life following the example of her knight whose face remained hidden throughout his earthly life, hidden as though

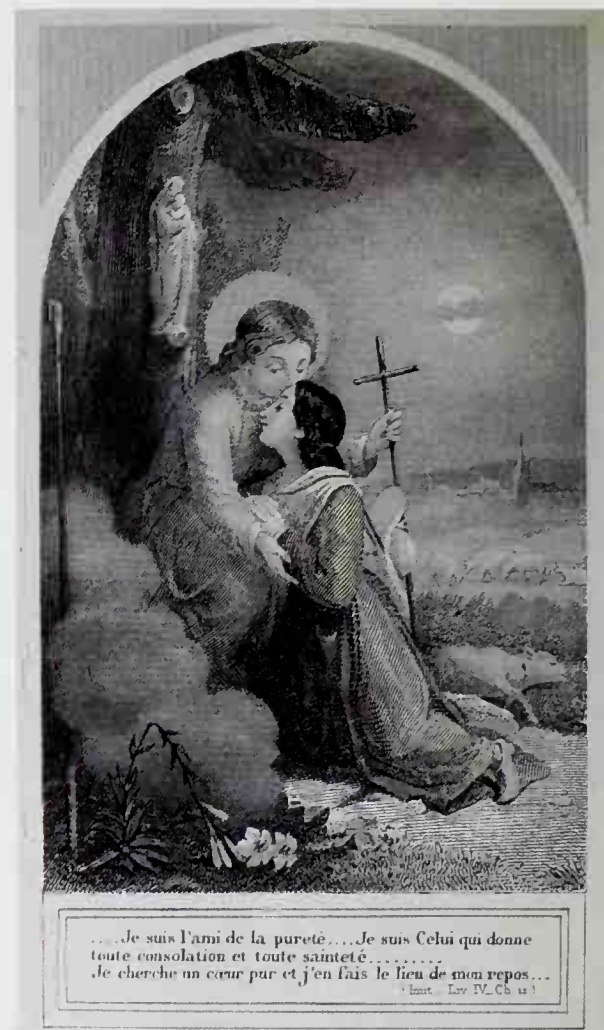
under a helmet. Only in heaven will he raise his mask and then his beloved will see the splendour of his adorable face.

Towards the middle of the page can be read the name that Celine should have borne in Carmel: Sister Marie of the Holy Face. At the end of January 1895, Canon

Delatroette expressed the desire that the name of Mother Genevieve of Saint Teresa, the foundress who had died in December 1891, be perpetuated. Consequently Celine became a novice in February 1895 and made her profession the following year under this name.



The morning of March 17th 1896, Celine received the black veil during mass. That afternoon, in the presence of a large congregation, Marie Guerin received the Carmelite habit under the name of Sister Marie of the Eucharist. Before the ceremony, newly professed Sister Genevieve posed with her cousin. According to the custom, Marie was dressed in a bridal gown. Is not entry into the novitiate a preparation to become the bride of Christ?



A picture given to Therese by her cousin Marie Guerin on the occasion of her reception of the habit

The picture expresses one of Therese's great desires: to rest against the heart of Jesus, while allowing him to find in her the "place of his rest."

"To sleep on his heart, so close to his face, such is my heaven!"



A family photo

It was taken after March 17th 1896 (the date when Marie Guerin received the Carmelite habit) and before spring (there are no leaves on the trees). It was probably taken just before Mother Marie de Gonzague was re-elected on March 21st.

Saturday March 21st 1896, the eve of Passion Sunday, the community elections took place. The sixteen capitulars gathered in the choir to vote. The eight others prayed... Would Mother Agnes, the prioress for the last three years, be re-elected or would Mother Marie de Gonzague take charge again? Seven ballots were required for the decision... The sixty-two year old was finally elected by a narrow margin. The bell was rung to call the other eight sisters who were waiting.

When she entered the choir, Therese saw Mother Marie de Gonzague sitting in the prioress' stall. "Struck with astonishment," she kept herself from revealing her disappointment. Still less did she speak about it. With the same faith as three years earlier, she regarded the new prioress as her "living Jesus."

Ce matin, à 8 heures et demie, Mademoiselle Celine Martin, entourée de trois de ses sœurs qui l'ont précédée dans la vie monastique, a prononcé ses derniers vœux et pris le voile des professes.

Monseigneur l'Evêque de Bayeux et Lisieux a daigné présider cette imposante cérémonie dont M. l'abbé Ducellier, doyen de Trévières, a dans une émouvante et éloquente allocution retracé la haute et religieuse signification.

Ce soir, à trois heures, Mademoiselle Marie Guerin, accomplit la première partie de son noviciat et revêt l'habit du Carmel. Dans quelques mois, elle aussi viendra prendre, au même lieu, les plus définitifs et solennels engagements.

Monseigneur préside encore cette seconde cérémonie, à laquelle un ami de M. Guerin, M. l'abbé Levasseur, curé de Saint Germain-de-Navarre-les-Evieux, prête le concours de sa pieuse et savante parole.

Matin et soir, la chapelle a été remplie d'une foule de personnes qui sont venues témoigner de leurs vives sympathies pour ces jeunes filles, pour cette famille honorée, sur laquelle Dieu se plaît à répandre de si grandes et nombreuses

The same day, in Le Normand, Uncle Guerin described the double ceremony presided over by Bishop Hugonin

This morning at eight-thirty, Mademoiselle Celine Martin, accompanied by her three sisters who preceded her into monastic life, pronounced her final vows and received the veil of the professed nun.

His Excellency the Bishop of Bayeux and Lisieux presided over this impressive ceremony during which Father Ducellier, the Dean of Trevieres, developed its lofty and religious significance in a moving and eloquent allocution.

This afternoon at three o'clock, Mademoiselle Marie Guerin, completed the first part of her formation and received the Carmelite habit. In a few months she too will make, in the same place, a solemn and definitive commitment.

His Excellency presided over this second ceremony at which a friend of Monsieur Guerin, Father Levasseur, pastor of Saint Germain-de-Navarre-les-Evieux, delivered a pious and insightful sermon.

Morning and afternoon, the chapel was filled with people who came to show their affection for these young women and for this honoured family on which God has poured such great and numerous blessings.



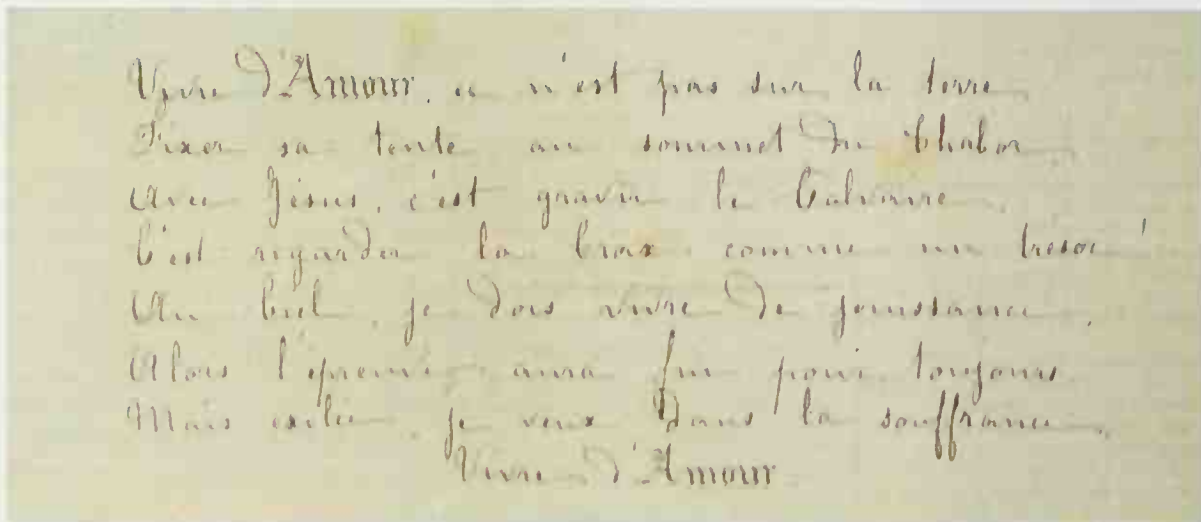
View from Therese's cell:
the cloister and the campanile

The evening of Holy Thursday, April 2nd, Therese kept vigil in the choir until midnight. Scarcely had she gone to bed, when she felt a bubbling stream rising to her lips. Her lamp was extinguished so she did not try to find out whether or not it was indeed blood she had just vomited. She fell asleep. Upon rising, she partially opened the shutter and saw that her handkerchief was full of blood. What joy! She was deeply convinced that Jesus was inviting her, on the anniversary of his death, to come to him.

Therese informed her prioress and added: "I am not suffering, Mother, and I beg you to let me continue my observance of Lent to the end." Mother Marie de Gonzague did not realize the seriousness of the situation. She permitted Therese to work as if nothing had happened. She continued her fast and cleaned the windows of the cloister doors, standing on a stepladder in a drafty place. "The hope of going to heaven," Therese would write the following year, "carried me away with joy."

*On Good Friday,
Jesus wanted to give me the hope
of going to see him in heaven soon*

The fourth stanza of
the poem "To Live by Love"
composed on February 26th 1895
(see p. 245)



Sister Marie of the Trinity, assistant infirmarian, was taken into confidence, but Therese asked her to say nothing to Mother Agnes. The following night, there was another pulmonary haemorrhage. This time there was no longer any doubt that heaven was very near. Dr. La Neele finally examined his cousin. Under close questioning, Therese admitted to being very hungry every evening during Lent. An enlarged gland in her neck gave evidence of her weakness. In order to examine her, Francis La Neele asked Therese to pass her head through the little opening of the grill in the oratory. As a result of this brief examination, he thought that the bleeding was coming from a ruptured vessel in her throat. He prescribed spoonfuls of creosote, throat sprays and rubdowns with camphorated oil. Therese had no illusions about the efficacy of these remedies. Her joy remained: the Lord would soon come to take her.

It wasn't until a year later, in the infirmary, following a more complete examination of the sick woman, that Dr. La Neele diagnosed tuberculosis.

Having climbed up
on the base of the cross,
Therese placed a lily
at Jesus' feet (July 1896)

Each evening after Compline, Therese assembled with the novices at the foot of the cross. They collected rose petals — there were about twenty rose bushes in the garden — and tossed them at the crucifix. They tried to throw them as high as possible, near Jesus' face. Wilted petals would not do, because it is the freshness of a life filled with love that must be offered to the Lord!

Therese did not change her mind about this even in April 1896. Her body ravaged by tuberculosis, her mind overcome with doubts about the existence of heaven, she wanted, at every hour of the day, to give her beloved the flowers of her love. More than ever, she subscribed to the poem she had composed the previous year and which she recopied during July to send to Father Roulland who was preparing to leave for China:

"To live by love, do not on earth
Pitch your tent on Tabor's summit.
But climb Calvary with Jesus,
See the cross as a treasure!

In heaven I will live in joy.
Then the trial will be forever past
But exiled here, I want in suffering
"To live by love."



*During the joyful days
of Eastertide,
Jesus made me aware
that there truly are
souls who have not faith*

tout à coup les brouillards qui m'entouraient d'autant plus épais
 ils pénétraient dans mon âme et l'enveloppaient de telle sorte qu'il
 ne m'est plus possible de retrouver en elle l'image si douce
 de ma Patrie. tout à coup lorsque je veux reposer mon
 cœur fatigué des ténèbres qui l'entourent par le souvenir du pays
 humaine vers lequel j'aspire, mon tourment redouble, il me
 semble que les ténèbres empruntant la voix des facheux me disent
 en se moquant de moi: Tu rêves la lumière, une patrie embaumée
 de plus suaves parfums, tu rêves la possession éternelle d'ubri-
 ateur de toutes ces merveilles, tu cras sortis un jour des brouillards
 qui t'entourent! avance, avance, rejoins toi de la mort qui te
 donnera^{ra} ce que tu espères, mais une nuit plus profonde encore
 la nuit du néant.

In her last manuscript, Therese confided to her prioress the thoughts that obsessed her: is not death a definitive fall into the night of nothingness? She added: "I do not want to write about it any longer. I fear I would be blaspheming."

Therese lived the paschal triduum in great joy. Her desire to go to meet her beloved was soon to be fulfilled. "I enjoyed so lively, so clear a faith that the thought of heaven was all my happiness. I could not believe there were sinners who did not have faith. I thought they were speaking against their beliefs in denying the existence of heaven."

But, in the first days of Easter week, darkness overwhelmed her soul. Who knows? Perhaps the materialists are right. What proof is there that heaven exists? When someone dies, what remains of the person? Can consciousness still exist when the body disappears? Though she was surprised, Therese was not distraught. For a long time, she had been living in the night of faith. From the time she was a novice, she had prayed in dryness. In 1891, she had even experienced "such great interior trials that she sometimes wondered whether or not there was a heaven." This fog had been fleeting, yet as the months passed, the darkness persisted.

Her doubts did not have to do with the existence of God, but with that of a future life. She was affected in her deepest desire: to do good after her death. The saintly Mother Genevieve, the foundress of the Lisieux Carmel, had been dead five years and nothing gave evidence of her survival in the hereafter. No miracle took place at her tomb. What good was it then to sacrifice oneself?

Therese reacted to this terrible temptation by repeating this saying of Jesus: "I am going to prepare a place for you... and I will return, so that where I am, you may also be." She did not discuss the reasoning that suggested to her the impossibility of life after death. She was satisfied to repeat to Jesus: "I believe in your word, in your promise; I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." She would multiply these acts of faith in the last eighteen months of her life. Her mind may be overwhelmed with objections, with "doubts," yet Therese does not doubt. She believes.

216 LE S. ÉV. SELON S. JEAN. [CH. XXI.]

21. Pierre donc faisant vu, dit à Jésus: Et celui-ci, Seigneur, qu'en sera-t-il?

22. Jésus lui répondit: Je veux qu'il reste ainsi (1) jusqu'à ce que je vienne (2); et que vous importe? pour vous, suivez-moi.

23. Là-dessus, le bruit se répandit parmi les frères (3) que ce disciple ne mourrait point; toutefois Jésus ne dit pas à Pierre: Il ne mourra point, mais: Je veux qu'il

reste ainsi jusqu'à ce que je vienne: que vous importe?

24. C'est ce même disciple qui rend témoignage de ces choses, et qui les a écrites; et nous savons que son témoignage est vrai.

25. Il y a encore beaucoup d'autres choses que Jésus a faites; et si on les rapportait chacune en particulier, je ne pense pas que le monde même (4) put contenir les livres qu'il en faudrait écrire.

(1) Quelques auteurs ont conclu de ces paroles que saint Jean devait vivre jusqu'au jugement dernier, et qu'il n'était point encore mort. Le texte grec porte, verset 22: Si je veux qu'il reste jusqu'à ce que je vienne, etc. En outre, l'Évangéliste a voulu lui-même prévenir et détruire ce soupçon en ajoutant: Toutefois Jésus ne dit pas, etc. — (2) Jusqu'à ce que je vienne l'enlever de ce monde; ou bien: Jusqu'à ce que je vienne pour punir les Juifs, et faire triompher le christianisme. Saint Jean ne mourut, en effet, qu'après la ruine de Jérusalem; et c'est particulièrement de lui, selon quelques interprètes, que doivent s'entendre ces paroles: Quelques-uns de ceux qui sont ici présents ne mourront point qu'ils ne voient paraître le Fils de l'homme dans son règne (S. Matthieu, xvi, 28.) — (3) Parmi les chrétiens. — (4) L'Évangéliste veut marquer par cette expression qu'il n'était pas possible de rapporter tout le détail des actions, des miracles et des paroles de Jésus-Christ.

Seigneur, vous me comblez de joie par tout ce que vous faites (S. LCI) juin 1894

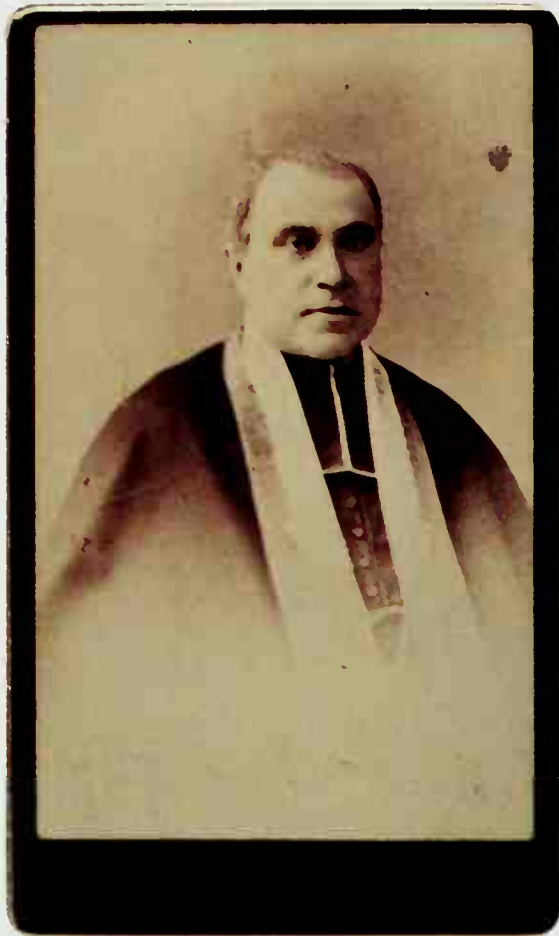
The *Credo* that Therese wrote in her blood on the flyleaf of her pocket edition of the gospel (12 x 7.5 cm)

Therese had detached the 216 pages of the four gospels from her *Manual of the Christian* and had them bound in one booklet which she always carried with her. This allowed her to meditate on the gospel as often as she wanted. On the last page she copied the verse of Psalm 91 which expressed one of her fundamental convictions: since "nothing can separate me from the love of God," "all is grace."

Therese confided her temptations against the faith to Father Godefroid

Madelaine, who was preaching the community retreat in Carmel, October 8th-15th 1896. The preacher advised her to carry the *Credo* on her heart always. Therese decided to write the text of the Creed in her own blood at the end of the gospel, to show God that she was ready to shed all her blood for each of the articles of the Apostles' Creed, in particular for the last two: "I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting" (see p. 261).

Despite the darkness that invaded her soul, Therese proclaimed her hope of heaven. "I sing what I *want* to believe," she confided.



Father Youf (1842-1897)
chaplain of the Carmel

Therese knew only one bishop, Bishop Hugonin. In Carmel she knew only one chaplain, Father Youf. Given the responsibility of the Lisieux Carmel in 1873, he exercised his ministry there for twenty-four years. On October 8th 1897, eight days after Therese's death, he also entered into eternal rest, at the age of fifty-five.

Father Youf was a hard worker. A conscientious student in his youth, he remained throughout his life very careful about the use of his time: he would go directly from the dinner table to his work desk. When he went into town, he would be seen immersed in his breviary or some other book. He read numerous books on spirituality, believing this would equip him better for his work as chaplain. Though his poor health made parish work impossible

for him rather early on, he nevertheless carefully prepared all his sermons. He had grouped them in bound collections which he made available to the Carmelites.

Therese never forgot the advice Father Youf gave her in 1887: "Do not hesitate to travel to Bayeux to ask your bishop directly for permission to enter Carmel at fifteen!" She always remained grateful to him for this advice. It was indeed indicative of one of this priest's major preoccupations: to help young people discover and fulfil their religious or priestly vocation. It was said of him that he "filled the Carmel with worthy candidates" and it was known that he went to great trouble to help young boys attain the necessary scholastic level for admission into a seminary. How many papers he corrected with this in mind!

Therese had great affection for him. In her opinion he was "the priest," the one who received the power to consecrate the

body of Christ and to hold it in his hands. With what love she prepared the sacred vessels in the sacristy! With what care she painted and illumined the missal he used at the altar (see p. 199)! He was Therese's regular confessor though she did not experience the great wave of confidence as with Father Alexis Prou. Therese understood early that Jesus wanted to be her only "director." Father Pichon had in fact told her this from the very beginning of her cloistered life: "My child, may Our Lord always be your superior and novice master!"

This fine chaplain was not much help to her when she confided to him, in April 1896, the objections that assailed her mind regarding the afterlife. "Don't dwell on these thoughts!" he was contented to say. "They're very dangerous!" His advice was not bad, but it gave her little light.

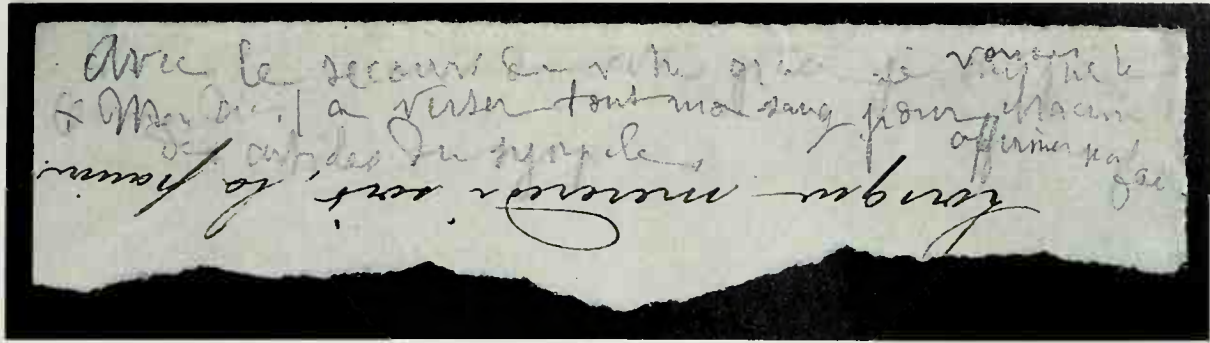
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Sete ou Sacre Sacre Jesus
17 Juin 1896

Ce que je verrai bientôt pour
la Première fois!...

Je suis enca sur la rive étrangère,
Mais pressentant le bonheur éternel,
Oh! je voudrais déjà quitter la terre
Et contempler les merveilles du ciel...
Lorsque je rêve aux joies de l'autre vie
De mon cœur je ne sens plus le poids
Puisque bientôt vers ma seule Patrie
Je volerai pour la première fois!.....

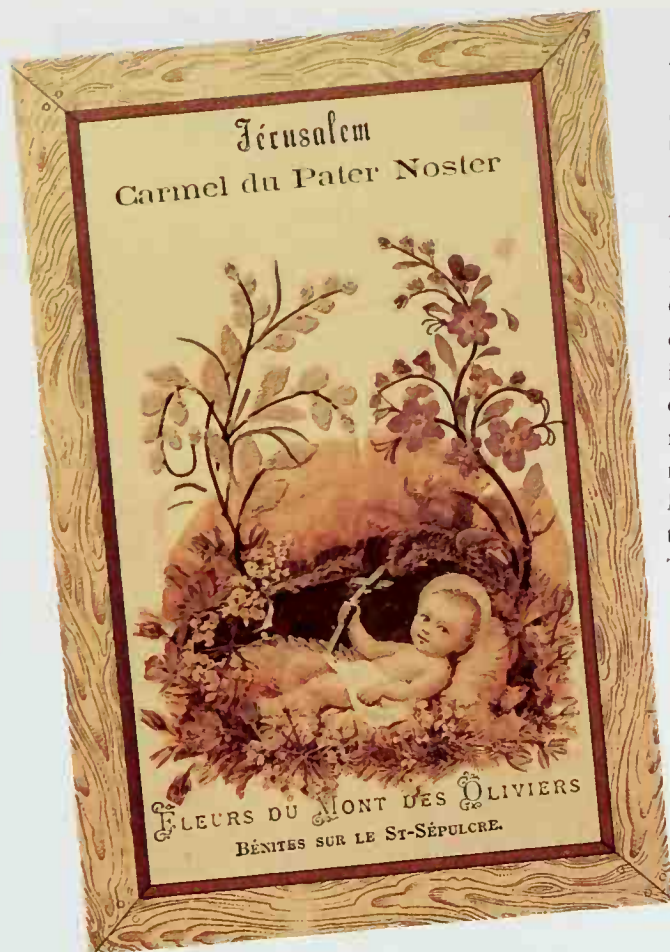
Oh! donne-moi, Jésus de blanches ailes
Pour que vers toi, je prenne mon essor
Je veux voler aux rives éternelles,
Je veux te voir, ô mon Dieu bésor!
Je veux voler dans les bras de Marie
Me reposer sur ce trône de chair,
Et recevoir de ma Mère chère
Le Sacre Sacre pour la première fois!.....



