
« MY VOCATION IS TO LOVE! »



It made 100 years on September 30 that St. Theresa of the Child Jesus - Thérèse Martin from Normandy, France - died in Lisieux, France, at the age of 24. One year before her death, she wrote the following: « *I have finally discovered my vocation: my vocation is to love. Yes, I have found my place in the Church. I shall be love, and in this manner I shall be everything, and my dream will have been fulfilled. I have understood that the Church has a heart, and that this heart is burning with love. I have understood that love alone could move the members of the Church to act, and that if love were to die, apostles would no longer proclaim the Gospel, and martyrs would refuse to shed their blood. I have understood that love contained all the vocations within itself, that love was everything, and that it encompasses all times and places: in other words, that love is everlasting.* »

« JUST FOR TODAY »

The following are a few lines from poems that Theresa composed, during her lifetime: « *My life is but an instant, a passing hour. My life is a moment that escapes me and flees. You know, O Lord, that I have but today to love you on earth. I love you Jesus, my soul longs for you. Just for this day be you my loving support. Reign over my heart, smile upon me, just for today. I do not care if the future is bleak: I cannot pray for what has not yet come. Maintain a pure heart in me, keep me in the shadow of your presence, just for today. If I dream of tomorrow I fear being fickle; I feel growing in me sadness and loneliness. I no longer fear the enemy's guiles, but give me a place in your heart, just for today.* » Theresa had understood that each day was a divine gift: « *One day at a time, just for today.* » As it was true in the past, so is it, today.

« STORY OF A SOUL »

Saint Theresa has left her mark on us because of her youth, her spirituality, and her concern for the world. The following are words taken from her autobiography: *Story of A Soul*, a book over 250 pages long, that was translated in numerous languages and has had a long printing history: « *There is nothing fertile on earth that has not undergone suffering, physical suffering, private anguish, trials known to God only or to everyone.* » « *I have never given God anything but love. and love He shall return to me. After my death I shall send own a shower of roses. What attracts me is love. To love and be loved, and to return to earth to have Love be loved!* »

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Theresa of the Child Jesus is very close to the youth of today. During the World Youth Day in Paris, in August, when Pope John Paul II announced that he would proclaim her a doctor of the Church on October 19, his long-expected announcement was greeted with thunderous applause. « *A Carmelite and an apostle, a master of spiritual wisdom to many consecrated and lay people, patron saint of missions, St. Theresa occupies a special place in the Church. Her eminent doctrine deserves to be taught as a most profitable one.* » And the Pope continued: « *The message of St. Theresa, of such a young saint so close to our time suits you to a "t," young people of today. Schooling you in the Gospel, she calls you to boundless generosity.* » She was but twenty-four years old when she died, but what strides she made during her short lifetime, and what a legacy she has left us!

Theresa, poor and humble, has pointed out to us the path of spiritual childhood, the path of those who fully trust in God as in their Father.

BISHOP TROY RESIGNS

On September 22 Pope John Paul II accepted the resignation of Bishop Edward Troy of Saint John, for health reasons. Born on September 3, 1931, Bishop Troy has just turned 61; he was ordained a priest May 28, 1959 and a bishop May 22, 1984. Throughout his episcopal ministry Bishop Troy was fully devoted to his people of the Saint John diocese, and he was a man of great generosity. He was a zealous defender of life and truth, and he was among the most active members of the Canadian Bishops' Conference, the Atlantic Bishops' Conference, and the Canadian Catholic Health Association. I want to express all the admiration and friendship I have for him; my prayers go with him and my hope is that his retirement be most beneficial to him.

DAY OF PRAYER

Please note that every first Thursday of the month is a day of prayer at the Diocesan Centre. Mass is celebrated at 8:30 A.M. followed by adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 11:30. All are welcome to this activity, to pray especially for vocations, to give thanks, and to intercede for our Church.

RETURN TO OUR ROOTS

For nearly twenty years now the Diocesan Centre was a beautiful place where closed retreats were held under the direction of the Oblate Fathers. This work was dear to the heart of Bishop M.-Antoine Roy, our first bishop. We would like to redo our ties with this past by inaugurating a new retreat service. So, during the course of the year, eleven retreats [In French] will be offered to women October 3, 4, and 5, to young people October 24 and 25, and February 13, 14, and 15; to couples November 14, 15, and 16 and May 22, 23, and 24; to everyone, on the subject of suffering, March 20, 21, and 22; on vocations, March 27, 28, and 29; to men only, April 9, 10, and 11; to divorced and separated persons, April 17, 18, and 19; to consecrated persons, May 1, 2, and 3; and to senior citizens, May 29, 30, and 31. For more information or registration, please call the Centre at (506) 735-5578. Trinitarian Father Yvon Samson will be the retreat facilitator. These will be good opportunities for spiritual renewal.

Have a good week.

+ François Thibodeau

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Bishop of Edmundston

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