

PRAYER

O Lord, You have said: Unless you become as a little child, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven; grant us, we beseech You, so to walk in the footsteps of your blessed Virgin Thérèse with a humble heart, that we may attain to everlasting rewards: who lived and reigned the world without end. Amen.



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SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

Special Veneration



PATRONESS OF THE MISSIONS

*St. Callistus Community at
Christ Cathedral
September 18 & 19, 2013*

VENERATION OF THE RELIC OF ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX

We have come to know and love St. Thérèse of Lisieux through her profound writings. On her humble, wooden writing desk (écritoire) she composed her spiritual masterwork, “Story of a Soul,” along with 7 of her 8 plays, 47 of her 62 poems, 95 of her 266 letters – including those to the two missionaries with whom she corresponded — and 16 of her 21 prayers. Now considered a special relic of St. Thérèse, the writing desk was used almost daily by her from 1894 until her death and is here before us today for our veneration. It is the first time ever the Carmelite Sisters have allowed this relic of “the Little Flower of Jesus” outside their convent in France where St. Thérèse lived and died. During this Year of Faith, the Sisters specially requested that we focus on this desk alone. By doing so, her writings through which she taught about the faith and supported missionaries in their efforts are emphasized.

October 1 is the feast day of St. Thérèse of Lisieux and, properly fitting, also the beginning of World Mission Month. St. Thérèse wanted very much to leave her convent in France and be sent on mission, specifically to Vietnam. However, her poor health and battles with tuberculosis prevented her from making that journey, but not from being a missionary. Determined not only to love God herself, but also to lead others to know and love Him, St. Thérèse offered her prayers and her own sufferings for missionaries around the world. In 1927, she was declared co-patron with St. Francis Xavier of all missionaries and the Missions, thus

emphasizing the important role we all share as missionaries through prayer and sacrifice. From making that journey, but not from being a missionary. Determined not only to love God herself, but also to lead others to know and love Him, St. Thérèse offered her prayers and her own sufferings for missionaries around the world. In 1927, she was declared co-patron with St. Francis Xavier of all missionaries and the Missions, thus emphasizing the important role we all share as missionaries through prayer and sacrifice. “The life of St. Thérèse offers a lesson for each of us, baptized into the continuing mission of Jesus,” said Father Andrew Small, OMI (National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States). “She was a missionary in a very real and valid way without ever leaving the Carmel in Lisieux — through her prayers, the offering of her personal sufferings to the Lord, and her devotion to the Eucharist.” When we celebrate World Mission Sunday (the third Sunday of every October) let us share the love of God with everyone as St. Thérèse passionately continues to do.

Experiencing her relic serves not only as a reminder of who St. Thérèse of Lisieux was, but more importantly as an opportunity to encounter St. Thérèse — the “Little Flower of Jesus,” “Doctor of the Church,” spiritual master, and missionary. As we venerate we are challenged to reflect on her life. Through the movement of the Holy Spirit within St. Thérèse, she exemplifies how we are to be instruments of God, both in the present and the future.

VENERATION OF THE RELIC OF ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

WHAT ARE RELICS?

A relic is something connected with or once belonging to a saint or blessed. There are three different classes of sacred relics. First-class is a part of a saint's body (i.e. bone, flesh, or hair). A second-class relic is considered an item that a saint wore, owned, or used frequently (i.e. St. Thérèse's writing desk). A third-class relic refers to an item that touched a first-class relic such as a cloth or paper. Despite the distinctions, the kind or size of the relic is not what matters. What is important is the faith and prayer which it inspires.

WHY VENERATE RELICS?

The veneration of relics is an ancient custom, but not because they contain any magical or special powers. The Council of Trent (16th century) taught "the holy bodies of the holy martyrs and of the others who dwell with Christ... are to be honored by the faithful." By venerating relics we honor and form deeper connections with the saints bringing us closer to Christ.

According to Fr. William Saunders, "to venerate the relics of the saints is a profession of belief in several doctrines of the Catholic faith: (1) the belief in everlasting life for those who have obediently witnessed to Christ and His Holy

Gospel here on earth; (2) the truth of the resurrection of the body for all persons on the last day; (3) the doctrine of the splendor of the human body and the respect which all should show toward the bodies of both the living and the deceased; (4) the belief in the special intercessory power which the saints enjoy in heaven because of their intimate relationship with Christ the King; and (5) the truth of our closeness to the saints because of our connection in the communion of saints — we as members of the Church militant or pilgrim Church, they as members of the Church triumphant." (Saunders, Rev. William. "Church Teaching on Relics." Arlington Catholic Herald.)



St. Thérèse of Lisieux's writing desk (écritoire),



UNITING OUR HEARTS WITH ST. THÉRÈSE

During veneration you are invited to write your name on a card that will be provided. With intentions and intercessions in mind, hold this card up against your hearts in prayer. Then carefully set the card on top of her writing desk. Father Andrew Small stated, "This simple act is a way for pilgrims to unite their hearts with those of St. Thérèse and to place all their hopes and sorrows in heaven with her." When the relic is returned to the Carmelite Convent in Lisieux, France, Fr. Andrew will personally carry your cards, entrusted with your cares and hopes to the intercession of St. Thérèse, so that they may be placed at her tomb.



LOCATION & SCHEDULE

LOCATION:

Veneration will take place in the Large Gallery at Christ Cathedral

SCHEDULE:

Wednesday, September 18

12:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Daily Mass at 5:30 PM (Vietnamese)

Thursday, September 19

6:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Daily Mass: 6:30 AM (English) &

8:00 AM (English)

Fr. Andrew Small, OMI and Msgr. Robert Fuhrman from the Pontifical Mission Societies will be present at this 8:00 AM Mass for the conclusion of the veneration.

Please note during daily Masses open veneration will not be available.