Very probably in June 1897, Therese scribbled on a scrap of paper this cry of faith: "My God, with the help of your grace I am ready to shed my blood to affirm my faith" (she added: "for each article of the Apostles' Creed").



It was probably at this time that Therese engraved with a sharp tool, on the lintel of her cell door: "Jesus is my only love!"

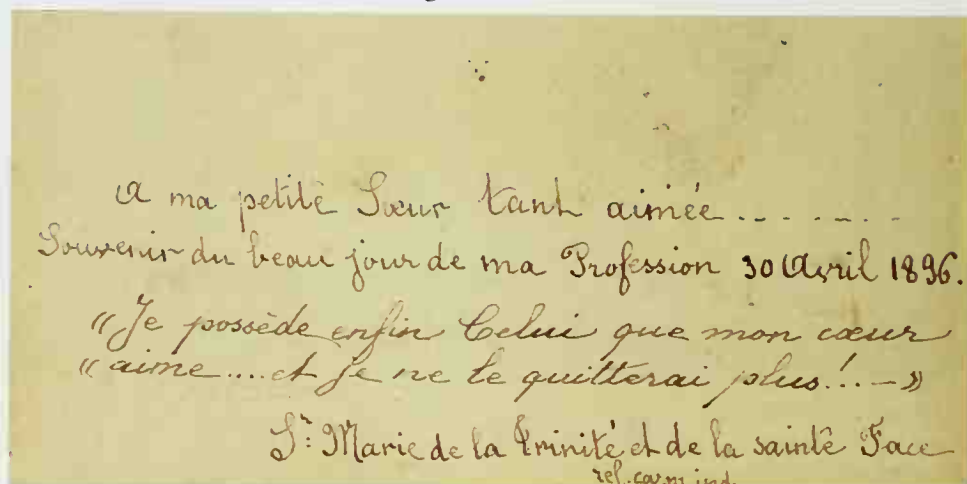


A picture given to Therese by Sister Marie of the Trinity on the occasion of her profession (April 30th 1896)

According to a tradition going back to the 4th century, Jesus taught his disciples the Our Father on the Mount of Olives. A French Carmel was founded on this spot in 1875. The Lord's Prayer is written in this cloister in seventy-eight languages. The Lisieux Carmel corresponded regularly with the one in Jerusalem. During the summer of 1897, Mother Marie de Gonzague informed the prioress of the Mount of Olives that Therese was close to death.

I am reminded of Joan of Arc attending the coronation of Charles VII

On April 30th 1896, five years to the day after her first entrance into the Carmel in Paris, avenue de Messine, Sister Marie of the Trinity pronounced her final vows. "Sister Therese of the Child Jesus seemed as happy as I was," she later noted. "I am reminded of Joan of Arc attending the coronation of Charles VII," said Therese. The novice mistress' humble pride is evident on the photograph taken that day.



On the back, the dedication of the newly professed sister

Photograph taken April 30th 1896

Therese, serious yet serene, stands between the novice, who is kneeling and smiling mischievously, and the prioress, seated and marked by the years. From left to right: Sisters Marthe, Marie of the Sacred Heart, Marie-Madeleine of the Blessed Sacrament, Marie of the Eucharist and Therese. Kneeling behind the newly professed is Sister Genevieve who made profession the previous February 24th.



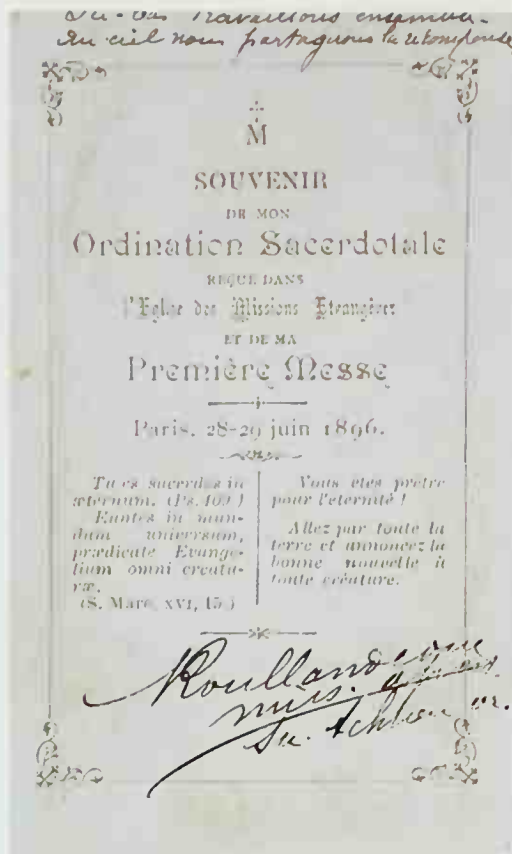
Sister Marie of the Trinity was particularly moved by Therese's joyful response. This joy was the fruit of an ardent love for Jesus, as the poetry she received on her feast day, Trinity Sunday, May 31st 1896, indicated: "To please you is my only endeavour / You are my bliss / O Jesus..."

Mother Agnes later entitled this poem "I Thirst for Love." Judging from the numerous drafts, this "thirst" flowed with difficulty into poetic form. Therese, however, was not seeking to produce literary masterpieces. In June 1894, Marie of the Trinity showed her a treatise on versification which she had

brought to Carmel. Therese returned it to her quickly. "I prefer not to know all these rules: my poems are an expression of my heart, an inspiration. I cannot force myself to make it a mental work, a study. At that price, I would rather renounce writing poetry."

Until the end of Therese's life, Sister Marie of the Trinity benefited from a privileged relationship with her. Their conversations took place in a climate of simplicity and joyfulness that were perfectly appropriate to the message of the one and the character of the other.

During the last months of their lives together, the exchanges deepened. Therese went so far as to confide in Sister Marie of the Trinity her temptations against the faith. The young professed nun was astonished: "But these luminous hymns you compose contradict what you are telling me! — Ah," replied Therese, "I sing what I want to believe, but without any feeling. I dare not even tell you how dark is the night in my soul, for fear of making you share my temptations."



Father Roulland's ordination card

A Dieu, my brother, distance can never separate us

Father Adolphe Roulland (1870–1934)

Born in Cahagnolles, 15 kilometres south of Bayeux, for a while he practised his father's trade of blacksmith. Because of this, he did not enter the sixth grade until the spring of 1885, at the age of fifteen, after receiving some Latin lessons from Father Norbert, a Norbertine from the same town. Like other religious, the Norbertines had been expelled from their communities in 1880.

On September 8th 1890 — the day Therese made profession — the young man went on a pilgrimage to Notre Dame de la Deliverande. There he decided to pursue his vocation to the priesthood. In 1892, he sought admission to the Seminary for Foreign Missions in Paris. For his parents, who had no other children, the sacrifice was difficult. In those days, mis-

sionaries left expecting never to return, since sabbaticals did not exist. Adolphe arrived at the rue du Bac on September 12th 1892, where 150 young men were preparing like himself to become missionaries. Towards mid-May 1896, Adolphe informed Father Norbert that he would be ordained a priest on June 28th with twenty-nine other seminarians. He asked him to intervene at the Lisieux Carmel — the only one in his diocese — that a daughter of Saint Teresa might take special care of his apostolate. He could not yet indicate which country he would be going to since he himself would not know until a few hours after ordination.

The Norbertines had been allowed to return to their house in Mondaye in 1894 and the young deacon knew the bonds that existed between the abbey and the Lisieux Carmel: Dom Godefroid, prior of Mondaye,

had agreed to give a triduum there once again from June 22nd–24th 1896.

When she received this request, Mother Marie de Gonzague had Sister Therese of the Child Jesus come to her office right away: "Would you like to take in care a missionary who is to be ordained a priest in a few weeks?" Therese wanted to respond affirmatively right away, but she presented, nonetheless, a few objections. Since the month of June 1895, she had already been offering her "poor merits" for another missionary seminarian, Maurice Belliere... Other holier religious were not lacking who could take on this responsibility. The prioress overcame this scruple with a word: her obedience would double her merits. She asked only that this correspondence be kept secret: in the eyes of the community, this spiritual brother would be "Mother's missionary."



A pall made by Therese
for the new priest



Two themes dear to Therese: the boat that advances to the light of Jesus the host and the bird that allows itself to be entranced by his gaze. On the ribbon, the constant motive of her thanksgiving: "Forever I will sing the mercies of the Lord."

Therese went to work at once. She made a pall, a corporal and a purificator which she gave to Mother Marie de Gonzague on June 21st for her feast day. Thus the future priest would be able to receive these gifts before his ordination. On July 3rd, on his way to Normandy to say goodbye to his family, he stopped at the Lisieux Carmel to celebrate one of his first masses. In the parlour, he met Mother Marie de Gonzague and Sister Therese of the Child Jesus. The dark curtains remained drawn... On July 23rd, Father Roulland wrote to Therese: "I will never forget your last words: 'A Dieu, my brother!'"



Father Roulland's mission field

Therese posted this map in the laundry room where she worked with Sister Marie of Saint Joseph. Thus, she could more easily call to mind the apostolic journeys of her missionary brother.

THE ART OF OVERCOMING BARRIERS

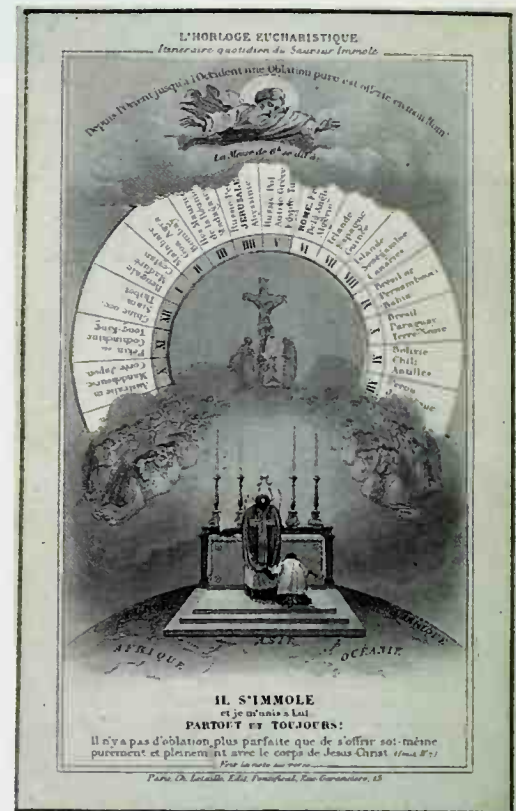
Though Teresa of Avila required the Carmelites to hide themselves behind grills and curtains, she did not hinder them from satisfying their legitimate feminine curiosity... or that of their correspondents! Many examples of innocent curiosity could be cited where the cloister curtain was lifted when it seemed opportune to do so.

Thus, in order to allow Father Roulland to catch a glimpse of the face of the one who was going to take his apostolate under her care, Mother Marie de Gonzague agreed with him on a sign. In the parlour, on July 3rd, just before he said one of his first masses, she told him: "The last one who remains kneeling for a moment at the communion window after all the nuns have received communion [by virtue of her role as sacristan], she is the one!" Therese, who was present during the conversation, added: "And the first to receive communion, Father, is the prioress!"

The exchange of photographs greatly helped to make relationships

more human. Thus, Father Roulland sent his photo to Mother Marie de Gonzague asking her to give it to Sister Therese of the Child Jesus. "Since you are permitting a sister to cross the ocean with a brother," he wrote on July 29th 1896, "you will surely permit the brother to cross the cloister grills." Two days earlier, Therese had sent one of her photos to him in Marseilles. On the back of the cardboard mount, she had inscribed the significant dates of her life.

It goes without saying that it was essentially in Jesus that Therese encountered her missionary brother. "A Dieu, my brother," she wrote on July 30th, "distance can never separate our souls. Death will even make our union more intimate. If I go to heaven soon, I will ask Jesus for permission to visit you in Su-Tchuen and we will continue our apostolate together." In this same letter, however, Therese asked her brother to send her the significant dates of his life, so she could unite herself more closely to him on those days.



A picture given to Therese by Mother Marie de Gonzague (date unknown)

Thanks to this picture, Therese could tell when Father Roulland was celebrating mass in China.

The book Therese is holding was given to her by Father Roulland when he visited Lisieux: *The Su-Tchuen Mission in the 18th Century. The Life and Apostolate of Bishop Pottier* by L. Guiot (Tequi, 1892). In it, Therese learned about the mission field entrusted to her second spiritual brother. Inscribed on the scroll in her hand was one of Therese's favourite sayings of Teresa of Avila: "I would give a thousand lives to save one soul."

In placing a lily near the book on China, Therese expressed one of her most profound convictions: her simple, consecrated life sufficed for her to participate closely in the apostolate of a missionary. She repeated this in a poem she gave Father Roulland on July 16th, the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel:

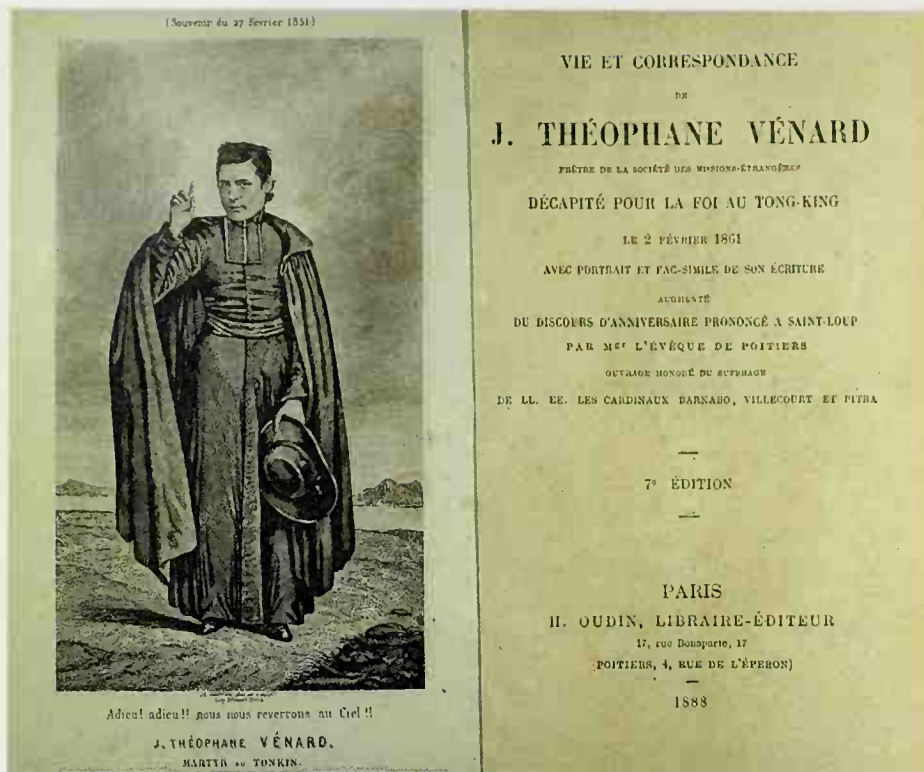
"Be his to cover the globe
To preach the name of Jesus.
Be mine, in shadow and mystery,
To practise humble virtues.

I claim suffering,
I love and desire the cross...
I would die a thousand times
To help save one soul!"

Exactly one year later, after another pulmonary haemorrhage she would make this famous promise: "I want to spend my heaven doing good on earth."



A photograph taken in early July 1896



This book stirred up in Therese's heart a strong spiritual friendship with the young martyr from the Foreign Missions of Paris, who was decapitated in Tonkin in 1861. In him the Carmelite discovered a soul surprisingly similar to her own: a happy temperament, a very simple heart filled with affection for family members. This reading made the desire to leave for the missions come alive again in her. Shortly after her profession, she had confided to Father Pichon her desire to leave for the Carmel in Saigon, founded in 1861 by Sister Philomene and three other nuns from Lisieux.

The plan resurfaced in 1896 when the Carmelites of Saigon and Hanoi asked for additional personnel. On August 2nd, the day Father Roulland left for China, the departure of Mother Agnes for Saigon was being seriously considered. In the weeks that followed, the same proposal was considered for Sister Genevieve and for Sister Marie of

The copy Therese read in 1896 did not include this picture, which she received only on August 10th 1897 (see p. 297)

*O Theophane,
angelic martyr,
you lived and died
with a smile*

A picture completed by Therese a few months before her death

On June 4th 1897, Therese was with her sisters in Sister Genevieve's cell, two steps from her own. Exhausted, she stretched out on the bed. "Oh, my little sisters, how happy I am!" she said. "I see that I will die soon, I am sure of it now."



the Trinity: "Why not me?" Therese asked herself. During the month of November, her health appeared to stabilize. She resumed all community exercises, Matins included. Mother Marie de Gonzague looked more favourably on her request since she too had wanted to leave for Saigon at the time of its foundation.

In order to know God's will, Therese began a novena to Theophane Venard. After a few days, she began coughing again as she had done in the spring. The plan was deferred until later, but it was not entirely buried. On February 2nd 1897, the anniversary of Theophane's martyrdom, Therese composed a poem in his honour: in it she expressed her desire to leave, but also her certitude that she would be useful in the mission fields even if she were to spend her life within the narrow limits of her Carmel. On March 19th, she again wrote to Father Roulland: "I can assure

you [...] that, if Jesus does not come soon to take me to the heavenly Carmel, I will one day leave for that of Hanoi."

An engraving found in a collection of La Fontaine's *Fables*, to which Therese had access (the book belonged to Pauline)

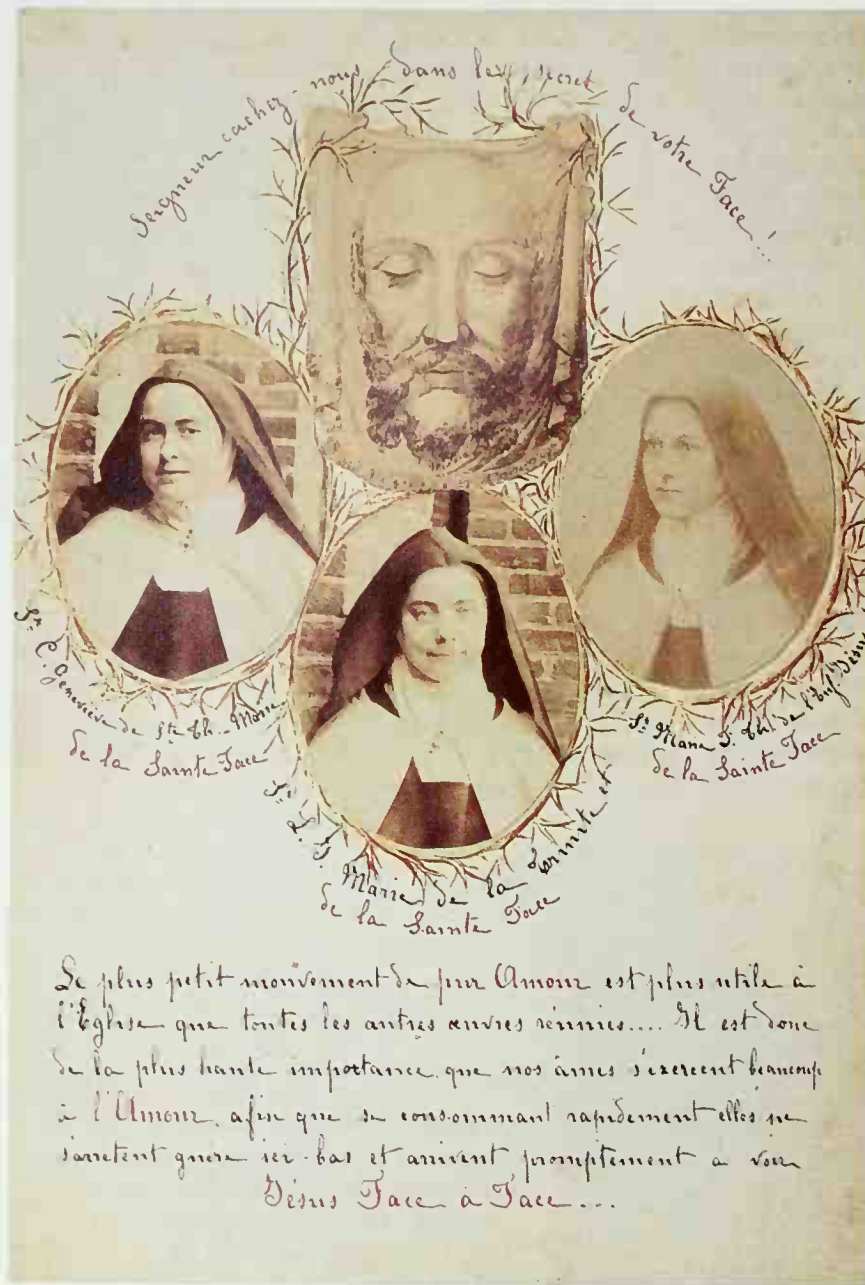
This picture displeased Therese so much that she asked her sister to tear it out of her book. "It is not 'death' that will come for me," she said again on May 1st 1897, "it is God. Death is not the ghost, the horrible spectre depicted in images." It is clear that Therese greatly preferred pictures where Jesus came in person to gather souls like so many flowers to decorate his paradise.



Je ne trouve rien sur la terre qui me rende heureux; mon cœur est trop grand, rien de ce qu'on appelle bonheur en ce monde ne peut le satisfaire. Ma pensée s'envole vers l'éternité, le temps va finir... mon cœur est paisible comme un lac tranquille ou un ciel serein; je ne regrette pas la vie de ce monde; mon cœur a souffert de la vie éternelle... Encore un peu et mon âme quittera la terre, finira son exil terminera son combat... Je monte au Ciel... je touche la patrie... je remporte la victoire!... Je vais entrer dans ce séjour des élus, voir des beautés que l'œil de l'homme n'a jamais vues, entendre des harmonies que l'oreille n'a jamais entendues; jouer de joies que le cœur n'a jamais goûtées... Me vras rendra cette heure que chacune de nous a tant désiré!... Il est bien vrai que le Seigneur choisit les petits pour confondre les grands de ce monde... Je ne m'appuie pas sur mes propres forces mais sur la force de celui qui sur la Croix a vaincu les puissances de l'enfer. Je suis une fleur printanière que le maître du jardin cueille pour son plaisir... Nous sommes toutes des fleurs plantées sur cette terre et que Dieu cueille en son temps, un peu plus tôt, un peu plus tard... Moi petite éphémère je m'en vais la première! Un jour nous nous retrouverons dans le Paradis et nous jouirons du vrai bonheur!...
Hymne de l'Inf. Jésus en attendant des fruits de l'angelique Marie
Theophane Venard

She must have made this picture for her sisters at about this time. In it is found the desire expressed for so long: to die of love. Above, an adaptation of the third reading from Matins for the octave of Saint Agnes (January 28th). Below, the antiphon from the *Benedictus*. The text from Saint John of the Cross is a passage that Therese marked with a cross on the copy she kept at her bedside throughout her entire illness.

