



**MISSIO-AVONA**  
THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES




## **The Patroness of the Mission and Missionaries**

### **The month of Mission**

The Month of October is the month dedicated for the Missions in the Catholic Church. The very first day of the month of October is dedicated to St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the Patroness of the missions and Missionaries.

### **The Family life of Thérèse**

The family of Louis Martin and Marie-Azelie in Alençon France were the first couple to be canonized saints by His Holiness Pope Francis (in 2015). The couple had eight children and at the very young age their four children passed away and were survived by four daughters. The new ninth girl child was called Marie Françoise- Thérèse Martin. She was born on 2nd January 1873. She was a sickly child and her mother was afraid that she might not survive. When she was four her mother Marie-Azelie died of breast cancer in the year 1877.



After the death of her mother she became very much dear to her father. He called her “my little queen”. Her sister Pauline took the place of her mother. All the five surviving daughters (Marie, Pauline, Leonidas, Céline) including Thérèse joined the convents and become religious nuns.


### **Religious Life of Thérèse**

On the Christmas day in the year 1886 Thérèse had a profound experience of God. In 1887 during the papal audience in Rome, she obtained a permission from Pope Leo XIII to enter the Carmelite Monastery at the age of fifteen. She took the religious name as Therese of the Child Jesus. In the convent she was a sacristan and she assisted the novice mistress.

She wrote in her autobiography entitled, “The story of a Soul” that she wanted to be a missionary, an apostle, a martyr but she was living a life of cloistered Carmelite, a life within the four walls. Here, she found that Love was the only thing that motivated every missionary, an apostle and a martyr to serve the Lord. She exclaimed, “my vocation is to Love”. In the convent she tried to live a holy life. Though the Life for the young girl was difficult yet she made every effort to be charitable.

### **Her Spirituality: Little way**

She discovered her spirituality to be a saint: “Little way”. That is, to do small things with great love. She became a missionary by her life, prayer and suffering which she offered to the missions.



On June 9, 1895 she was diagnosed with the symptoms of Tuberculosis. During the time of sickness, she underwent lot of faith trials but she overcame them with love and her little ways. She believed in to spend her heaven doing good on earth. She promised the showers of Roses from heaven. She breathed her last on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1898. She was only 24 years old.

**Canonization: the little flower of Jesus**

She was canonized on 17th May 1925 by Pope Pius XI. Pope John Paul called her a Doctor of the Church in 1997. In France she is known as “la petite Thérèse” (little Therese). In the English speaking countries as the Therese of child Jesus or the Little flower.

**Thought:** May her Little way of prayer, service, suffering and hoping help our Christian way of life.

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