On the back, Therese copied sentences from Theophane Venard. Three of them explain the picture she chose to say goodbye to her sisters. "I am a springtime flower that the Master of the garden picks for his pleasure... We are all flowers planted on this earth and which God picks in his own good time, some sooner, some later... As for me, the little ephemeral one, I am going first."



O face more beautiful than the lily

On the back of the cardboard mount (13.1 x 9.1 cm), Therese glued the photographs of the three signers, taken on the same day, at the same spot and in the same pose, shortly after July 3rd 1896. The photograph of Therese taken that day was later replaced by the portrait in charcoal done by Sister Genevieve in 1899.

In 1896, Therese chose the feast of the Transfiguration — one of the great feasts of the Confraternity of the Holy Face — to consecrate herself solemnly to the “adorable face of Jesus.” She was joined by those whom, the previous year, she had invited to make the same offering to merciful love as she had and who were, like her, very

devoted to the Holy Face. Here, as in her Act of Offering of June 1895, Therese asked the Lord to give her his own divine love so she could love him with an “infinite love.” In 1897, she celebrated August 6th in the infirmary where she confirmed the essential place of the Holy Face in her personal piety.

Consécration à la Sainte Face.

O Face Adorable de Jésus! puisque vous avez daigné choisir particulièrement mes âmes pour vous donner à elles, nous venons les consacrer à vous.... Il nous semble o Jésus, vous entendre nous dire: *« Un jour moi mes sœurs, mes épouses bien-aimées, ma Face est couverte de rosée et mes cheveux des gouttes de sa sueur. Nos âmes consacrant votre langage d'amour nous voulons essayer votre douce bonté et vous consoler de l'oubli des méchants, à leurs yeux vous êtes encore comme caché, ils vous considèrent comme un objet de mépris..... »*

O Visage plus beau que les lys et les roses du printemps! vous n'êtes pas caché à nos yeux — les larmes qui voilent votre divin regard nous apparaissent comme des Diamants précieux que nous voulons recueillir afin d'acheter avec leur valeur infinie les âmes de nos frères.

O votre Bouche Adore nous avons entendu la plainte amoureuse comprenant que la soif qui vous consume est une soif d'Amour, nous voudrions pour vous désaltérer posséder un Amour infini....

Épouse Bien-Aimée de nos âmes, si nous avions l'amour de tout le monde, tout cet amour serait à vous.... Oh bien! Donnay-nous cet amour et venez vous désaltérer en vos petites épouses.....

Oes âmes, Seigneur, il nous faut des âmes.... surtout des âmes d'apôtres et de martyrs afin que par elles nous embrassions de votre Amour la multitude des pauvres pécheurs. O Face Adorable nous saurons obtenir de vous cette grâce! oubliant notre exil sur le bord des fleuves de Babylone nous chanterons à vos oreilles des plus doux ces mélodies, puisque vous êtes la vraie, l'unique Patrie de nos cœurs, nos cantiques ne seront pas chantés sur une terre chargée

O Face chère de Jésus! en attendant le jour éternel nous contemplerons votre gloire infinie, notre unique Dieu est de charmer vos Yeux Divins en cachant avec notre visage afin qu'ici bas, personne ne puisse nous reconnaître.... votre Regard Valé vint à notre Ciel o Jésus!....

Signé :

Th. de l'Inf. Jésus et de la S^{te} Face — M. de la bonté et de la S^{te} Face — P. de S. B. Marie le 6/8

Consecration to the Holy Face
composed by Therese
for August 6th 1896, the feast
of the Transfiguration

At the beginning of the second stanza, Therese turned to a theme dear to Saint John of the Cross and which she made completely her own, namely that the beauty of the most marvellous creatures is indeed pale—and very ephemeral—when compared to that of the Word of God made flesh and now transfigured.

Therese had already developed this idea in April 1895 to help Celine over-

come her nostalgia for the grounds of La Musse which she had enjoyed for years:

“Jesus, you are the Lamb I love
You are all I need,
O supreme Good!
In you I have everything,
earth and even heaven,
The flower I pick is you,
O my King!...”

Therese took her inspiration from the litanies of the Holy Face frequently recited in the community. She concluded her prayer by reaffirming her desire to live unknown, following the example of the One whose face remained hidden during his passion. Yet here below, we can charm his divine eyes. For Therese, Jesus' gaze on her was always heaven begun on earth.

*I sense in myself the vocation of
Warrior, Priest, Apostle, Doctor,
and Martyr*



On the evening of September 7th, Therese began her annual private retreat, that is, she was going to live "in solitude" for ten consecutive days, without participating in community works or in recreation. The next day, she commemorated the sixth anniversary of her profession. She took two sheets of paper, 21 x 27 cm, folded them in two and, on the eight pages,

wrote Jesus a letter of thanksgiving: "O my Beloved Jesus, who can say with what tenderness, what gentleness, you direct my little soul!" She thanked him first for the dream she had experienced during the night of the previous May 9th-10th. The Venerable Anne of Jesus, one of the foundresses of the Carmel in France, appeared to her in a dream and covered her with caresses. The Spanish religious then told her that she would soon die and that God was very pleased with her. These words filled her with joy. By this dream, the Lord especially wanted to illumine her night with a ray of light. Yes, "there is a heaven and this heaven is peopled with souls who love me and who consider me their child"... even if I scarcely think of them, for it must indeed be recognized, Therese continued, that "until then I had been entirely indifferent to Venerable Anne of Jesus: I had never invoked her."

Therese then spoke of the desires that had been developing within her for some time. The vocation of Carmelite, spouse and mother was no longer enough for her. She felt welling up within her immense and apparently contradictory desires. She aspired to other vocations: she wanted to be a warrior, a priest, an apostle, a doctor, a martyr... for she wanted to prove her love for Jesus in countless ways. One kind of torture was not enough: she needed them all. "This is foolishness," she thought. Foolishness all the more unreasonable because she was herself only a small, weak, powerless soul!

Ouvre ta épouse Jésus, être carmélite, être par mon union
 avec toi, la mère des âmes ^{est} devrait me suffire... et
 rien est pas aimé... Dans doute ces trois privilèges sont bien
 ma vocation. Carmélite, épouse et Mère. cependant je suis
 en moi d'autres vocations. Je me sens la vocation de l'ouvrier,
 de Prêtre, d'Épiscopat, de Docteur de Martyr; enfin, je sens
 le besoin, le désir d'accomplir pour la Jésus, toutes les œuvres
 les plus héroïques... Je suis en moi avec le courage d'une
 Croix, d'un Souverain Pontifical, je voudrais mourir sur un
 champ de bataille pour la défense de l'Église...
 Je sens en moi la vocation de Prêtre, avec quel amour, à Jésus
 je te porterais dans mes mains lorsque à ma robe tu déciderais
 du bien... Avec quel amour je te donnerais mes âmes!
 Mais hélas! tout en désirant d'être Prêtre, j'admire et j'envie
 l'humilité de St François d'Assise et je me sens la vocation à
 l'imiter en refusant la sublime dignité de Sacerdote.
 O Jésus! mon amour, ma vie... comment aller ces contrastes.

The prayer of September 8th 1896
(Manuscript B)

The picture that Sister Genevieve lent
 to Therese in July 1897, on a day when
 she was suffering a great deal. It may have
 been July 3rd when the patient requested
 that the life of Saint Francis of Assisi
 be read so that she might receive
 examples of humility from it

Like Francis, Therese was very fond of
 animals and spontaneously used the lan-
 guage of flowers to express her desire
 to open herself to Jesus and offer him
 her whole life as a fragrant perfume.
 Like the Poverello, she especially
 wanted to love him without measure, to
 the point of folly, and to remain always
 before him with a pauper's heart.
 "Though I desire to be a priest," she
 wrote, "I admire and envy the humility
 of Saint Francis of Assisi and I sense in
 myself the call to imitate him by refus-
 ing the sublime dignity of the priest-
 hood."

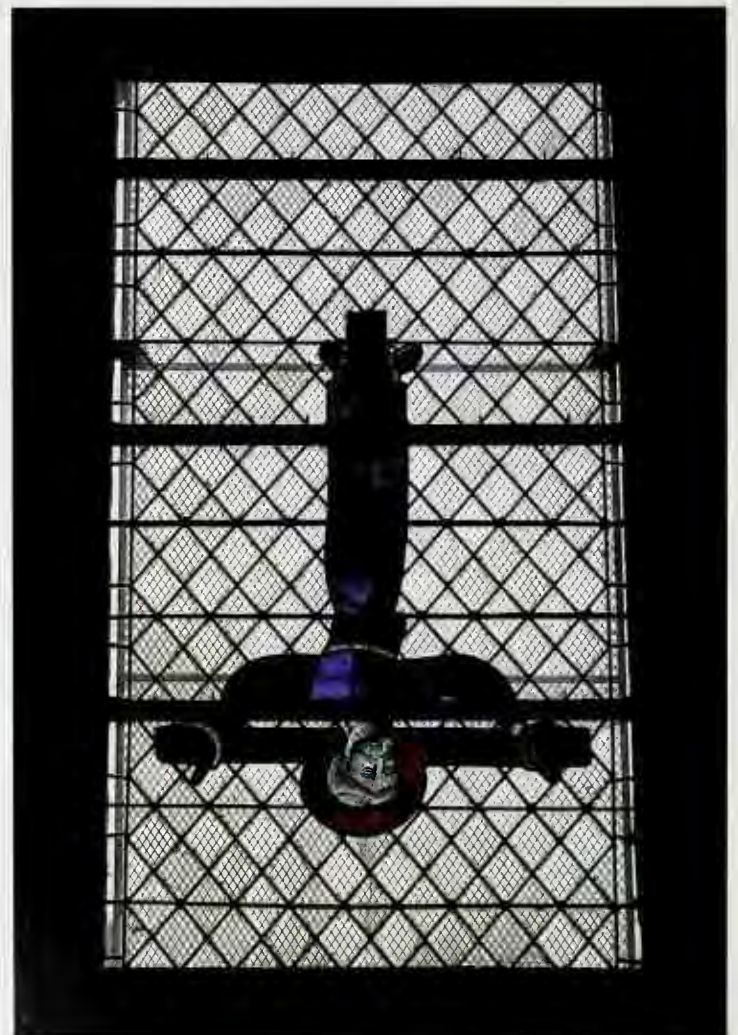


Il quitta tout pour se retenir que la Croix!
 JESUS CRUCIFIE était son seul trésor.
 Tout autre bien n'était pour lui qu'indigence.



Image dear to Therese
 She used a photograph of it
 to compose her last picture,
 for Father Belliere
 (see p. 251)

For Therese, the priest was essentially
 the man of the eucharist. He is the one
 who gives Jesus to his brothers and sisters:
 "I sense in myself the vocation of
 priest. With what love, O Jesus, would I
 carry you in my hands when, at my call,
 you would come down from heaven...
 With what love would I give you to
 souls!"



The window of Saint-Pierre cathedral
 in Lisieux (15th century)

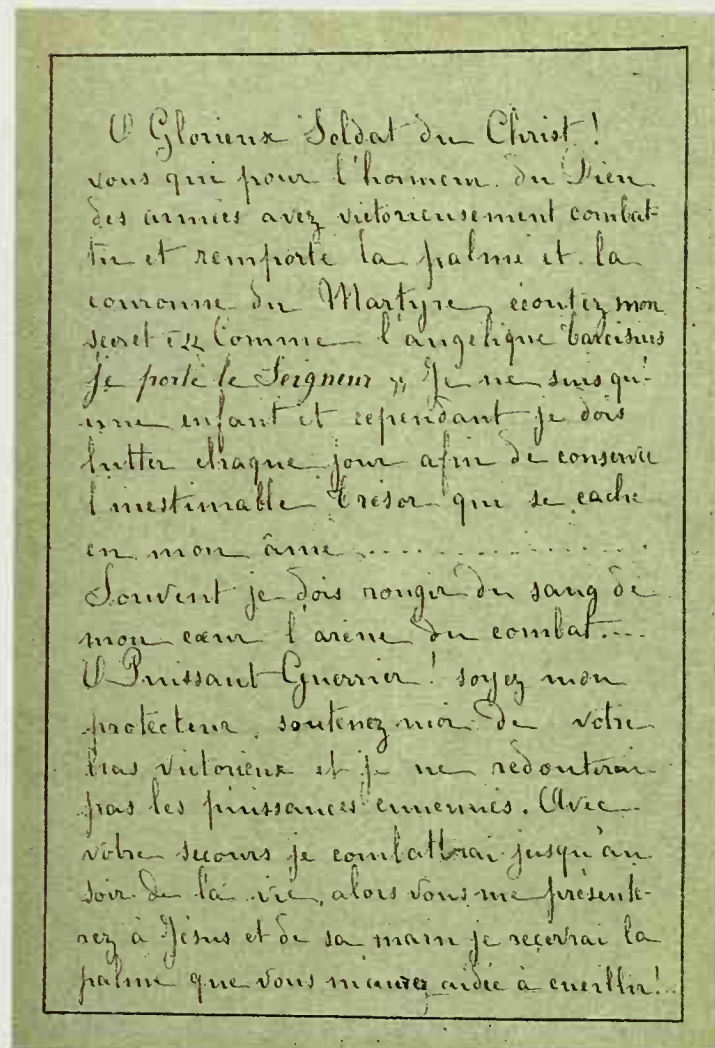
Stained glass representations of the crucifixion of Saint Peter are quite rare.



Saint Sebastian visits Tarcisus
Picture given to Celine
in mid-January 1897

For Therese, the soldier who came to the aid of Tarcisus was Saint Sebastian himself. The legend has it that he visited and strengthened the martyrs. Celine, who loved all that had to do with chivalry, had a special devotion to this martyr. She had asked Therese to compose the prayer that is found on the back of the picture: "O Glorious Soldier of Christ!"

Therese lightly coloured the characters in red and gold. She accentuated the wound on Tarcisus' forehead and had the blood flow to the ground — a detail not present in the original lithograph. As for the two angels, they became for Therese the symbol of the Holy Innocents, of those who enter into the kingdom of heaven "empty-handed," which was how she wanted to arrive there herself.



The feast of Saint Sebastian was celebrated on January 20th, and on February 24th, Celine would celebrate the first anniversary of her profession. By this picture, Therese exhorted her sister to imitate the courage of the martyr-soldier and invited her to enter more deeply into the Little Way. The victory over the difficulties of community life, the "palm of martyrdom," must be obtained according to the example of the Holy Innocents: as an absolutely free gift received from the Lord. Therese's whole soul is found in this picture: like Tarcisus, she is only a child; like Sebastian, she wanted to be a valiant warrior (see p. 222).

Jesus has always been pleased to grant my desires, Therese thought. Celine joined her in Carmel and she was given two missionary brothers. If such foolish desires take hold of her heart, it is because Jesus wants, in one way or another, to satisfy them (see p. 210).

Therese began to search the Scriptures for the solution to her problem. She came across chapters 12 and 13 of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. Everyone, Paul explains, must accept to fulfil a different role in the Church: the eye cannot be the hand! This re-

sponse did not satisfy her at all, since she wanted to be, simultaneously, priest, apostle and martyr... She would even have liked to have been a missionary from the beginning to the end of time. She continued her search... and found her answer:



Therese had a special devotion to the Carmelites of Compiègne. In 1894, she had joyfully participated in the centenary celebration of their martyrdom and, while making a banner in their honour, confided to Sister Teresa of Saint Augustine: "What happiness if we were to have the same destiny, the same grace!"

Father de Teil, who was responsible for the process of beatification of these martyrs, came to the Lisieux Carmel to

give a conference about them. Therese greatly appreciated his presentation for it rekindled in her heart the desire for martyrdom and led her to say, when leaving the parlour, that with such a postulator, the Carmelites of Compiègne would soon ascend the altars. She obviously did not suspect that, twelve years later, this same Father de Teil would be named vice postulator for her own cause of beatification.

In the heart of the Church, my Mother, I will be love

Since the Church is a body, it must have a heart, a heart burning with love. And it is this love which inspires all the members of the Church to action. Consequently, thought Therese, it was enough for her to live her contem-

plative vocation intensely; be one with all those who, in the Church, love Jesus intensely; be, in the Church, the heart; and thus fulfil all the other vocations to which she felt herself irresistibly called.

en tous... La charité me donna la clef de ma vocation. Je compris que si l'Eglise avait un cœur composé de ses membres, le plus méconnu, le plus noble de tous se trouverait dans son cœur. Je compris que l'Eglise avait un cœur et que ce cœur était brulant d'Amour. Je compris que l'Amour seul faisait agir les membres de l'Eglise, que si l'Amour était le soutien des Apôtres, il soutiendrait plus tard tous les autres. Je compris que l'Amour réunissait toutes les vocations, que l'Amour tout seul, quel qu'il soit, tous les temps et tous les lieux, en un mot qu'il est éternel. Mais dans l'acte de mon jour de retraite je me suis écrié: O Jésus mon Dieu... ma vocation enfin je l'ai trouvée, ma vocation, c'est l'Amour! Une fois trouvée ma place dans l'Eglise et cette place, O mon Dieu, c'est vers qui mon cœur se tourne... dans le cœur de l'Eglise, ma Mère, je mets l'Amour... mais je ne saurais tout... après ma vie sera réalisée!!! Pourquoi parler d'un jour de retraite, non, cette expression n'est pas juste, c'est plutôt la paix calme et saine de mon cœur.

A passage from Manuscript B in which Therese explains her discovery

SENDING THE MANUSCRIPT TO HER GODMOTHER

Before beginning her retreat, Therese received a clear request from her godmother: "Write something for me about your little doctrine." Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart wanted to possess a spiritual testament from her goddaughter. After writing the eight pages of her letter to Jesus,

Therese concluded that they were definitely a kind of condensed version of her Little Way. She decided to give them to her godmother, after adding two pages of introduction.

Upon receiving this collection — henceforth called Manuscript B — Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart was both

amazed and discouraged. "Do you want me to tell you," she wrote to her goddaughter, "you are possessed by God... just like evil ones are by the devil?" How could Therese propose her doctrine as a Little Way that makes holiness accessible to all? In order to be able to follow it, one must be devoured by the same thirst for martyrdom as Therese... and this must indeed be very rare.

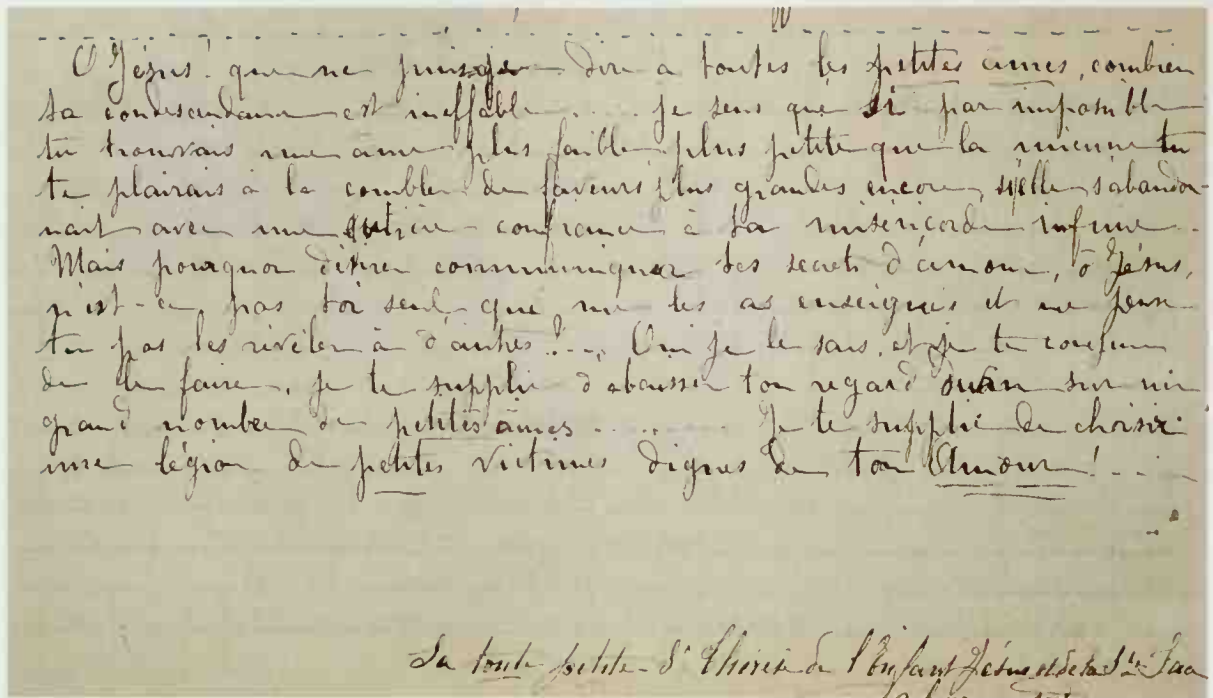
Blessed misunderstanding on the part of the godmother! To correct this, on the evening of September 17th, Therese quickly wrote a marvellous letter that clarified everything...

"My desires of martyrdom mean nothing, they do not give me the unlimited confidence I feel in my heart. [...] I truly sense that this is not at all

what pleases God in my little soul. What pleases him is to see me love my littleness and my poverty, it is the blind hope I have in his mercy... this is my only treasure, dear Godmother!"

In other words, to become a saint, there is no need at all to feel great desires in one's heart. At Gethsemane, Jesus begged his Father to take away

the chalice of suffering that awaited him. What does the Lord ask us to do? To recognize our radical powerlessness to attain true love by our own efforts... and to expect everything from him. "It is confidence," Therese affirmed, "and confidence alone, that must lead us to love."



The conclusion of Manuscript B

If Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart had carefully read what her goddaughter had written at the end of her meditation, she would not have been discouraged on receiving it. The immense desires that she bore in her heart did not hinder her from remaining "the very little Therese."

Photograph taken in the sacristy courtyard (July 1896)

Mother Agnes did not like this photo because of the pose and the poor arrangement of the clothing. Wanting it destroyed, she wrote on the negative: "unsuccessful." Certainly the way Therese is holding the stem of her lily is rather awkward, but what transparency and what energy there are in her gaze! What quiet assurance in her smile! Two weeks later, Therese would give her cousin a poem in which the ten-syllable verses breathe the same serenity and determination:

"Like a child full of tenderness
I want, Lord, to shower you
with caresses
And in the field of my apostolate
I dash into combat like a warrior!"

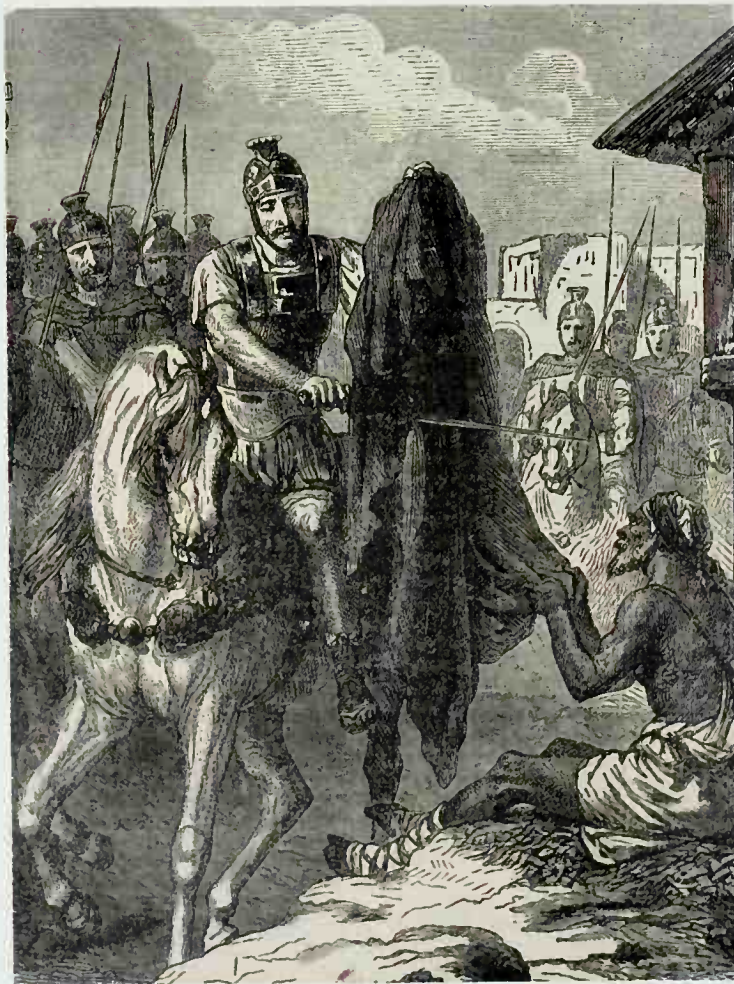
More than ever, Therese possessed a Joan-of-Arc soul. The previous month she had said to the Lord:

"Victory is mine...
I always disarm you
With my flowers!"



Therese did not wait until the end of her life to acquire great sensitivity in relating to others. In rereading the gospel — on which she meditated more and more — she was struck by a certain number of things. Jesus affirms that the second commandment is "like" the first — that is, Therese thought, just as important. On the evening of the Last Supper, Jesus even asked us to love one another "as" he loved us. This would be an impossible ideal to accomplish, if he himself did not love others from within us.

*This year, God gave me
the grace to understand
what love is*



A picture Therese made to put in her breviary. On the front, an engraving of Saint Martin cut out of a History of France

It does not seem that the Martin family had any particular devotion to the saint whose name they bore. However, Therese most likely put this picture in her breviary to recall the commandment of love of neighbour, the depths of which she continued to rediscover.

Ah! Seigneur, je sais que vous ne commandez rien d'impossible, vous connaissez mieux que moi ma faiblesse, mon imperfection, vous savez bien que jamais je ne pourrais aimer mes sœurs comme vous les aimez, de vous-même, ô mon Jésus ne les aimez encore en moi. C'est parce que vous voulez m'accorder cette grâce que vous avez fait un commandement nouveau. — Ah! que je l'aime puisqu'il me donne l'assurance que votre volonté est d'aimer en moi tous ceux que vous me commandez d'aimer!...

Therese devoted long pages of her last manuscript to sharing her discoveries about love of neighbour

Sister Marie of Saint Joseph (1858–1936)

This was the Sister who, at the end of Therese's life, provided her with the opportunity to understand better all the demands of the gospel regarding love of neighbour.

In 1895 Sister Marie of Saint Joseph was thirty-seven years old. Her depressive personality left her on the fringe of the community. No one wanted to work with her, because one always had to be ready to suffer some unforeseen outburst of anger. But Therese found the way to her heart. Consequently Sister Marie of Saint Joseph obtained from Mother Agnes, then prioress, permission to seek the counsel of her younger sister from time to time. Therese counselled her as best she could. The following year, for her feast day (March 19th), Therese gave her a poem, "The Eternal Canticle Sung from Exile," in which she delicately reminded her that her "great poverty" ought not to hinder her from making her whole life a "single act of love."

Further, still in March 1896, Therese volunteered to help her in the laundry. Until May 1897, she calmly put up with her mood swings. One day, Therese confided to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart: "Ah! if you only knew how often one must forgive her! How worthy she is of pity! It is not her fault she is so ungifted. She is like a poor clock that must be rewound every fifteen minutes!"

Therese was certainly thinking of her when she wrote in her last manuscript: "Imperfect souls are not sought after. No doubt one tries to remain within the bounds of religious courtesy in their regard but, perhaps out of fear of saying something unkind to them, we avoid their company. — In saying imperfect souls, I do not mean only spiritual imperfections, since even the most holy will only be perfect in heaven. I mean here the lack of judgment or education, the supersensitivity of certain personalities, everything which makes life unpleasant. I know well that these moral weaknesses are chronic, that there is no hope of a cure, but I also know that my mother would not cease caring for me, trying to comfort me, even if I were sick my whole life."

We understand that, three weeks after turning in her laundry apron, Therese wrote: "This year, God gave me the grace to understand what love is." Those fourteen months working beside Sister Marie of Saint Joseph taught her a great deal.

It was also this sister who gave Therese the opportunity to exercise patience on laundry days. She did not realize that she splashed her neighbour with dirty washwater because of the way she lifted the handkerchiefs from the washing board. When Therese fell ill, Sister Marie of Saint Joseph was very distraught. Like most of the other religious, she was forbidden access to the infirmary.



One day in September, she picked a violet and delicately slid it on the window sill. Therese's 'thank you' came to her in an unexpected manner the day after her death. On the evening of October 1st 1897, Sister Marie of Saint Joseph found her own cell perfumed with such a scent of violet that she looked everywhere for the bouquet. Then she remembered the little violet of September 13th. She understood, and the fragrance vanished. When her depression increased, she had to leave the monastery in 1909. She died twenty-five years later.

In April 1897, Therese underwent a new ordeal. She suddenly learned that she had been deceived by a first-class swindler who had gone so far as to project her photograph in Paris, boulevard Saint-Germain. This incredible story reflects the kind of anticlericalism that existed at the time.

An Unbelievable Conversion

In 1896, Catholics in France were enthusiastic about the extraordinary conversion of a certain "Diana Vaughan." Born in the United States, she arrived in Paris in 1884, at the age of twenty. She belonged to a satanic, Masonic sect called Palladism. The Catholic press spoke of her rather favourably; it was said that she had been unwilling to profane a consecrated host.

On May 8th 1895, La Croix asked its readers to pray to the Venerable Joan of Arc for her conversion. On the 13th, the feast of Corpus Christi, Diana was overwhelmed by grace. A few months later, she was baptized, composed a eucharistic novena and announced her desire to enter religious life.

Therese's Enthusiasm

The Carmelites of Lisieux shared the enthusiasm of the majority of French Catholics regarding this astonishing conversion. Therese was even more interested in it because it had come about through the intercession of Joan of Arc. Thus she decided, with her novices, to compose a playlet on the conversion of the one whom the Catholic press called a "new Joan of Arc." It was presented on June 21st, the feast day of Mother Marie de Gonzague who



Leo Taxil

had been re-elected prioress the preceding March 21st.

Therese gave her play a significant title, *The Triumph of Humility*, in order to remind her sisters that humility was the essential weapon to use against Satan.

Sending a Photograph

Mother Agnes suggested to Therese that she compose some verses for the converted woman. Inspiration would not come and Mother Agnes settled for sending Diana Vaughan a photograph that Celine had taken the previous year in which Therese and her sister pose in the respective roles as Joan of Arc and Saint Catherine. This tableau could only please the "new Joan of Arc" who needed to be encouraged in her vocation.

Therese wrote a few lines to send with the photograph. The letter and tableau were not sent directly to Diana Vaughan, since she was obliged to remain hidden to avoid the reprisals of the members of her former sect. They were sent to her correspondent, Leo Taxil, who claimed to be a convert as well. After publishing a whole series of anticlerical pamphlets, *A bas la calotte* [Down with Priests] (1879), *Les Soutanes grotesques* [Ludicrous Cassocks] (1879), etc., he was struck by grace while studying the trial of Joan of Arc. In 1885, he broke from the free-thinkers and published numerous works to denounce the misdeeds of Freemasonry. He was Diana Vaughan's 'impresario.'

Doubt Increases

But in 1896 many journalists began to doubt this man's sincerity. So he announced that, along with Diana Vaughan, he would give a conference to dissipate all doubts. It would take place on Easter Monday, April 19th 1897, in the great hall of the Geography Society, boulevard Saint-Germain. This was one of the most elegant halls in the capital at that time and was rented to all kinds of organizations.

A Tumultuous Meeting

Once Miss Vaughan announced that she would appear in person, even at the risk of her life, the police were called in to ensure her safety. At the start of the meeting, the room was full: French and foreign journalists of every persuasion, numerous priests and religious, and freethinkers. In all, four hundred people were present.

*There really are souls who,
by the abuse of grace,
lose the precious treasure of faith*

The announcement of the meeting organized by Leo Taxil at the Geography Society Hall, set for Easter Monday, April 19th. Numerous slides would also be projected.

On annonce une séance promise par Diana Vaughan à la Société de Géographie de Paris pour le lundi de Pâques. Voici le programme publié par diverses feuilles :

Cette séance sera précédée d'un discours de Léo Taxil intitulé : *Douze ans sous la bannière de l'Eglise* et dans lequel il déclarera se séparer de la lutte antimaçonnique.

La conférence de Diana Vaughan aura pour titre : *le Palladisme terrassé*.

Des projections lumineuses montreront des *actes de famille* légalisés concernant miss Diana Vaughan et d'autres papiers maçonniques et des portraits.

On annonce une série d'autres réunions semblables dans un grand nombre de villes d'Europe et d'Amérique.

» Que dire encore de cette séance? Des projections, il devait y en avoir par centaines ; une seule a eu lieu, une photographie représentant l'apparition de sainte Catherine à Jeanne d'Arc, d'après un tableau qui aurait été fait en l'honneur de Diana Vaughan dans un couvent des Carmélites. Quel couvent? La maison de Taxil probablement...

» La farce est terminée... jusqu'à ce que l'histriion recommence ses exercices. Car il va se mettre à diffamer les catholiques après les avoir exploités. Sans doute il publiera les lettres

Le Normand, Saturday, April 24th 1897

Therese learned from this article that her photograph had been projected the previous Monday in Paris by Leo Taxil. This article, by Eugene Tavernier, is an extract from the one that appeared in *L'Univers* the previous Wednesday.

Le Normand, Saturday, April 17th 1897

As planned, the meeting began with a speech by Leo Taxil. He dramatically announced that his anticlericalism was as strong as ever and that he was amused at having deceived audiences for twelve years. In the hall, even the most anticlerical hurled abuse at him. Fortunately, the police were there; they had insisted that participants leave their canes at the door. The public's anger reached its peak when Leo Taxil cynically admitted that he had made up the Diana Vaughan 'affair'. She was purely a product of his imagination, and Palladism was a sect that existed only in his mind. "As for the eucharistic novena," he added, "I composed it!"

During the entire course of his speech, a photograph was projected before the public on a large screen. It represented Joan of Arc in chains in prison, being consoled by Saint Catherine. The notice had promised the projection of hundreds of slides. In fact, that night, Leo Taxil projected only the photograph he had received from Lisieux the previous year. He tried to persuade his audience that this was a Carmelite dressed as Joan

of Arc. Understandably, the journalists, sickened by all his lies, did not believe him. Nonetheless it was true.

Therese's Reaction

The Lisieux Carmel learned of the deception on April 21st by means of a laconic paragraph published in *Le Normand*. On Saturday April 24th, the newspaper published a long article on page one entitled "The Confessions of Leo Taxil." In it Therese learned that the infamous swindler had used her photograph to mock the devotion of Christians to Joan of Arc. It was a hard ordeal. Like her contemporaries, Therese had been deceived. What a humiliation! Nonetheless, Therese did not forget what she had written at the end of her play: "You desire, fervent Carmelites, To win hearts for Jesus, your spouse. Well! Always remain little for him. Humility angers hell."

She tore to shreds the thank you note that Leo Taxil had sent her on behalf of Diana Vaughan in July 1896, in response to her own letter, and threw it onto the garden dungbill. She threw it, not into a fire, but onto a dungbill: some actions speak louder than words!

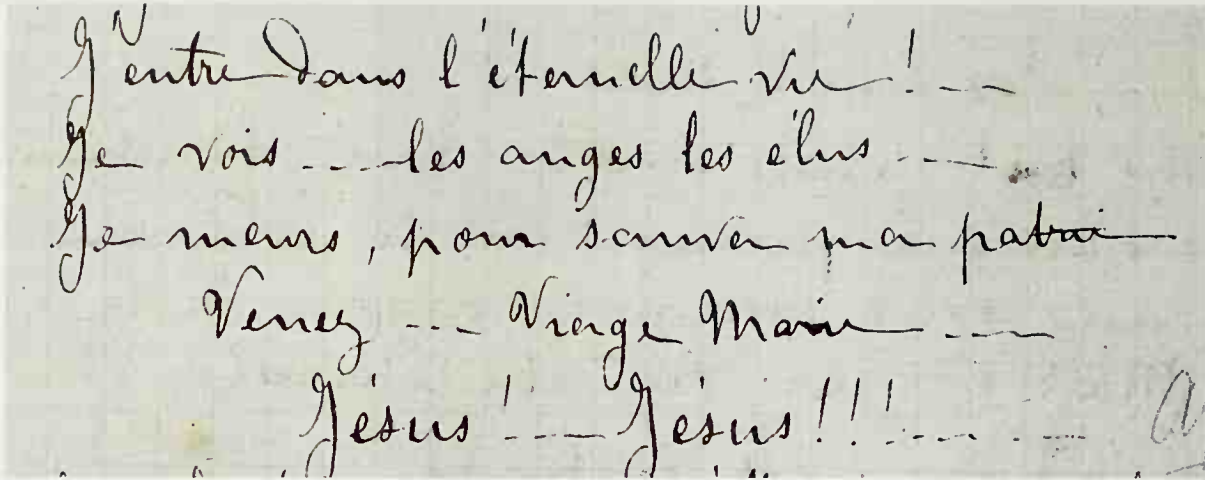
A New Child to Save

Leo Taxil had been baptized. He had even studied in a Christian college in Marseilles. Therese considered him a new child to save, another Pranzini. She was certainly thinking of him when, two months later, she wrote in her last manuscript: "Jesus made me feel that there really are souls who have no faith, who, by the abuse of grace, lose this precious treasure."



*J*oan's example strengthened Therese in her hope of pursuing her mission after death. In prison in Rouen, Joan knew very well that the English had not been driven out of France once and for all. Her mission was not fin-

ished but, after her death, she would continue to save her country in other ways. These then were the last words that, in her second play, Therese had Joan sing at the stake: "I die to save my country."



Joan of Arc Accomplishes Her Mission

Joan's last words at the stake: "I enter into life eternal! I see... the angels, the elect..."

I die to save my country. Come... Virgin Mary... Jesus!... Jesus!!!"

Joan died at the age of nineteen; Therese would die at twenty-four. But her mission, like Joan's, was just beginning. All my life, Therese thought, Jesus has been pleased to fulfil all my desires, even those that seemed the most childish or impossible. He made snow fall the day I received the habit; he permitted Celine to join me in Carmel,

even though there were already three family members here; he even gave me two missionary brothers! Why would the Lord act differently at the approach of my death? Why would he place in my heart such strong desires to do good after my death if he did not want me to accomplish them? My real mission is about to begin.

Therese and Sister Genevieve in their respective roles as Joan of Arc and Saint Catherine. This is the photograph that was projected in the hall of the Geography Society by Leo Taxil on April 19th 1897

Sister Genevieve partially repainted the photograph she had taken in January 1895 (see p. 220). In particular she engraved on the wall the words 'Jesus' and 'Mary.'





Statue of the Virgin called 'Heart of Mary'

The saying engraved above the niche, "She is more Mother than Queen!", was uttered by Therese on August 23rd 1897.

One day Therese confided to Sister Genevieve: "I still have something to do before I die. I have always dreamed of expressing in a song to the Blessed Virgin all I think of her." The sermons she had heard on Mary often annoyed her. They celebrated her virtues to such an extent that they made her inimitable. They so exalted her privileges that she apparently far exceeded the glory of all the saints, like the sun which at its rising makes the stars disappear.

"How strange that is! A mother who makes the glory of her children disappear! I think quite the opposite. I think she will increase the splendour of the elect." Along the same lines she said: "We know well that the Blessed Virgin is the Queen of heaven and earth, but she is more Mother than Queen."

In May 1897, Therese began her project. Month of May, month of Mary. She collected her strength and composed her last poem in honour of the Virgin Mary. In twenty-five stanzas, she related the life of Mary of Nazareth, just as the gospel presents it to us, as a very simple life of faith. She loved to contemplate in Mary the model of all Christians who have to live their love of God and neighbour in ordinary everyday circumstances:

*"No raptures, miracles, ecstasies
Embellish your life,
O Queen of the elect."*

For Therese, Mary is truly the unsurpassable model of "little souls." She does not invoke her own story until the very last stanza:

*"You who smiled on me
at the dawn of my life
Come smile on me again...
Mother... evening is nigh!"*

*I would have liked to have been a priest
to preach on the Blessed Virgin*

Today, Western Catholics are familiar with the Eastern icon. The same was not true in the 19th century. The cult of Our Lady of Perpetual Help — probably painted in Crete in the 14th or 15th century — was one of the few exceptions to the rule. It was propagated by the Redemptorist Fathers. After preaching a parish mission, they would solemnly enthrone a reproduction of the Marian icon that they venerated in their church in Rome.

This is a Byzantine Virgin of the type called Hodigitria, that is, "She who shows the Way" (*bodos*), Jesus being the way to the Father. In most icons of this type, the Child Jesus sits up straight, blesses with his right hand and holds the scroll of the Scriptures in his left. Here, he curls both his hands around Mary's, who reassures her child who is frightened by the vision of the instruments of the Passion.

Sister Marie of the Trinity greatly venerated this icon. In 1894, she attributed to it the solution of the difficulties that hindered her entrance into the Lisieux Carmel. Therese kept a picture of it in her breviary and composed a poem in its honour in March 1897. In it she asks Mary for the grace to be strengthened in her ordeal:



The icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Saint-Pierre cathedral)

"When I struggle, dearest Mother,
You strengthen my heart in battle.
Always, always, image of my Mother,
Yes, you will be my happiness, my treasure,
And I would like, at my last hour,
To fix my gaze on you again."

The beginning of the last poem composed by Therese
"Why I love you, O Mary!"

Air: Pourquoi m'avoir laissé l'autre
jour ô ma Mère

396 St.

Mai 1897

Pourquoi je t'aime, ô Marie!

Oh! je voudrais chanter Marie, pourquoi je t'aime.
Pourquoi ton nom se doua fait-tressaillir mon cœur
Et pourquoi la pensée de ta grandeur suprême
Me saurait à mon âme inspirer de frayeur
Si je te contempiais dans ta sublime gloire
Et surpassant l'éclat de tous les bienheureux
Lors que je suis ton enfant je ne pourrais le croire
O Marie, devant toi, je laisserais les yeux!.....



The wheelchair used by Monsieur Martin from May 1892 until his death, July 29th 1894. Therese used it in June 1897 to sit in the garden of the Carmel while writing her last manuscript

She was constantly distracted by the infirmarians, by the sisters who stopped by, and by the novices who wanted to speak to her. "I don't think I was able to

write ten lines without being disturbed... Look, here is a haymaker who is leaving after telling me in a compassionate tone: Little Sister, it must tire you to write like that all day long... I am glad that we are out turning the hay, it always takes your mind off things." Therese added that she made the effort to be patient, to put into practice what she had written about love of neighbour.

On the evening of Sunday May 30th, Therese informed her "little mother" that she had spit up blood twice during the previous year; Mother Agnes was shaken. Her little sister was going to die! She must complete the writing of her memoirs... She had so much more to say! Mother Agnes went to find Mother Marie de Gonzague — who still knew nothing of the existence of the first manuscript — and suggested to her that she order Therese to pursue her work.

"Write about what?" asked the sick woman, who had just vomited. — About the novices, about your spiritual brothers." She was given a little black imitation-leather notebook which she considered entirely too beautiful for her and she began working around June 3rd or 4th. She decided to write about her recent discoveries concerning love of neighbour and her work with the novices, but she began by confiding to her prioress how her discovery of the Little Way came about and the terrible temptation to doubt the existence of heaven.



Photograph taken June 7th 1897 (first pose)

To love to the point of dying of love

Celine wanted to photograph her sister on Pentecost Monday, in anticipation of Mother Marie de Gonzague's feast day, June 21st — and “in view of my approaching death,” as Therese stated in a letter to Father Belliere dated July 18th.

Therese held up two pictures from her breviary which recalled both her religious name and her spirituality: the Child Jesus of Messine (see p. 205) and the Holy Face of Tours (see p. 136).

“To die of love!” was the ‘dream’ Therese had proclaimed in her February 1895 poem (see p. 245). She expressed it again now when writing her manuscript: “It now seems to me that nothing can keep me from flying away, for I have no more great desires, other than to love to the point of dying of love.”

For once, Therese took care to note the date: June 9th. It was the second

anniversary of her Offering to Merciful Love. This time, she sensed that her death was near. It was also the day she confided to her godmother, with calm assurance, that she was certain that she would work still more after her death. God would not put such a desire in her heart if he did not want to grant it.



The staircase Therese climbed every evening to reach her cell

The saying written on the wall ("Today a little work, tomorrow eternal rest") did not correspond at all to her idea of heaven.

Gradually, as the end approached, Therese was convinced that death, far from putting an end to her apostolic activities, would permit her to carry them out more intensely. This was an original notion of heaven. Mother Genevieve, for whom Therese had such veneration, had said before she died that she desired heaven only to see God. The thought that the angels take care of us, while never ceasing to turn towards God, was one of the reasons invoked by Therese to support her hope. Furthermore, the life of Aloysius Gonzaga, read in the refectory in May-June 1897, corroborated her views. The author emphasized the richness of the posthumous life of this Jesuit who died at the age of twenty-

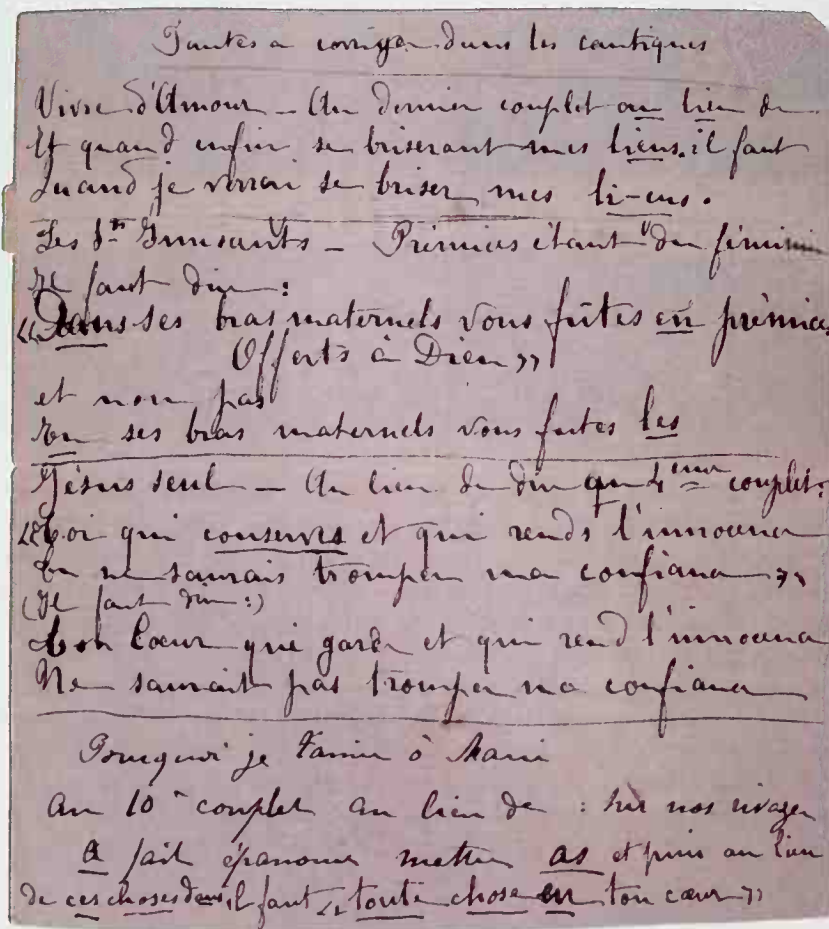
three. On June 9th, they had just read the life of a German canon who, having asked Aloysius Gonzaga to save him, saw him appear and make a shower of roses fall on his sickbed, a sign of the healing grace he was to receive. After the meal, in the room adjoining the refectory, Therese, her elbow leaning against a piece of furniture, solemnly declared to her god-mother:

"I too will send a shower of roses after my death."

Shortly afterward, she gave some directives to Mother Agnes for the publication of her manuscripts. Calmly, she dared to say: "People will be more aware of the gentleness of God."

After my death, I will send a shower of roses

Therese noted the corrections to be made in her 'hymns' in view of their publication



Photograph taken June 7th 1897 (third pose)

Therese posed a third time. Everything was better 'arranged'! It took all her strength to maintain her expression. Therese was so weak that the gardener overheard her cry: "Please be quick — I am exhausted!"

The novices did not like this photograph. Therese wrote to Father Belliere the following July 18th: "When they saw it, they cried out that I had put on my solemn face; apparently, I am usually smiling more." But Therese liked it because she thought she appeared energetic in it.



Nuncupate etiam
180 PAGES

sans toute sa persécution. Le bon Dieu s'en est donné
 point d'appréhension: Lui-même, et Lui seul. Pour l'aise
 d'Orasias, ^{qui} et c'est ainsi qu'il est soulevé le monde
 c'est ainsi que les saints ^{qui} militants le soutiennent
 que jusqu'à la fin du monde les saints à venir le
 tiennent ainsi.

Ma mère chère, maintenant je voudrais vous dire
 que j'ai écrit par l'écrit ce que j'ai dit. Mais que je me suis
 le au lieu de me faire plus de peine qu'une fois en il a
 mais que ces lettres sont si nombreuses qu'elles sont embarras
 Je n'ai pu en faire plus de six dans le B. l'écrit. Aussi
 de donner les lettres de la vie de Jésus et je suis de quel
 genre. Ce n'est pas de la première fois mais à la fin
 que je m'excuse, au lieu de m'excuser avec le Seigneur
 je répète souvent l'humilité finie en publican, mais sur
 j'ajoute la confession de Madeleine son clameur ou plutôt
 son amour, au lieu que Jésus le laud de Jésus. Et
 de même, à moi je le dis quand même, j'aurais sur la
 conscience tous les péchés qui se peuvent commettre. J'ira
 sans cesse de repentir me jeter dans les bras de Jésus
 sous combien Il aime l'enfant prodigue qui revient à lui
 C'est pas parce que le bon Dieu dans sa bonté m'a
 a présente mon ami. Un péché mortel que je m'excuse

*Even if I had on my conscience
 all the sins
 that could be committed...*

la connaissance et l'amour.

S^{te} Thérèse de l'Enfant Jésus a écrit ces dernières lignes au crayon dans son lit à l'infirmerie (juillet 1897)

Elle n'a pas écrit autre chose sur ce cahier, ce que l'on pourrait croire en voyant la page coupée.

Cette page a été coupée pour un motif insignifiant.

S^{te} Agnès de Jésus
s. e. i. s. r. i. s. e.

"Love":
The last word
in each of Therese's
three manuscripts

In the infirmary, Therese finished singing the Lord's mercies on her behalf, in pencil because the use of an inkwell was scarcely advisable for the bedridden. It was important to her that the reader understand her thought. She insisted to Mother Agnes: "Mother, please say that even if I had committed all possible crimes, I would still have the same confidence: I feel that this great multitude of offences would be like a drop of water thrown into a blazing furnace." She asked that

the account she had read in the Life of the Desert Fathers be added to her manuscript: a great sinner called Paësie was converted shortly before her death. At the moment of her death, Abba John the Dwarf, who had helped her along the way to her conversion, saw her soul fly to paradise.

Therese did not want anyone to doubt the Lord's infinite mercy. For him, a day is like a thousand years. He can therefore prepare us in an instant to appear before him.



*I have greatly suffered here below:
souls must be told this*

During the first month of her stay in the infirmary, Therese had numerous pulmonary haemorrhages — at least twenty. How, then, could Doctor de Corniere maintain that the sick woman suffered from pulmonary congestion? Was this a diagnostic error? Not likely. At the time it was known that the spitting up of blood was one of the characteristic symptoms of pulmonary tuberculosis. Furthermore, the doctor did order for Therese the remedies prescribed at the time for tubercular patients. It seems more likely that, in order not to upset the family

and the community, Doctor de Corniere wanted to avoid pronouncing the word 'tuberculosis,' as taboo in those days as the word 'cancer' is today. In addition, there was no possibility of a cure. The fact remains that the patient was exhausted. Still, she made the truly heroic effort of writing every week (July 13th, 18th and 26th) to Father Belliere who was on vacation and insistently sought her aid. She also wrote a farewell letter to Father Roulland, two to her family, plus some notes to her sisters. Mother Agnes, who saw the end coming, asked her many

questions. In all simplicity, Therese confided to her some of the graces she had received in the past — in particular the grace of the Marian veil (see p. 152) and the sensation of fire that was hers after her Offering to Merciful Love (see p. 240).

On July 30th, it was thought that she was close enough to death to receive extreme unction and the viaticum. The next day, she admitted: "I have found happiness and joy on earth but solely in suffering, for I have suffered greatly here below: souls must be told this."

11 June 97
de Corniere
 Eau de Vodka 1/2 gallon 2 bottles
 Solution: Eau distillée 1000
 Eau de Lavande 60
 Eau simple 60
 Une cuillerée à bouche
 Effrayé vibrante après le ton
 Colant

26 June 97
de Corniere
 Eau distillée filtrée 1000
 Eau de Lavande 60
 Eau simple 60
 Une cuillerée à bouche
 Coster les heures pendant le jour
 Colant

24 June 97
de Corniere
 Préparation d'opium pour 1 livre
 en pâte avec de l'eau de pluie
 Colant

27 June 97
 Eau de Vodka 1/2 gallon 2 bottles
 Eau simple 60
 Une cuillerée à bouche
 Colant



Prescriptions ordered
 by Doctor de Corniere

At a time when Social Security did not exist, Therese did not want to take expensive medicines, even if they were sent to her by her uncle. "I am no longer treated like a poor little one," she would say. If they were given by others, she would accept them more readily, thinking that the Lord would reward them for their generosity on her behalf. In 1888, Monsieur Guerin had sold his pharmacy to Monsieur Lahaye.

Doctor de Corniere (1841-1922)
 (photograph taken in 1898 or 1899)

A former intern at Saint-Louis Hospital in Paris, he set up practice in Lisieux in 1869 and was named chief surgeon of the local hospital in 1891. Physician at the Carmel from 1886 to 1920, he took care of Therese beginning in July 1896.

One of Therese's school notebooks

Though sick, Therese did not lose her sense of humour. She called Doctor de Corniere "Clodion the Hairy," the nickname given to the chief of the northern Frankish tribe that had invaded Gaul at the beginning of the 5th century.

	Dates	Evénements
8 ^e . Sciences	420	Pharmacologie
	428	Clodion le chevelu



A note on the base, written by Mother Agnes, indicates that this statue was placed in the infirmary on July 16th 1897

The following night, at two o'clock in the morning, Therese expressed her most profound desire: "I want to spend my heaven doing good on earth."

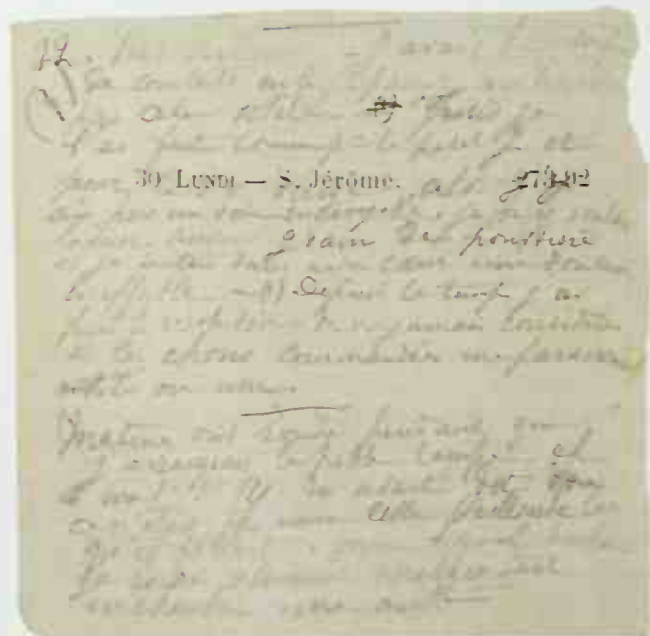
The calendar sheet on which Mother Agnes wrote down the notes she took at Therese's bedside on July 12th

In July, Therese herself used two other little sheets from this outdated calendar from 1895. The calendar, then, was kept in the infirmary.

Mother Agnes received permission from Mother Marie de Gonzague to look after her sick sister in the evening, during the office of Matins, beginning on June 5th. From July 8th — the day Therese was transferred to the infirmary — Mother Agnes remained at her sister's bedside during the hours of the office, during recreation and each time the infirmarians were needed elsewhere.

Anxious not to lose the memories Therese confided to her during these privileged moments, Mother Agnes hastily took notes on loose sheets and then transcribed them in a notebook. Thirty years later (1922-1923), she recopied all those notes in a yellow leather-covered notebook — now known as the 'yellow notebook' — and

*I want
to spend my heaven
doing good on earth*



published some of them in 1927 in a little book that would be enormously successful: *Novissima Verba* or *Derniers entretiens de sainte Thérèse de l'Enfant-Jésus* [Last Conversations of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus]. Unfortunately, only one of these original sheets has been found in the archives of the Carmel.

On July 12th, Therese confided to her sister the interior struggle she fought when she worked at the gatehouse with Sister Saint Raphael and was ordered to clean, as quickly as possible, a pilot light intended for some of the prioress' relatives. It was a porcelain beater, 22 cm high, made of four detachable pieces and intended to keep herbal tea warm.

On May 27th 1897, Ascension Day, Therese confided to Mother Agnes: "Oh! I would very much like to have a picture of Theophane Venard; he is a kindred soul. Saint Aloysius Gonzaga was serious, even at recreation, but Theophane Venard was always happy!"

On August 10th, Therese received this picture and pinned it to the curtain over her bed. She was struck by the gesture Theophane was making in the photograph: he is pointing to heaven with his right index finger. "See what he is pointing out to me," she remarked. "The pose could easily have been different." The picture had been made by mounting Theophane's head, taken from an actual photograph, onto a sketched silhouette. This accounts for the misproportion of certain details.

On September 6th, Therese received a relic of the young martyr. During the last weeks of her illness, she often took Theophane's picture and relic and caressed them. While making this gesture, she was most likely thinking of some of Theophane's sayings which she had copied on the back of a holy card the previous June (see p. 269).



The picture of Theophane Venard given to Therese in the infirmary on August 10th, and which she pinned to the curtain over her bed

At the bottom of the picture (17 x 9.7 cm), there was an inscription: "Farewell! Farewell! We will see each other again in heaven!" Over the inscription, Therese glued five miniatures of her favourite pictures: a Mater Dolorosa, a photo of her deceased little brothers and sisters, Saint Joseph carrying the Child Jesus, Saint Cecilia and Guido Reni's *Ecce Homo*.

After the alarm of July 30th and the days following, Therese enjoyed a relative respite. She was even surprised by her desire for "all kinds of good things." On August 6th, the lung haemorrhages stopped, but the fever and congestion remained. On August 9th, Doctor de Corniere joined his wife at Plombieres, but noted, before leaving, the deterioration of the left lung. He prescribed "little remedies" for the time of his absence and recommended a replacement from Lisieux.

On August 15th, Therese's illness took a new turn. Her left side became very painful and her legs swelled up. On August 17th, in the absence of Doctor de Corniere, Mother Marie de Gonzague finally permitted Doctor Francis La Neele to examine his

cousin. His diagnosis was clear: "The right lung is completely gone, filled with tubercles in the process of softening. The lower third of the left lung is gone. [...] The tuberculosis has reached the final stage." The word was finally uttered. The illness had invaded the entire body, including the intestines. The suffering was terrible. Therese was suffocating. They also feared an intestinal occlusion. "It's enough to make you lose your mind," she admitted. "Whenever I say: 'I am suffering,'" she said to Sister Genevieve, "you will answer: 'So much the better!' I don't have the strength, so you must finish what I would like to say."

I am suffering!...

Remember that Therese always had the picture of the Holy Face before her, for it was pinned to one of the curtains over her bed. She herself experienced something of what Christ experienced at Gethsemane: though infinitely happy to be the beloved Son of the Father, he was infinitely sad. More than ever, she repeated to herself Father Pichon's words: "Jesus suffered with sadness; without sadness would the soul suffer?" She also recalled a reflection of Lammenais which she had read in her Imitation: "Our Lord, in the garden of Olives, enjoyed all the delights of the Trinity, and yet this did not lessen the cruelty of his agony. It is a mystery, but I assure you that I understand something about it because of what I myself am experiencing."





I am suffering

The period of great suffering ended on the afternoon of August 27th. The fever, the thirst and the congestion remained. She could breathe with only half of the left lung.

On August 30th, they brought her outside under the cloister on a rolling bed, as far as the open door of the choir, for her last visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Before bringing her back into the

infirmary, Sister Genevieve photographed her dropping rose petals on her crucifix. On September 14th, repeating this familiar gesture, she dared to say: "Collect these petals, my little sisters, they will help you do favours later on... Don't lose any of them." Contact with these petals did actually result in miracles later.



On the infirmary wall,
to the left of the window,
there was a fresco
representing Christ
in the Garden of Olives
accepting the chalice
offered to him by an angel

Therese liked to think that the angel was
consoling Jesus by showing him the harvest
of the elect he was in the act of saving:

“An angel showing you this chosen
harvest
Brought joy again to your blessed face.”

For Therese, her infirmary was another
Garden of Olives, another prison of
Rouen: the salvation of the world was in
the process of being accomplished here.
Two hours before her death, in total
agony, she would confide: “I would never
have believed it possible to suffer so
much! Never! Never! I can only make
sense of this in terms of my ardent desire
to save souls.”



The procession accompanying the Blessed Sacrament brought to a sick Carmelite (photograph from the early years of the 20th century)

The long prayers that surrounded the reception of communion in the infirmary literally exhausted Therese. Thus she had to forego further communion. She received communion for the last time on August 19th, the feast of Saint Hyacinth. She obviously offered her last communion for the conversion of Father Loyson.

O Mary...



On August 4th, Therese was brought a sheaf of freshly harvested wheat. She removed the most beautiful ear, saying: "Mother, this ear is the image of my soul: God has bestowed on me graces for myself and for many others." Then, fearing that this was an expression of pride, she added: "Oh! How I would like to be humiliated and mistreated to see if I am really humble of heart!... Yet when I was humiliated in the past, I was very happy... It seems to me I am humble... God shows me the truth: I sense so well that everything comes from him."

The hermitage of the Holy Face alongside Chestnut Lane

In Therese's time, the arbour trellis from the garden at Les Buissonnets sheltered the Holy Face of Tours. From her infirmary bed, Therese could see the hermitage and she was looking in that direction on August 28th when she said: "Do you see the black hole over there where you can no longer distinguish anything: my body and soul are in a hole like that. Ah! yes, what darkness! But I am at peace."



O Marie, si j'étais la Reine
du Ciel et que vous soyez Ché-
rese, je voudrais être Cheresese
que vous soyez la Reine du
Ciel!!!

8 Septembre 1897

Therese's last prayer: "O Mary, if I were the Queen of heaven and you were Therese, I would want to be Therese so you could be the Queen of heaven!!!..."

September 8th 1897, the seventh anniversary of her profession, was a calm, pleasant day for the sick woman. She asked to see the picture of Our Lady of Victory to which she had attached the little flower her father had given her. She then wrote on the back, her hand trembling, this last Marian prayer. These were the last words she wrote.

The somewhat convoluted style — unusual for Therese — of this prayer is thought to be in imitation of a reflection generally attributed to Saint Augustine: "Lord, my soul greatly rejoices when it thinks that you are God; for if the impossible could occur that Augustine were God and you were Augustine, I would prefer that you were God and not Augustine." Therese had heard this statement read in a *Life of the Saints*

and Feasts throughout the Year which was read in the refectory every year on August 28th, the feast of Saint Augustine.

Perhaps Therese was also thinking about what she had said two weeks earlier, on August 21st: "The Blessed Virgin was not as lucky as we are since she had no Blessed Virgin to love, and this is one joy more for us and a one joy less for her."

M'a bonne Sainte Vierge faites que votre petite
Cherese ne se tourmente plus jamais.

The earliest prayer found in Therese's handwriting was also a prayer to Mary. It very likely dates from June 1884: "Blessed Virgin, may your little Therese be delivered from torment forever."

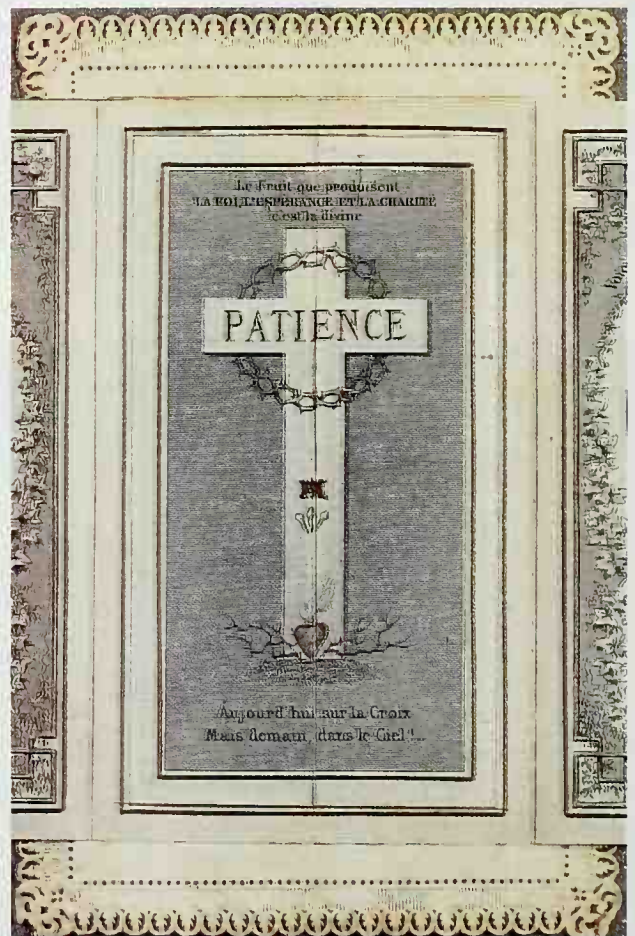
In it Therese reveals the anxiety of conscience that tormented her from May 13th 1883: Did the Virgin truly smile on her and heal her?

*I have not yet had
a minute of patience.
This patience is not my own!*



A picture sent by Madame La Neele on September 15th 1897

Madame La Neele had bought this picture in a religious bookstore in Caen and sent it to the sick woman, saying: "I don't know what to send you that would bring you some small pleasure. When I go out, I scrutinize the displays carefully, always looking for something you might like. Yesterday, I saw this picture at Dudouit's and I thought I would send it to you to show you that I am constantly thinking of you."



Very moved by this sign of affection, as well as by the treats sent by her uncle (artichokes and cream cheese), Therese reflected the next day: "Of course, I knew they loved me, but I would never have thought that they loved me so much!"

Certain aspects of this multi-layered picture surely resonated with Therese's soul, for they corresponded to what she was in the midst of living:

— To be content with God (top cover). Even while suffering terribly (suffocation, coughing, insomnia, bedsores, constipation, and gangrene of the intestines), Therese never denied what she had written at the end of her pocket gospel (see p. 259): "Lord, everything you do fills me with joy." She even made up word plays and puns to console those who came to visit her.

— Divine patience (inner cover). Therese was deeply convinced that the patience others admired in her was not hers, but that Jesus meted it out to her one second at a time.

— The entrance ticket to heaven (insert), on the other hand, probably did



not please her, since she wanted to arrive before the Lord empty-handed, like the Holy Innocents. She knew, however, that her sufferings were far from useless: through them, she could obtain life for her spiritual children and earn the grace of conversion for sinners and for unbelievers.

— The reward (innermost image). Finally, once the entrance ticket to heaven was removed, one discovered the central image, which reminded Therese of the ultimate object of her hope:

"My Beloved, let me soon glimpse
The gentleness of your first smile.
From your adored mouth
Bestow upon me soon
your eternal kiss."



MY GOD, HAVE MERCY

Throughout the day of September 30th, Therese was suffocating, but, surprisingly, she moved around a lot and she even sat up in her bed, something she had not been able to do for some time. "See what strength I have today! No, I am not going to die! I have months yet, maybe years!" she said. She confided to Mother Marie de Gonzague: "Oh! Mother, I assure you the chalice is full to the brim!... But God is not going to abandon me, of course. He has never abandoned me... Yes, my God, whatever you want, but have mercy on me!"

In the afternoon, the prioress placed a picture of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on her lap. "Oh! Mother, present me soon to the Blessed Virgin, for I am a baby that can take no more! Prepare me to die well." She was told that she was ready. "Yes, it seems that I have ever only sought the truth. Yes, I have understood humility of heart... It seems to me that I am humble [...] I do not regret having given myself to love."

Around five o'clock, the bell rang to summon the community to come to the infirmary quickly. The dying woman welcomed the sisters with a smile. A terrible death rattle pierced

her chest. Her hands turned blue, her face was sweating profusely. Time passed. The prioress sent the sisters back.

After seven o'clock, Therese was able to articulate: "Mother! Is this not still the death agony? Am I not going to die?... — Yes, my poor little one, this is agony, but perhaps God wants to prolong it a few hours. — Very well, then!... on with it!... I would not want to suffer any less time..." She looked at her crucifix, "Oh! I love him... My God... I love you!..."

Her head fell back. Mother Marie de Gonzague had the bell rung again and the community returned quickly. The sisters, kneeling, saw Therese's face regain a very peaceful look. Her shining eyes were fixed a little above the Virgin of the Smile, for the time it would take to say a Creed. Then she collapsed, eyes closed. It was 7:20 in the evening.

Sister Genevieve, in tears, hurriedly went out to the cloister. It was raining. "If only there were stars in the heavens!" she said to herself. A few moments later, the clouds were swept away and the stars twinkled in a sky become suddenly very clear.

Therese's last tear,
collected by Sister Genevieve
on a cloth she later cut
in the shape of a tear

MY GOD, I LOVE YOU









Therese's first grave (1897–1910)

The official examination of Therese's relics took place on September 6th 1910. After thirteen years in the grave, only the remains of bones covered with shreds of cloth were found. The gravediggers were struck, however, by the strong scent of violet that came from the rotten boards. They also found, completely intact, the palm placed in the casket.

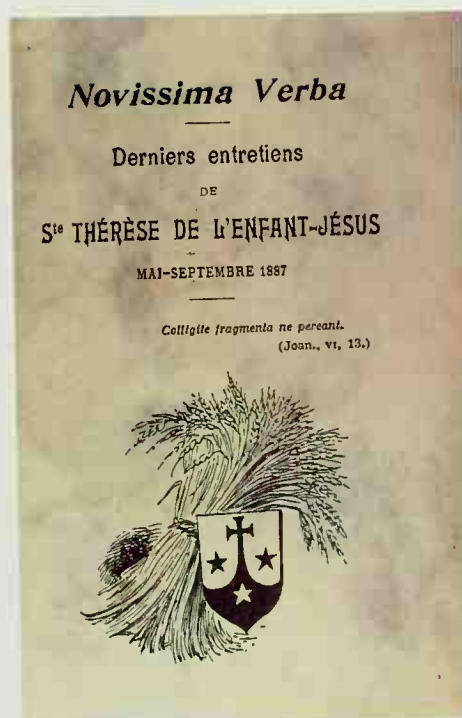
The new casket was then placed in a stone vault, where the statue of Therese is located today (see p. 328). The fervour of pilgrims was often indiscreet. In 1912, the authorities went so far as to place this inscription on the tomb: "Would those who pick flowers please leave the roots!"

On Monday October 4th, Therese was buried in the town cemetery. Leonie led the procession, surrounded by the Guerin and the La Neele families and a few friends. Stricken with the gout, Uncle Guerin was not able to attend the funeral. He had not expected his niece to be the first one to use the cemetery plot he had just bought for the Carmel.

Thanks to the distribution of *The Story of a Soul*, Therese was quickly known, loved and prayed to throughout the world. Many came in pilgrimage to her tomb to pray for a cure or a conversion. In 1903, Father Taylor, a young Scottish priest passing through Lisieux, suggested to Therese's sisters that they undertake steps towards the process of canonization. The Carmelites were astonished: nothing in Therese's life seemed to warrant such a project. The idea nonetheless gained acceptance. Little Sister Therese would be canonized by the People of God long before she was canonized by the Vatican.



The first edition of *The Story of a Soul* was published on September 30th 1898, just one year after Therese's death. Two thousand copies of this 475-page book were printed.



In keeping with the will of the deceased, Mother Agnes corrected Therese's three manuscripts, dividing them into eleven chapters and adding a twelfth in which she summarized the last months of her life. She supplemented the work with some of Therese's poetry and with extracts from her correspondence. Despite the banality of the title, the print run was sold out in a few months. The number of reprints and translations increased. The twelve chapters of *The Story of a Soul* were printed in small format in 1902: *An Unpetalled Rose*. Two years later the *Call to Little Souls* was published. This booklet, a summary of Therese's life and message, was immensely successful.

Thousands of readers were deeply moved. Many priests admitted that this reading did them more good than all the retreats they had previously made. The Carmelites of Lisieux received more and more letters asking them for relics of little Sister Therese or informing them of a grace obtained through her intercession. Books and relics passed from hand to hand. The spark was lit.

Novissima Verba (*The Last Conversations*)

This pocketbook (15 x 9 cm) was not published until 1927. It contained the words of her sister which Mother Agnes had written down on old calendar pages (see p. 196). The critical edition of *Derniers entretiens* (*Last Conversations*) was published in 1971 — first volume of the eight works making up the Centenary Edition.

By 1906, *The Story of a Soul* was already translated into six languages (English, Polish, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish). The Carmelites nonetheless remained detached and in no way dreamed of having Therese canonized. They were interested only in promoting the painting of the Holy Face, done by Sister Genevieve in imitation of the photograph of the Shroud of Turin. Did Therese not say that devotion to the Holy Face was the heart of her spirituality? To propagate Therese's message, all they had to do was to popularize Sister Genevieve's painting.

Father Eugene Prevost, a Canadian priest, devoted himself to this task. He had printed in eight languages on the back of the picture a

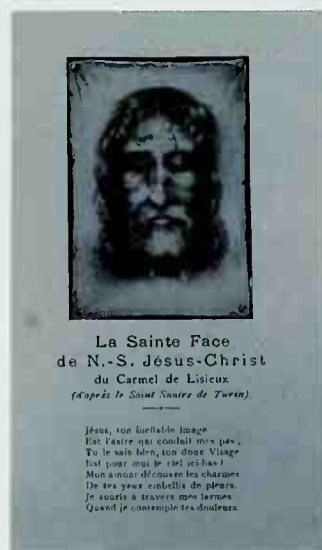


Photograph of the shroud of Turin taken in 1898 by Secondo Pia and published in 1902 by Professor Paul Vignon in his book *Le Linceul du Christ* [The Shroud of Christ]

prayer to the Holy Face, composed by Therese: "O Jesus, your face is the only beauty that delights my heart." To assist priests in difficulty, Father Prevost founded *L'Oeuvre sacerdotale*, which was highly valued by the Vatican. At his request, Pius X granted indulgences for the picture and prayer to the Holy Face in February 1906. During March of the following year, he gave the pope a copy of *The Story of a Soul*. Upon opening it, Pius X noticed the image of the Holy Face which he already knew and which had been incorporated into the 1906 edition. The pope was indeed pleased.

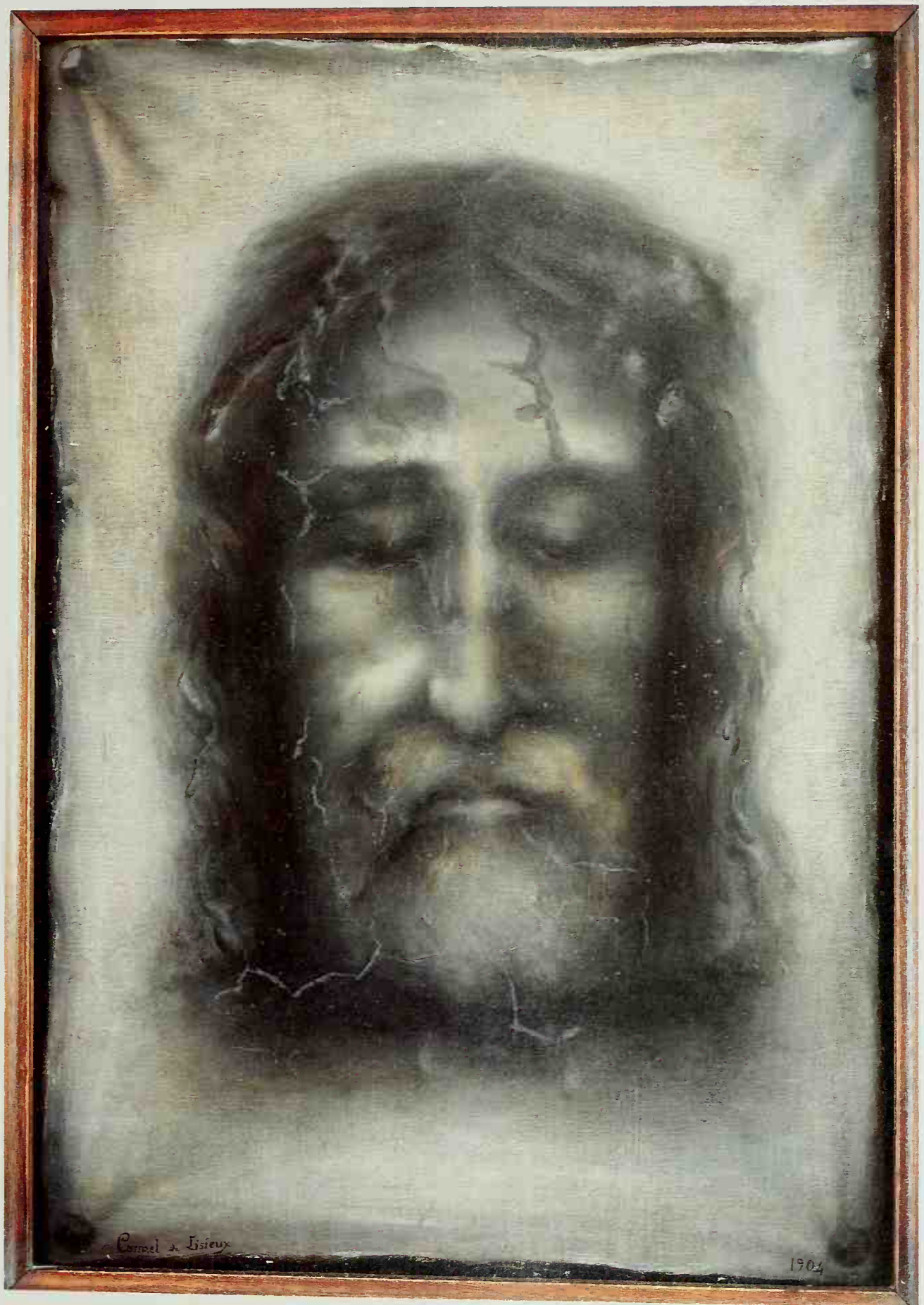
Such was the first contact between the pope and Therese. Had she not always wanted to bide behind the Holy Face?

Pictures of the Holy Face distributed by Father Prevost



In 1905 Sister Genevieve made this grisaille based on the negative of the photograph published by Professor Vignon

In March 1909, the work received the grand prize at an international exhibition of religious art in Bois-le-Duc (The Netherlands)



Leaving their photographs of Therese in a closet, the Carmelites of Lisieux inundated the world for more than sixty years with pictures and postcards that presented her in rather maudish fashion. Why did they hide her true face, in particular her strong chin, for so long?

the mentality of the time. It was generally thought that photography could never compare with the art of portraiture: common belief had it that photography was to portraiture what the barrel organ was to music. Only a

could present her to the Salon, if she consented to undertake further training in Paris. Celine declined the invitation, but continued to benefit from his advice and encouragement. The painter visited her several times in Carmel and, to show his respect, he gave her his palette one day. Thus she had reason to believe that, without being exceptional, her paintings were worthwhile.



Painting done in 1911
by Sister Genevieve

They believed that these photographs did not correspond to reality. In order to remain still for the nine seconds of posing, Therese tensed her face so much that she was never photographed with a relaxed, natural smile.

Sister Genevieve thus judged it necessary to compose a portrait of her sister that was 'truer' than all the photographs she had taken. Henceforth she would carefully hide these photographs from the public. Fortunately, she did not dispose of them, so it was possible to publish the entire collection in 1961, two years after her death. As strange as it appears to us, Sister Genevieve's conduct accurately reflected

painter, they thought, could render someone's true physiognomy.

It is understandable that Sister Genevieve tried her hand at this, especially since Edouard Krug, a well-known painter, had assured her that she had talent. This disciple of Flandrin had given her painting lessons in 1891 and was confident he

Nevertheless, it is regrettable that instead of remaining with the oval portrait done in charcoal (1899), which appeared for a long time on the frontispiece of *The Story of a Soul*, Sister Genevieve launched into colour portraits. Bishop de Teil, the very one who had wished for a trichromatic portrait for the front of the report he was preparing for the Vatican, exclaimed, when he saw the reproductions of this portrait: "It looks like Sister Therese was wearing lipstick!"

"Therese with roses" (1925)



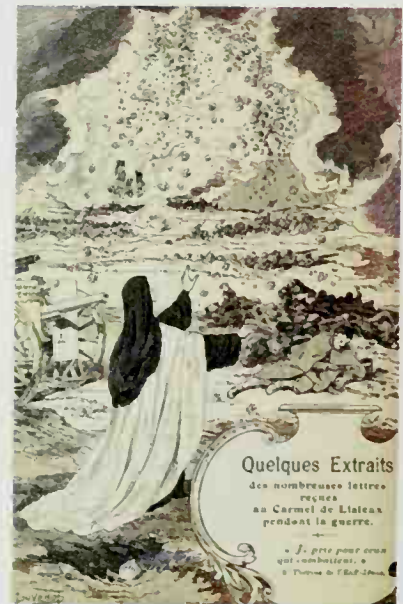


The Little Way

In order to recount the favours of all kinds obtained through Therese's intercession, favours that were sometimes accompanied by apparitions of the "little sister" in her brown habit, seven volumes entitled *Showers of Roses* were published between 1907 and 1925. They represented a total of more than three thousand pages in small print.

Some of these miracles occurred at Therese's very tomb, such as the instantaneous cure, on May 26th 1908,

of a four-year-old blind girl brought to the Lisieux cemetery the night before by her mother. The miracle made a great impression on the residents of Lisieux, who were rather reticent at the idea that their compatriot might be canonized. The age of little Reine Fauquet ruled out any suspicion. Doctor La Neele, though not favourable to the launch of the cause, was indeed obliged to provide a medical certificate attesting to the cure.



The members of the ecclesiastic tribunal instituted by Bishop Lemonnier of Bayeux to investigate the cause of canonization of Sister Therese. Photograph taken August 3rd 1910 at Sainte-Marie-de-Caen Minor Seminary.



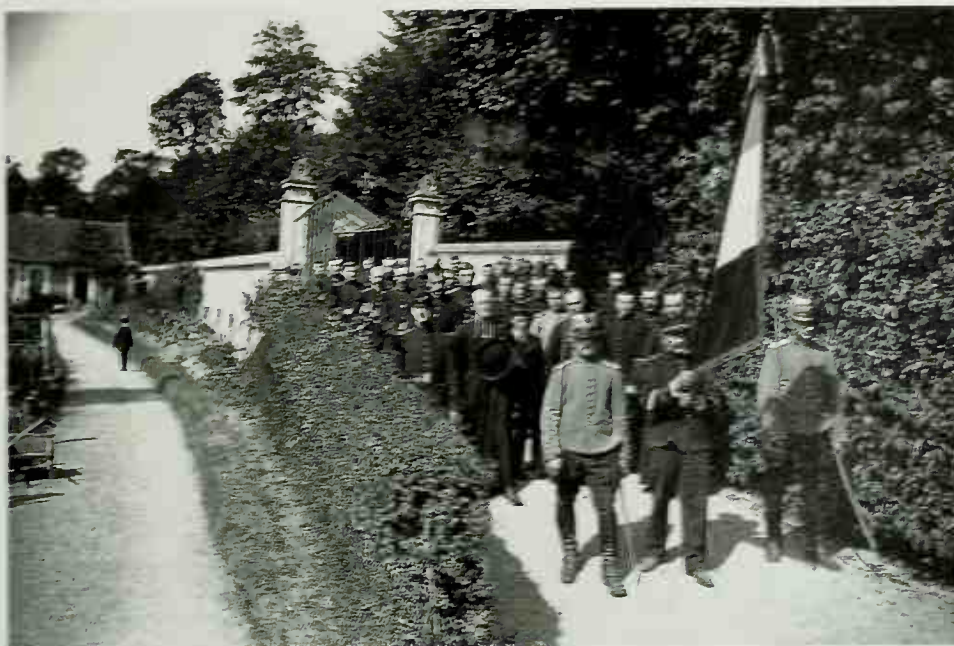
Standing, to the right of the bishop: Father Pierre Theophile Dubosq, superior of the major seminary and Promoter of the Faith; seated: Canon Quirie, vicar general; standing, to the left of the bishop: Canon Deslandes, first notary; seated: Father Roger de Teil, vice postulator of the cause.

Impressed by the exceptional number of favours obtained through the invocation of Therese. Christians throughout the world called for her canonization. Despite his lack of enthusiasm for this cause, Bishop Lemonnier had no choice but to open in Bayeux, in 1910, an "ordinary" process — thus called because it takes place under the authority of the local Ordinary (the bishop). Thirty-seven witnesses made depositions about

Therese's life. In 1915, the "apostolic" process — under the direct delegation of the Apostolic See of Rome — was opened at Bayeux. It ended on October 30th 1917. The previous August 9th and 10th, a second exhumation of Therese's remains was undertaken — a ceremony that took place before an estimated crowd of 1,500 people.

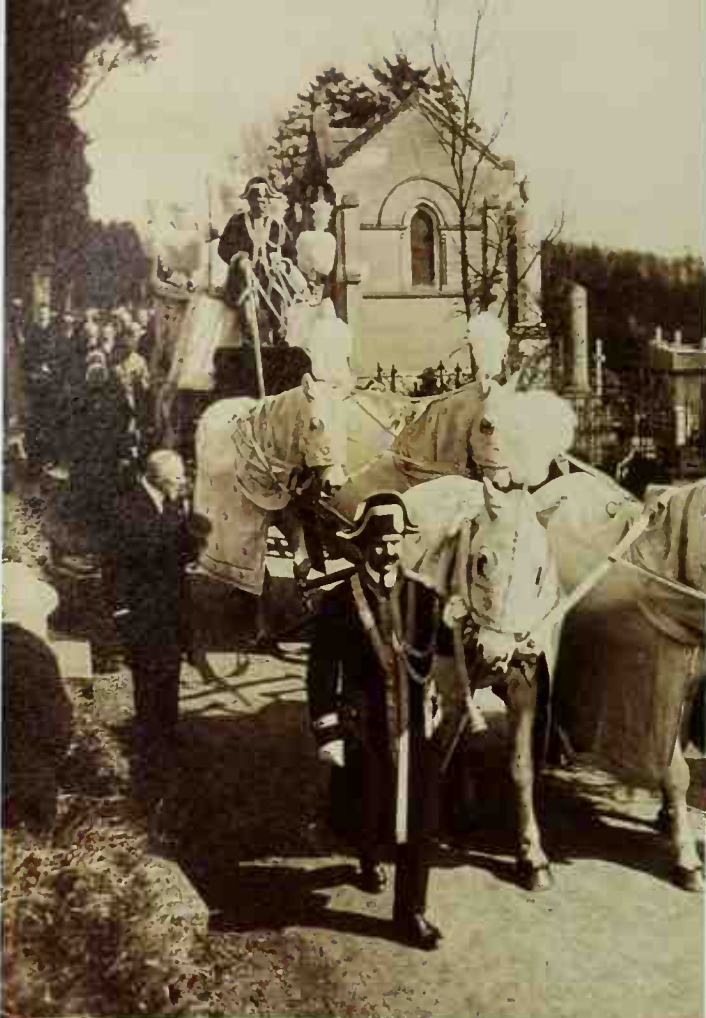
On August 14th 1921, Pope Benedict XV declared that Therese of the Child Jesus had practised in heroic

fashion faith, hope, love and all the other virtues, and proclaimed her "Venerable." On this occasion he delivered a very beautiful discourse on the exceptional model of spiritual childhood that Therese gave us.



Soldiers entering the Lisieux cemetery singing the Magnificat (1913)

These military pilgrims foretold the significant role that soldiers would play during the First World War in the development of popular devotion to "little Sister Therese." German soldiers, like the Allies, would implore her protection.



The solemn translation
of the relics,
March 26th 1923

On March 26th 1923, one month before her beatification, Therese's relics were brought to the Carmel, to the reliquary where they remain to this day. This event took place in magnificent springtime sunshine and with impressive reverence. Given the fact that Therese had not yet been beatified, neither singing nor music was permitted. Only the recitation of the rosary occasionally broke the silence of the 50,000 pilgrims lining the two-kilometre route. Covered with a gold brocade pall, the precious casket was carried on a carriage draped in white. A detachment of French and American officers and soldiers made up the guard of honour:

Miracles again took place that day. A seriously wounded soldier, paralysed for fifteen months, began to walk as the carriage passed by; a young blind woman, who was waiting at the Carmel for the arrival of the procession, felt her eyes open suddenly and was able to contemplate the triumphant entrance of Therese into her Carmel.

Therese's reliquary
in the chapel of the Carmel

The marble recumbent statue does contain some of Therese's bones, but almost all of her remains have been enclosed in a golden case placed under the reliquary. The gold rose in Therese's right hand was placed there on September 30th 1925 by Cardinal Vico, legate of Pius XI, on the evening of the great triduum during which Lisieux celebrated Therese's canonization.

Above the reliquary is the "Virgin of the Smile" (see pp. 18 and 52).



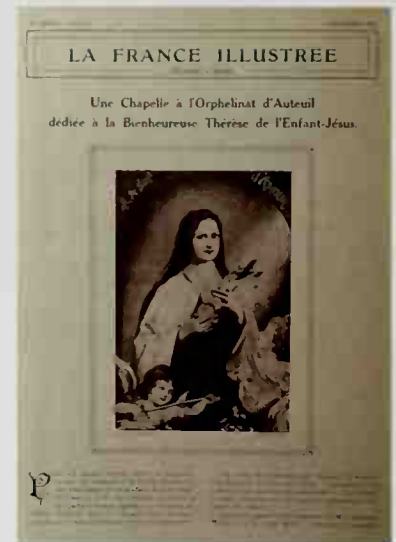


The Monument of Adoption sculpted by Auguste Maillard in the chapel of the Orphelins-Apprentis d'Auteuil 40, rue La Fontaine, Paris XVI

Sister Marie of the Trinity (see p. 204) is presenting two boys to Therese. The first, wearing a first communion armband, recalls the work originally founded by Father Roussel; the second, in work clothes, represents apprentices.



Home safe and sound from the war; Father Brottier (photo above) learned in 1919 that his superior had entrusted him to the special care of "Little Sister Therese." To show his gratitude, the former military chaplain decided to build a sanctuary in her honour. As soon as he had accepted, in November 1923, to take over the work founded by Father Roussel, Brottier prayed to Therese to send him 10,000 francs so he could carry out his dream. On the last day of the novena celebrated for this intention, an envelope arrived containing the required sum. The first stone of the church in Auteuil was laid on July 13th 1924. In order to collect the funds necessary for the



construction of the building, Father Brottier had posters placed in the subway and mobilized the generous friends of the Orphelins-Apprentis d'Auteuil. On October 5th 1930, Cardinal Verdier consecrated the sanctuary, the first one dedicated to Therese in France and in the world.

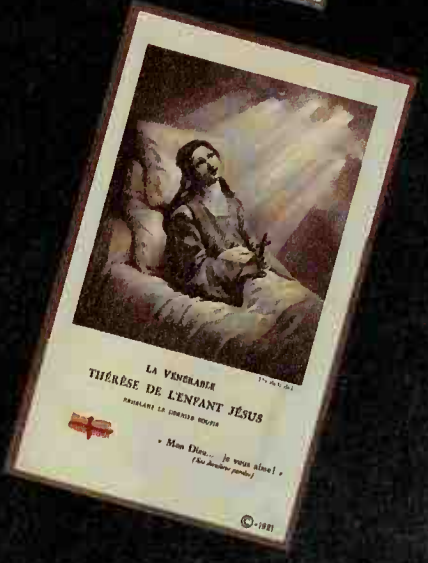
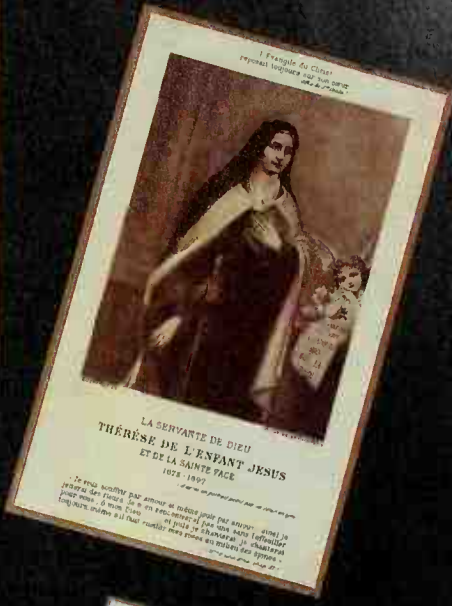
Since the glorification of Therese by the Church, her cult has spread throughout the world. In the smallest village church is found the statue cast through the efforts of Father Marie-Bernard, monk of the Grand Trappe de Soligny. Planned in February 1919, it was completed in September 1922. As for Therese's pictures, they have literally invaded the world.



The basilica of Choubrah in Cairo

This building was given by the Muslims to "Allah's little saint" to thank her for all the favours she obtained for them. It remains a very busy place.

More than two thousand churches or chapels have been built in Therese's honour since 1925.





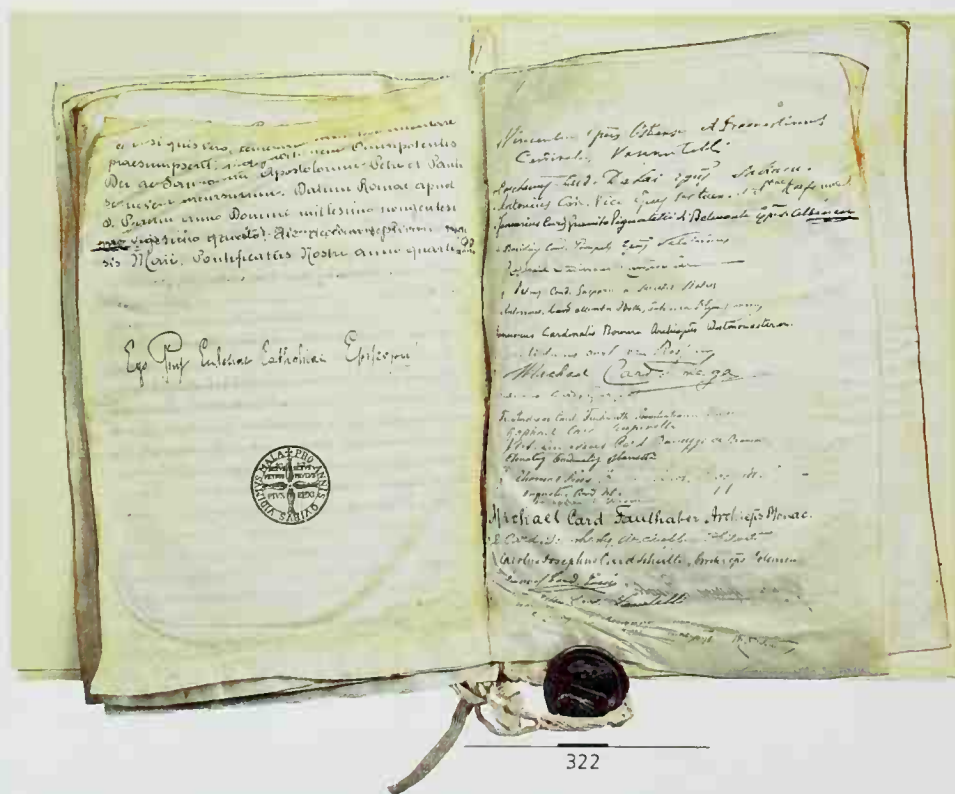
The bull of canonization

It fell to Pope Pius XI to bring about the ultimate glorification of the one he gladly called the "Star of his pontificate." On April 29th 1923, he presided over the ceremonies of her beatification and on May 17th 1925, surrounded by twenty-three cardinals and two hundred and fifty bishops, he canonized her. Five hundred thousand faithful came to Rome for this occasion,

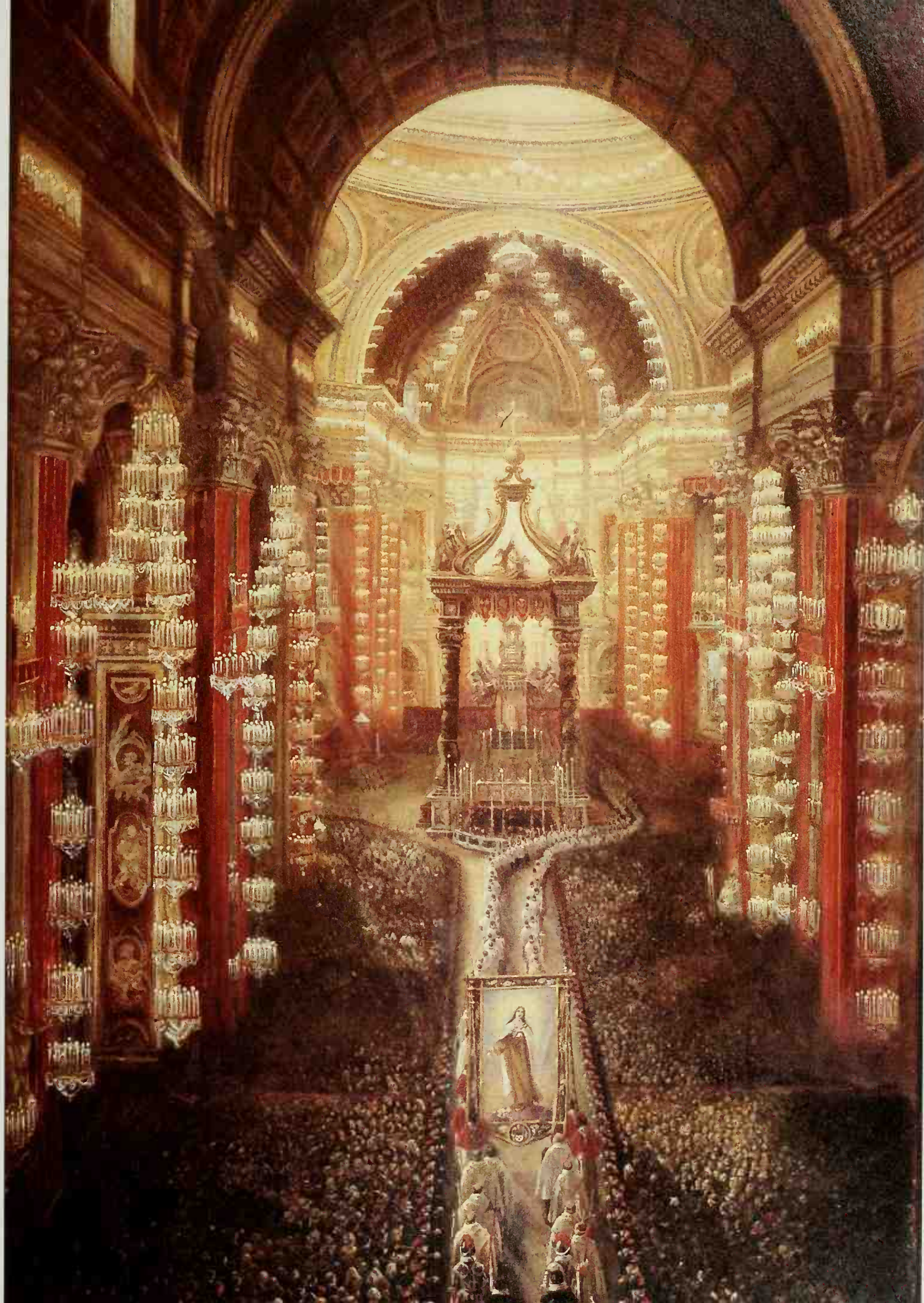
but only 50,000 of them were able to enter Saint Peter's Basilica to bear the pope solemnly declare that henceforth the little Carmelite of Lisieux could be called "Saint Theresia of the Child Jesus." For the first time in such a case, enthusiastic, prolonged applause greeted this proclamation.

Throughout his pontificate, Pius XI continually entrusted to Theresia his

great apostolic initiatives, in particular the establishment of Catholic Action and the development of the missions. Moreover, on December 14th 1927, he declared Theresia principal patroness of the missions a par with Saint Francis Xavier.



Theresia's canonization at Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome on May 17th 1925. Painting by Sister Marie of the Holy Spirit, Carmelite of Lisieux





The subscription card sent out in 1929 to solicit donations for the basilica

The campanile was not constructed on the site originally chosen because large amounts of concrete had to be poured to the right of the square to prevent the clay hillsides from sliding down into the valley. Accordingly, the campanile was placed on this particularly solid section of the site.

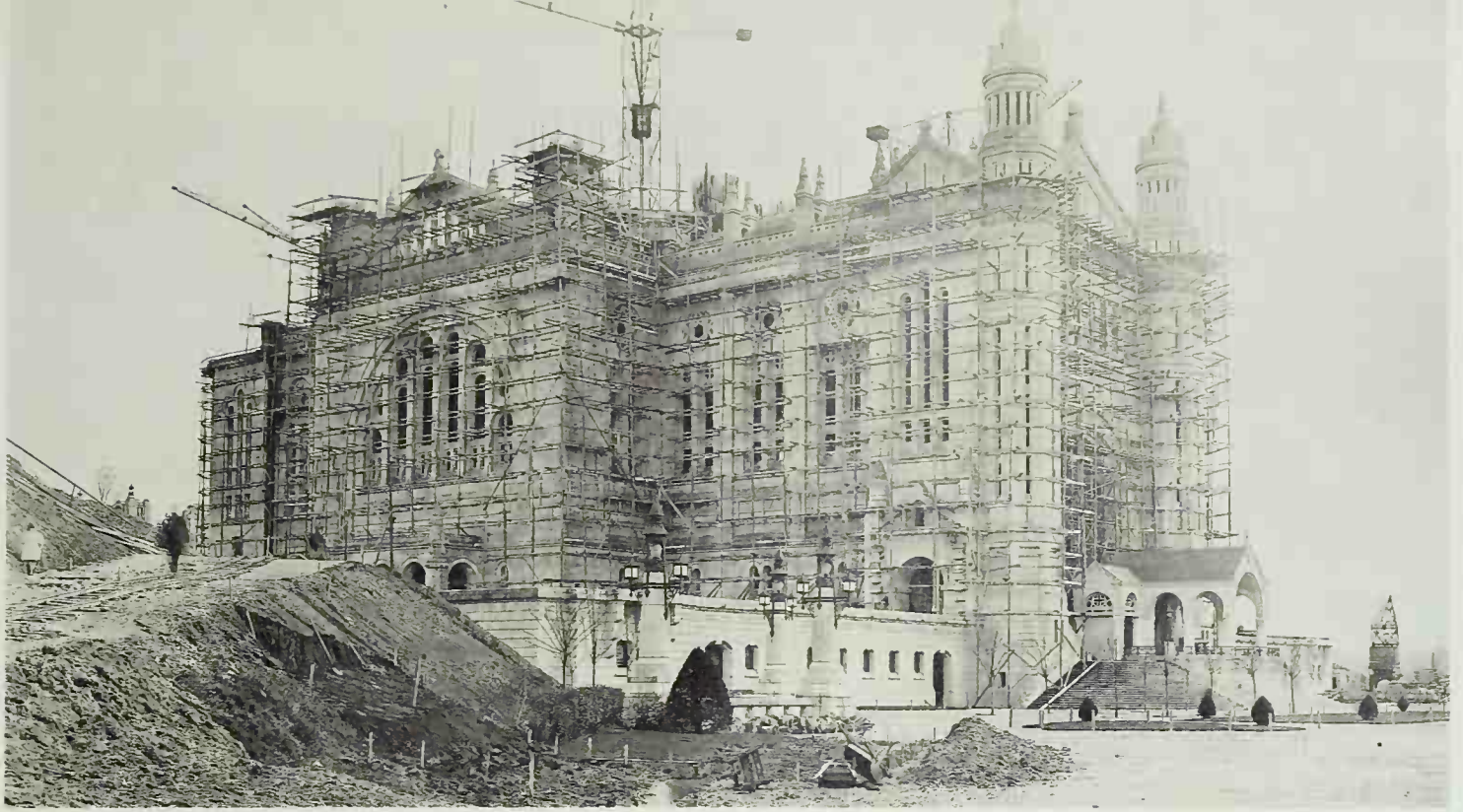
Despite the opposition of local clergy who judged construction of a basilica inopportune, the foundation was laid in 1929. Like the basilica in Montmartre, this one rests on a veritable forest of concrete pilings that reach down to the limestone layer more than thirty metres below the clayey layers of the hill.

Pius XI had asked Monsignor Subard, the new bishop of Bayeux,

that the building be "very large, very beautiful and completed as quickly as possible." Records for speed were incontestably beaten: the square, the way of the cross, the crypt and the basilica were completed and paid for in fewer than ten years. On July 11th 1937, at the close of the XIth National Eucharistic Congress, Cardinal Pacelli — the future Pope Pius XII — pronounced the solemn blessing of the basilica.

After the war, once the very limited damage done by the 150 bombs and shells that had fallen on the hill was repaired, Bishop Germain, the pilgrimage director, asked Pierre Gaudin to design the mosaics and stained glass windows of the basilica. His father, Jean Gaudin, had done the mosaics in the crypt in 1932.





The basilica during construction

Therese opened herself to the flames of love that come forth from the Heart of Jesus. Consumed by this fire, she wanted to accomplish countless things in order to love God and to make him loved: she sensed in herself the vocations of priest, apostle and martyr (see p. 273). The Holy Spirit, however, made

her understand that by remaining, in the heart of the Church, one who puts great love into everything she does, she would exercise all other vocations in eminent fashion: "In the heart of the Church, my Mother, I will be love. Thus I will be everything!" (see p. 277).

The stained glass of the south transept





The Saint Theres Hermitage near the Carmel



Cardinal Suhard on pilgrimage to Lisieux (1936)

Called upon by his bishop to manage the financial aspects of the construction of the basilica, Father Germain also wanted to establish, near the Carmel, a spiritual centre to encourage pilgrims to explore Theres's message in greater depth. Beginning in 1928, retreats were offered at the hermitage. "In building it, I gave Lisieux its spiritual basilica," he said.

After serving as a barracks for the German army, the building became the seminary for the Mission of France in October 1944. In fact, the first seminarians for the Mission of France arrived in Lisieux in 1942, under the direction of Father Louis Augros, a Sulpician. Cardinal Subard, Archbishop of Paris since 1940, thought it appropriate to form, at the school of Theres, priests who would be sent to populations strongly marked by atheism. After all, the Carmelite of Lisieux had, herself, shared in the plight of unbelievers for the last eighteen months of her life (see p. 258). Furthermore, Cardinal Subard was pleased to

resume contact with Theres's sisters whom he had known well when he was Bishop of Bayeux. As a result of a regular correspondence with Mother

Agnes, he decided to open the seminary in Lisieux.

When, in 1952, the seminarians moved from Lisieux to Limoges, they would say in jest that they had been literally "limogés" (i.e. dismissed to Limoges, 'fired'). The hermitage returned to its original purpose: welcoming retreatants and pilgrims.



Theres, Patroness of the Missions
Painting by Sister Marie of the Holy Spirit

On June 2nd 1980, Pope John Paul II concluded his first visit to France by celebrating mass on the esplanade of the basilica. "The saints virtually never go out of fashion," he asserted in his homily, "there is no expiry date on sainthood." Theres reminds us, he added, that "the most fundamental and most universal truth of the gospel message is that God is our Father and we are his children."





The great annual feasts which take place in Lisieux in honour of Saint Therese occur the last Saturday and Sunday of September, in memory of her death on September 30th 1897.

Saturday evening, the small case containing her relics is placed in a silver reliquary donated by Brazil and carried in procession to the basilica. The next day it is returned to the Carmel.

Every year, on the third Sunday of September, the Orphelins-Apprentis d'Auteuil come in pilgrimage to Lisieux

The Carmelite enclosure in the Lisieux cemetery

The cross designates the location of Therese's first tomb (1897-1910) and the statue stands on the site of the second (1910-1923).





INDEX OF CITED TEXTS

This index gives the page number in this volume, followed by the references to Therese's texts in order of appearance. The quotes in large bold italic letters are listed first. The abbreviations are followed by the page or folio number of one of Therese's three manuscripts. All references are to the front (recto) of the folio, unless otherwise indicated (verso).

ABBREVIATIONS

- A Autobiographical manuscript dedicated to Mother Agnes of Jesus, 1895
 B Letter to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, autobiographical manuscript, 1896

- C Autobiographical manuscript dedicated to Mother Marie de Gonzague, 1897
 CG *Correspondance générale de Thérèse*, Cerf-DDB, 1972-1973, 2 volumes
 CJ "Yellow Notebook" by Mother Agnes of Jesus
 CSG *Conseils et souvenirs*, published by Sister Genevieve, coll. "Foi vivante," 1973
 DE Therese of the Child Jesus, *Derniers entretiens [Last Conversations]*, 1971
 DE II Supplement to *Derniers entretiens*, 1971
 LC Letters from correspondents (in CG)
 LT Letters from Therese (in CG)
 Ms I, II, or III Three companion volumes to the 1956 edition of *Manuscrits autobiographiques* by Father François de Sainte-Marie

- MTr P. Descouvemont, ed., *Sœur Marie de la Trinité, Souvenirs*, Cerf, 1986
 NPPA Notes prepared for the Apostolic Process
 NPPPO Notes prepared for the Ordinary Process
 PA Apostolic Process, 1915-1917, published in Rome, 1976
 PN Therese's poetry with the revised numeration of the Centenary Edition *Poésies*, 1979
 PO Ordinary Process, 1910-1911, published in Rome, 1973
 Pri *Prières* composed by Therese, published in 1988
 PST *Le Père de sainte Thérèse*, Lisieux, 1953
 Th *Théâtre au Carmel*, "Récréations pieuses," composed by Therese, 1895

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12	A 33 v	88	A 60	176	PN 40	248	C 23 v; LT 178
13	PST 15	89	A 55 v; 61	177	CSG 105	249	C 21; LT 191
14	A 4 v	91	LT 36; A 56	178	LT 129; C 21; LT 126	250	LT 224, 247; C 31 v; Pri 8
20	A 6 v	92	A 68	180	LT 146	251	CG 823; LT 263
22	A 11 v; Ms II 12	94	LT 43 B	182	A 80 v; NPPA (Mother Agnes)	252	A 77 v; CG 1182
24	A 12; MTr 110	96	A 68 v; PA 141	183	LC 151	253	LT 182
25	A 12 v	99	LT 57	184	A 78	256	C 4 v
26	A 13 v	101	A 69 v; CJ 11.6.1	185	A 78; PA 194	257	PN 17
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37	A 23; 14	115	A 69 v; 73	194	A 80 v; LT 140	264	LT 193
38	A 14	116	LT 53; <i>Obituary</i> 4; DE 426-427; PN 40	195	PN 18	267	PN 35
39	A 42 v	117	PN 26; PA 177	196	A 81; CG 1176	268	PN 47; CJ 4.6.1
41	A 17 v; 44	118	A 69 v; A 48 v; LT 165	200	CJ 18.5.3; CSG 74	269	LT 221; CJ 1.5.1
42	A 22	120	PN 46	202	DE 594	270	Pri 12
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52	A 30; Dr. Gayral, <i>Une maladie nerveuse dans l'enfance de sainte Thérèse de Lisieux</i> , Carmel, 1959, p. 81-96	129	A 56; LT 198; PN 31; LT 160	208	A 82 v	280	C 11 v
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61	A 36 v	143	A 72	221	CJ 20.7.6; 27.7.6	288	C 17 v
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CHRONOLOGY

This chronology is built around Therese's life. From 1898, we mention only the important dates of her posthumous history.

1873 — ALENÇON

January 2: Marie-Françoise Therese Martin is born, 36 rue Saint Blaise
 January 4: Baptized in Notre-Dame church
 March 15 or 16: Sent to live with her wet nurse, Rose Taille, in Semalle
 Thiers resigns, MacMahon is president
 Restoration attempts fail
 German troops evacuate France
 Hanoi is overrun
 The Catholic weekly *Le Pelerin* launched
 Rimbaud: *Une saison en enfer*
 Peguy, and Marc Sangnier are born
 Tablets available in pharmacies

1874

April 2: Therese returns to her family in Alençon
 Child Labour Laws protect children under twelve
 Exploration of Brazza in the Congo begins
 Verlaine: *Romances sans parole*
 Wagner: *The Twilight of the Gods*
 Hansen isolates the leprosy bacillus

1875

Therese already knows most of the alphabet and begins to say: "I will be a religious."
 The Walloon Amendment passes
 The Institut Catholique de Paris is founded
 The Paris Opera is inaugurated

1876

July 16: First photo: Therese "pouting"
 The Conquest of Sudan begins
 Daniel Brottier (†1936) is born
 Construction of the Basilica of Montmartre (till 1910)
 Renoir: *Le Bal du Moulin de la Galette*
 Bell invents the telephone
 Lombroso: *Le Criminel-né*

1877

June 18-23: Madame Martin, Marie, Pauline and Leonie travel to Lourdes
 August 28: Madame Martin dies
 August 29: Madame Martin is buried
 November 15: Therese and her sisters move into Les Buissonnets in Lisieux
 Population of Paris exceeds two million
 Protestant Faculty of Theology of Paris founded
 Monet: *La Gare Saint-Lazare*
 Edison invents the phonograph

1878

Therese understands a sermon (on the Passion) for the first time
 August 8: Therese travels to Trouville and sees the sea for the first time
 Pius IX dies, Leo XIII elected
 Rodin: *Saint John the Baptist Preaching*
 Brahms: *Concerto for Violins and Orchestra*

1879

Late 1879 or early 1880: First confession
 MacMahon resigns, Grevy elected
 Proposal of law against the teaching orders
 Monthly *La Croix* launched
 Pasteur discovers the principle of vaccination

1880

Celine's first communion
 Anticlerical Decrees: dissolution of the Society of Jesus; the closing of 261 religious houses
 Jules Ferry, President of the Council
 Dom Pothier: *Les Melodies grégoriennes*
 Dostoyevsky: *The Brothers Karamazov*
 Degas: *Danceuse à la barre*
 Discovery and excavation of the site of Delphi by the French School of Athens
 First appendectomies
 Siemens' electric elevator
 The completion of the Saint Gothard Tunnel

1881

October 3: Therese enters the Abbey School of the Benedictine Nuns as a day student in the first division (green class)
 Primary school is free
 The fall of Jules Ferry, Gambetta Ministry
 Tunisia, French Protectorate
 Verlaine: *Sagesse*
 Toulouse Lautrec: *Cheval de trait à Celeyran*
 Offenbach: *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*
 First electric tramway in Berlin
 The beginning of the dredging of the Panama Canal by Ferdinand de Lesseps

1882

October 2, Pauline enters the Lisieux Carmel.
 Therese skips a grade and returns to the abbey in the first division (violet class)
 December: Therese suffers from continual headaches and insomnia
 Anticlerical academic laws, laicity of the primary school and the educational requirement for children 6-13
 The first vacation camps
 The creation of the Museum of Decorative Arts and the Grevin Museum
 Koch identifies the tuberculosis bacillus

1883

March 25: Therese falls ill at the Guerin home
 April 6: Pauline receives the Carmelite habit, Therese's temporary cure
 May 13 (Pentecost): The smile of the Virgin, Therese's cure
 July-August: Stay at Saint Ouen le Pin, on the property of Madame Fournet, Madame Guerin's mother
 Second half of August: Vacation at Alençon and surrounding area
 New Ministry of Jules Ferry
 The French occupy north Madagascar
 Expedition of Tonkin: Franco-Chinese War
 Alfred Loisy's biblical exegesis course in Paris
 Nietzsche: *Thus Spake Zarathustra*
 Renan: *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse*
 Construction of the first skyscraper in Chicago

The Tissander brothers' dirigible
The first electric energy distance transportation (Creil-Paris) by Deprey
Creation of the Orient Express Railroad

1884

May 8: Therese's first communion at the Abbey. Sister Agnes' profession in Carmel.
May 22 (Ascension Thursday): second communion
June 14: Therese is confirmed by Monsignor Hugonin, Bishop of Bayeux
August: Second stay at Saint-Ouen-le-Pin
October 3: Therese returns to school, first division (orange class); Mother Saint Leon is her teacher

The Naquet Law reestablishes divorce
The encyclical *Humanum Genus* by Leo XIII against secret societies and Freemasonry
First Salon of Independents in Paris
First film on rolls by Eastman
Perfection of the Kodak camera

1885

May 3-10: Vacation at the Villa Rose in Deauville
May 17-20: Retreat. Beginning struggle with scrupulosity
May 21: Solemn renewal of first communion
July-August: Third stay at Saint-Ouen-le-Pin
August 22 - early October: Monsieur Martin's trip to Constantinople
September: Vacation in Trouville, Villa Marie Rose, 25, rue Charlemagne
October 5: Therese enters the Abbey alone in division two (orange class)

Re-election of Jules Grevy
National funeral for Victor Hugo
Beginning of the labour movement
First pilgrimage to Rome led by Leon Harmel
Maupassant: *Bel Ami*
Zola: *Germinal*
Charcot's work on the functional centres of the brain
Incandescent lighting by Auer
Maxim invents the machine gun

1886

February-March: Therese leaves the Abbey and is tutored by Madame Papinau
July: Three day stay without Celine at Trouville, Villa Les Lilas (later to be called "Shower of Roses")
October 15: Marie enters the Lisieux Carmel
The end of October: Therese is freed from her scrupulosity
December 1: Leonie returns home after a six week attempt at religious life with the Poor Clares in Alençon
December 25: Christmas grace of conversion after midnight mass at Les Buissonnets

Boulangier, Minister of War
Martyrdom of Charles Lwanga and his companions in Uganda
Conversion of Leon Bloy, Charles de Foucauld, and Paul Claudel
Rimbaud: *Les Illuminations*
Drumont: *La France juive*
Pisarro: *Printemps à Eragny*
Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty (*La Liberté éclairant le monde*) inaugurated in New York

Hertz discovers electromagnetic waves
First electric lamp posts in Paris
Telephone connection between Paris and Brussels
First beet harvester by Bajac

1887

May 1: Monsieur Martin is afflicted with the first attack of arteriosclerosis
May 29 (Pentecost): Therese asks and obtains her father's permission to enter Carmel at fifteen
May 31: Reception into the Children of Mary at the Abbey
June 20-26: Stay at Trouville, Villa Les Lilas
July: Before the Crucified One, Therese becomes aware of the apostolic dimension of her life
July 13: Pranzini is condemned to death
July 16: Leonie enters the Carmel in Caen for the first time
September 1: Therese reads the account of Pranzini's execution and conversion in *La Croix*
October 31: Visit to Bishop Hugonin in Bayeux to obtain permission to enter Carmel
November 4: Departure for Paris and Rome with Monsieur Martin and Celine
November 20: Audience with Leo XIII. Therese presents her petition to the pope
December 2: Return to Lisieux
December 28: Bishop Hugonin authorizes Mother Marie de Gonzague to receive Therese

Birth of the expression 'Côte d'Azur'
Foundation of the Union of commerce and industry employees, first labour union created by the Brothers of the Christian Schools
Van Gogh: *Self-portrait*
Weismann proposes the chromosomic theory of heredity
Rudge's bicycle
Daimler perfects the internal combustion engine

1888

January 1: Therese is informed of Bishop Hugonin's response, but Sister Agnes of Jesus (Pauline) does not want her to enter in winter (during the penitential season)
April 9: Therese enters Carmel
May 28: General confession to Father Pichon
June 23: Monsieur Martin disappears in Le Havre
October 31: Monsieur Martin has a serious relapse at Le Havre

First Russian loan on the Paris stock exchange
Ordination of the first black priest in the United States
Barres: *Sous l'oeil des barbares*
Les Goncourt: *Germinie Lacertoux*
Gorski: *Les Rêves*
Gauguin: *Les Alyscamps*
Nansen's expedition to Greenland

1889

January 10: Therese receives the habit
February 12: Monsieur Martin is hospitalized at Bon Sauveur in Caen where he would remain for three years
July: Marian grace in the hermitage of Saint Magdalene
December 25: Termination of the lease for Les Buissonnets

Failure of Boulanger at the September elections
Military service of three years, seminarians are exempted
Institution of the driver's license
Institution of the feast of the Sacred Heart
Foundation of the Missionary Society of Saint Peter the Apostle, for indigenous clergy by Jeanne Bigard in Caen
First ecumenical meeting of Lord Halifax and Father Portal
Death of Father Damien, the leper, in Molokai (Hawaii)
Gauguin: *Autoportrait du Christ jaune*
Tchaikovsky: *Sleeping Beauty*
Opening of the Eiffel Tower
Marcelin Boule's geological classification
Brown-Sequard discover the role of glands in internal secretion

1890

September 2: Therese's canonical examination and the blessing of Leo XIII
September 8: Religious profession
September 24: Reception of the veil

In his "toast d'Alger," Cardinal Lavigerie calls Catholics to rally for the Republic
Father Lagrange founds the School of Biblical Studies in Jerusalem
Claudel: *Tête d'or*
Cezanne: *Les Joueurs de cartes*
Riva-Rocci: blood pressure cuff
Inauguration of the London subway
First flight of "Eole," Clement Ader's steam-powered airplane
Construction of the submarine "La Gynnote"

1891

Around February 10: Therese is appointed assistant sacristan to Sister Saint Stanislaus
April-July: Prayer for Father Hyacinthe Loyson
October 8-15: Retreat preached by Father Alexis Prou
December 5: Death of Mother Genevieve, foundress of the Carmel
The end of December: influenza epidemic

May 1: Fourmies: nine deaths
Creation of the Office of Labour
Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Leo XIII
Schleich uses ethyl chloride as an anesthetic
Pneumatic tire by Michelin

1892

May 10: Monsieur Martin, paralyzed in the legs, returns to Lisieux
May 12: Monsieur Martin's last visit to the parlour of the Carmel

Panama scandal
Work laws: exclude children under 13, limit the work day of those 13-16 to ten hours (eleven hours for women, twelve hours for men)
Bloy: *Le Salut par les juifs*
First reinforced concrete building by Hennebique (Paris, rue Danton)
Lorentz discovers electrons

1893

February 2: Therese composes her first poem
 February 20: Sister Agnes of Jesus is elected prioress. Therese assists Mother Marie de Gonzague, the new novice mistress, in the spiritual formation of her companions in the novitiate
 June 24: Leonie enters the Visitation in Caen for the second time
 September: Therese asks to remain in the novitiate. She is appointed assistant portress to Sister Raphael
 Panama Trial: Condemnation of Ferdinand de Lesseps
 Foundation of the first social secretariat in Lyon
 Dvorak: *New World Symphony*
 The first electric ovens
 Invention of the diesel engine

1894

January 2: Therese attains her majority
 She straightens her handwriting
 January 21: She plays the role of Joan of Arc in her first play
 Spring: Her throat begins to bother her
 June 16: Sister Marie of the Trinity enters Carmel
 July 29: Death of Monsieur Martin at the Chateau de la Musse (Eure)
 August: Therese resides henceforth in the cell of Saint Eliseus in the Saint Elias dormitory (corridor)
 September 14: Celine enters Carmel
 The end of 1894: Therese discovers the scriptural basis for what she would later call her Little Way
 May 8: National celebration in honour of Joan of Arc
 Assassination of Sadi Carnot. Election of Casimir Perier
 Votation of the laws against anarchists and the press
 First trial and condemnation of Dreyfus
 Joan of Arc is proclaimed 'venerable' on January 27
 Father Six founds the Christian Democracy in Lille France: *Le Jardin d'Epicure*
 Kipling: *The Jungle Book*

1895

Therese composes Manuscript A
 February 26: Therese composes the poem "To Live by Love"
 June 9: Therese is inspired to offer herself to merciful love
 June 11: Act of offering before the "Virgin of the Smile"
 June 14: Wound of love during the Way of the Cross
 July 20: Leonie leaves the Visitation
 August 15: Marie Guerin enters Carmel
 October 17: Therese is designated spiritual sister to Father Belliere
 Foundation of the Nobel Prize for peace
 Foundation of the Confederation generale de travail at the Congress of Limoges
 Encyclical *Provida Matris* by Leo XIII instituting a novena of prayer for the unity of Christians
 Valery: *La Soirée chez M Teste*
 Denis: *Les Pèlerins d'Emmaüs*
 Rouault: *Christ pleuré par les saintes femmes*
 Discovery of prehistoric paintings in the grotto of Eyzies
 Discovery of X-rays by Rongten
 Lumiere's "L'Arroseur arrosé"

1896

January 20: Therese gives Mother Agnes her notebook of memoirs (Manuscript A)
 February 24: Sister Genevieve's profession
 March 17: Sister Genevieve receives the veil. Marie Guerin (Sister Marie of the Eucharist) receives the habit
 March 21: Difficult election of Mother Marie de Gonzague as prioress after seven ballots. She entrusts to Therese the responsibility for the novices while retaining the title of Mistress of the novitiate
 Night of April 2-3 (Holy Thursday and Good Friday): First haemorrhage in her cell
 Shortly after Easter: Therese suddenly enters the night of faith
 May 30: Mother Marie de Gonzague gives Therese a second spiritual brother, Father Roulland of the foreign missions
 September 8: Therese writes Manuscript B (folios 2-5) addressed to Jesus himself
 Establishment of the prison at Cayenne
 Pierre de Coubertin reestablishes the Olympic Games in Athens
 Foundation of the first Trappist monastery in Japan
 Sienkiewicz: *Quo vadis?*
 Becquerel discovers radioactivity
 Freud formulates his first theory of psychoanalysis

1897

Early April: Therese falls seriously ill
 April 6: Mother Agnes begins to take down Therese's last words
 June 3: Mother Marie de Gonzague orders Therese to continue her autobiography. Therese writes Manuscript C.
 July 8: Therese moves into the infirmary
 July 30: Therese receives the last sacraments
 August 15-27: Period of great suffering
 August 19: Last communion
 Thursday, September 30, around 7:20pm: Therese dies
 October 4: Burial in the Lisieux cemetery
 Fire at the Bazar de la charite in Paris
 Bloy: *La Femme pauvre*
 Gide: *Les Nourritures terrestres*
 Loti: *Ramuntcho*
 Péguy: *Jeanne d'Arc*
 Rostand: *Cyrano de Bergerac*
 Construction of the Grand Palais and the Petit Palais in Paris
 Construction of the first movie studio by Melies
 Wireless telegraph is laid under the English Channel by Marconi

1898

September 30: First edition of *The Story of a Soul* (2000 copies)
 Zola: *l'accuse*
 Foundation of the League of the Rights of Man
 Legislation on work casualties
 Huysmans: *La Cathédrale*
 Lichtenberger: *Mon petit Trott*
 Pierre and Marie Curie announce the discovery of radium
 Magnetic recording of sound by Poulson: invention of the tape recorder
 First electric lamps with metallic filaments

1899

First favours and cures. Pilgrims come to pray at Sister Therese's tomb at the Lisieux cemetery
 Dreyfus' second trial: he is pardoned
 Max Planck presents the quantum theory in Berlin

1902

April 19: Mother Agnes is re-elected prioress. She will remain in office at the request of Pius XI (1923), with the exception of an eighteen-month interruption (1908-1909), until her death
 Combes, President of the Counsel Berger: the electro-encephalogram

1906

July 9: François Veuillot discloses in *L'Univers* that the Carmel is preparing to introduce Sister Therese's cause in Rome
 Failure of consecutive surveys on the law regarding the separation of church and state
 Catastrophe of Courrières, death of 1,100 miners
 Beatification of the Carmelites of Compiègne
 Death of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity, Carmelite of Dijon
 Claudel: *Partage de midi*

1907

March 15: Father Prevost gives Pius X a copy of *The Story of a Soul*
 October 15: Msgr Lemonnier, the new bishop of Bayeux, asks the Carmelites to write down their memories of Sister Therese
 Encyclical *Pascendi* by Pius X against Modernism
 Picasso: *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*
 August Lumiere invents colour photography

1908

May 26: The cure of Reine Fauquet, a four-year-old blind girl, at Therese's tomb
 Excommunication of Loisy
 First manifestation of cubism: Barque presents at Kahnweiler in Paris
 Modigliani: *Nu assis*
 Henry Farman: first closed circuit kilometre-length flight

1909

January: Father Rodrigue, ocd (Rome) and Father de Teil (Paris) are respectively appointed postulator and vice postulator of the Cause
 Beatification of Joan of Arc, April 18
 Creation of the "Nouvelle revue française" by Gide, Schlumberger, Copeau and Drouin, at Gallimard
 Aerial crossing of the English Channel by Louis Bleriot
 Peary reaches the North Pole

1910

August 3: Institution of the diocesan tribunal for the Ordinary Process
 September 6: First exhumation of Sister Therese's remains at the Lisieux cemetery; transfer to a new vault

Encyclical *Our Apostolic Responsibility* by Pius X against *Le Sillon*, the movement and journal of Marc Sangnier. After reading *An Unpetalled Rose*, Sangnier submits to the pontifical decision

1914

June 10: Pius X signs the decree to introduce the Cause

Declaration of war by Germany on France (August 30)
 Death of Pius X on August 20. Benedict XV succeeds him
 Barres: *La Grande Pitié des églises de France*
 Bloy: *Le Pèlerin de l'absolu*
 Bourget: *Le Démon de midi*
 Works of Adams and Wolf on the rotation of nebulous spirals

1915

March 17: Opening of the Apostolic Process in Bayeux
 The first use of asphyxiating gas by the Germans
 The work of Einstein on generalized relativity

1917

August 9-10: Second exhumation and official examination of Sister Therese's remains at the Lisieux cemetery
 Nivelles replaced by Petain. The beginning of military rebellions
 Clemenceau ministry
 Benedict XV promulgates the Code of Canon Law. He proposes his mediation in favour of a "white peace"
 Marian apparitions in Fatima
 Valéry: *La Jeune Parque*
 Langevin applies ultrasound to the war at sea

1921

August 14: Benedict XV promulgates the decree on the heroicity of the virtues of the Venerable Servant of God and gives a discourse on spiritual childhood
 Gheon: *Le Pantre sous l'escalier*
 Pirandello: *Six Characters in Search of an Author*
 Calmette and Guérin perfect the vaccine against tuberculosis

1923

March 26: Transfer of the relics to the Carmel
 April 29: Beatification of Sister Therese of the Child Jesus by Pius XI
 The Carmel receives 800 to 1,000 letters each day
 Creation of a seminary in Cameroon
 Romains: *Knoeb ou le Triomphe de la médecine*

Milhaud: *La Création du monde*
 Louis de Broglie: wave mechanics
 Citroën expedition to the Sahara

1925

May 17: Solemn canonization of Therese at Saint Peter's in Rome. Homily by Pius XI in the presence of 50,000 people. In the evening, 500,000 pilgrims press into the lit square
 Fall of the Herriot ministry
 Beatification of Bernadette Soubirous. Canonizations of John Eudes, Madeleine Sophie Barat and John Vianney
 Kafka: *The Trial*
 Riviere: *A la trace de Dieu*
 Unamuno: *L'Agonie du christianisme*

1927

January: The publication of the *Novissima Verba (Last Conversations)*
 July 13: The liturgical feast of Saint Therese is extended to the universal church
 September 21: Bishop Lemonnier approves the plans for the future basilica
 December 14: Pius XI proclaims Saint Therese, along with Saint Francis Xavier, the principle patroness of all missionaries
 Pius XI consecrates the first Japanese bishop for Nagasaki
 Mauriac: *Thérèse Desqueyroux*
 Proust: *Le Temps retrouvé*
 Abel Gance projects his film *Napoleon* on a triple screen at the Opera
 Lemaitre proposes the theory of the expansion of the universe
 Lindbergh crosses the ocean by plane

1929

September 30: Setting of the first stone of Lisieux basilica
 Black Thursday on Wall Street
 Lateran Accords
 Creation of the Vatican State
 Bernanos: *La Joie*
 Pagnol: *Marius*
 Fleming observes the antibiotic properties of penicillin

1937

July 11: Opening and blessing of the Lisieux basilica by Cardinal Pacelli, legate of the pope and the future Pius XII. The message of Pius XI is transmitted by radio
 Fall of the Blum ministry. Chautemps ministry
 Tenth anniversary of the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne in the Parc des Princes in Paris (July 17)
 Anouilh: *Le Voyageur sans bagage*
 Malraux: *L'Espoir*

1941

July 24: Foundation of the Mission of France with a seminary in Lisieux

Clandestine publication of the first notebook of *Temoignage chrétien*
 Death of Father Maximilian Kolbe at Auschwitz

1944

May 3: Pius XII names Saint Therese secondary patroness of France, along with Joan of Arc
 June 6: Landing of the Allied troops in Normandy. Lisieux is partially destroyed by the Allied bombings
 The first three brothers of Taizé begin to live a common life with Roger Schultz
 Camus: *Le Malentendu*
 Lecompte de Nouÿ: *La Destinée humaine*

1947

Fiftieth anniversary of the death of Saint Therese. Her reliquary is transported throughout the dioceses of France
 Father Combes gives a course on Therese to the Catholic faculties of Paris
 Ramadier ministry
 Wave of strikes, particularly in transportation
 General de Gaulle creates the Ressemblance du Peuple Français which is significantly successful in the municipal elections
 Canonizations of Catherine Laboure and Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort
 Camus: *The Plague*
 Montherlant: *Le Maître de Santiago*
 Marie-Noël: *Chants et psaumes d'automne*
 Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

1954

July 11: Consecration of the basilica in Lisieux
 Fall of Dien-Bien-Phu
 Geneva conference on Indochina
 Canonization of Pius X and Dominic Savio
 First arrest of priest-workers in France
 Beauvoir: *Les Mandarins*
 Fellini: *La Strada*
 First American atomic submarine

1956

Publication of the facsimile of the autobiographical manuscripts (restitution of *The Story of a Soul* according to the original)
 Publication of the single volume Jerusalem Bible
 First International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy
 Camus: *The Fall*
 Sister Marie Suzanne of the Missionaries of Mary discovers the vaccine against leprosy
 Production of nuclear energy at Marcoule

1980

June 2: Pilgrimage of John Paul II to Lisieux
 Assassination of Archbishop Romero of San Salvador
 Fifth Synod of Bishops on the Family
 Encyclical *Dives in misericordia* by John Paul II
 Marguerite Yourcenar is elected to the Académie française

GENEALOGY OF THERESE MARTIN

Pierre-François MARTIN (1777-1865) x Fanie BOUREAU (1800-1883)

Isidore GUERIN (1789-1868) x Louise-Jeanne MACE (1805-1859)

Marie-Louise GUERIN (1829-1877)
Sr. Marie-Dosithee
Visitation of Le Mans

Louis MARTIN (1823-1894) married in Alençon 13 July 1858 Azelie-Marie GUERIN (1831-1877)

Isidore GUERIN (1841-1909) married in Lisieux Elisa-Celine FOURNET
pharmacist in Lisieux 11 Sept 1866 (1847-1900)
(1866-1888)

Marie-Louise (1860-1940)
Therese's godmother
Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart
Carmel of Lisieux (1886)

Marie-Pauline (1861-1951)
Sr. Agnes, then Mother Agnes
Carmel of Lisieux (1882)

Marie-Leonie (1863-1941)
Sr. Françoise-Therese
Visitation of Caen (1899)

Marie-Helene (1864-1870)

Marie-Joseph (1866-1867)

Marie Jean-Baptiste (1867-1868)

Marie-Celine (1869-1959)
Sr. Genevieve of the Holy Face
Carmel of Lisieux (1894)

Marie-Melanie Therese (1870)

Marie-Françoise THERESE
(02 Jan 1873-30 Sept 1897)
Sr. Therese of the Child Jesus
and of the Holy Face
Carmel of Lisieux (1888)

Jeanne GUERIN x Dr. Francis LA NEELE (1858-1916)

Marie GUERIN
Sr. Marie of the Eucharist
Carmel of Lisieux (1895)

Paul, died at birth (1871) →

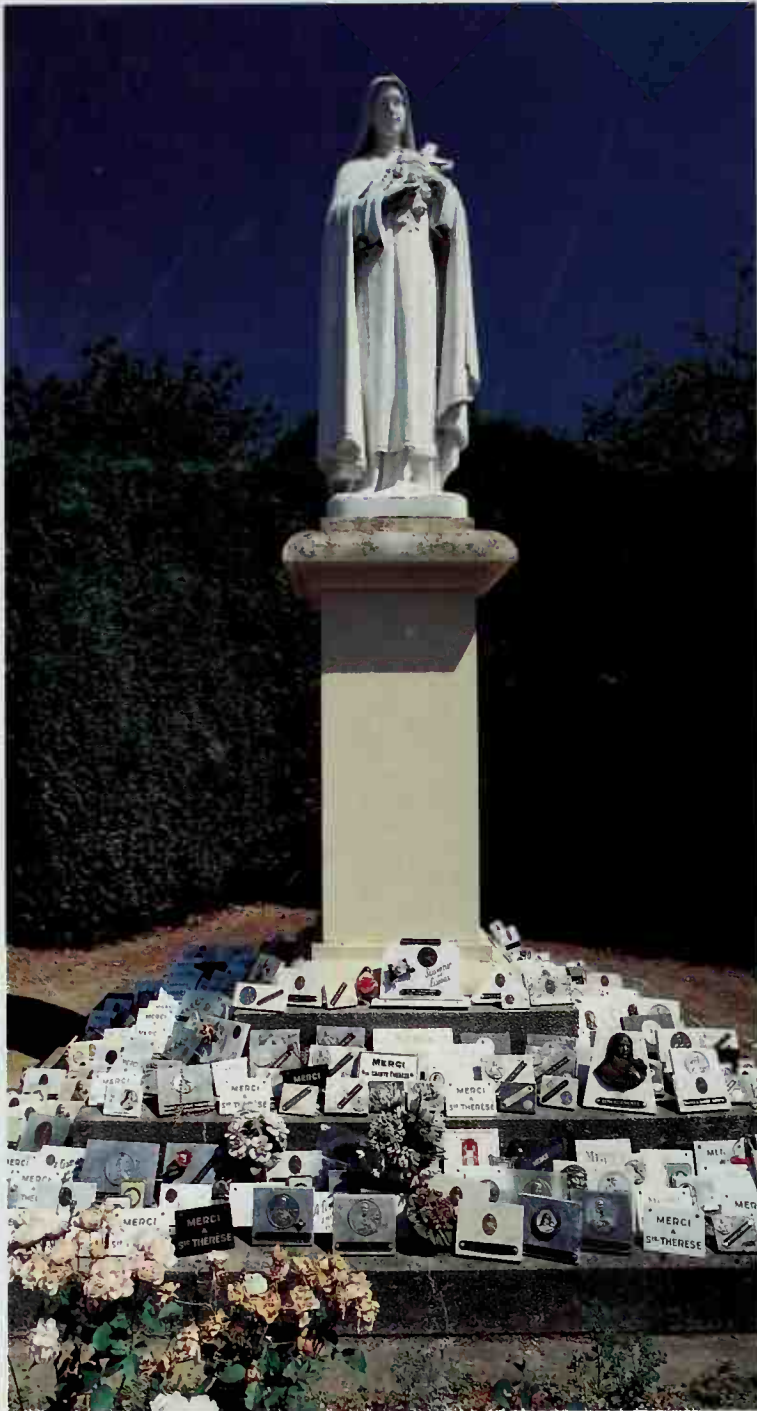


The Carmel and the Basilica

Therese's life in Carmel
her illness and death
her legacy

600 photo-documents
by Helmuth Nils Loose
commentary by Pierre Descouvemont





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