Under the Veil of the Virgin:

The Gradually Developing Relationship of
Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face to
The Blessed Virgin Mary

by

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<td>ACL</td>
<td>Archives du Carmel de Lisieux. (Lisieux Carmel Archives).</td>
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<td>AL</td>
<td>Annales de sainte Thérèse de Lisieux (revue). (Annals of St. Thérèse of Lisieux).</td>
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<td>CE I, etc.</td>
<td>Copie des Ecrits, 1910 (CE I, II, III, IV). (Copy of the Writings, 1910).</td>
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<tr>
<td>CF</td>
<td>Correspondance familiale, Lettres de Zélie Martin (1863-1877). (Family Correspondence, Letters from Zélie Martin, 1863-1877).</td>
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<tr>
<td>CG I</td>
<td>Correspondance générale, Tome I, 1972 General Correspondence, volume I, 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG II</td>
<td>Correspondance générale, Tome II, 1974 General Correspondance, volume II, 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChrI G</td>
<td>Cahier de M. Isidore Guérin, contenant des généalogies et chronologies de sa famille. (Copybook of M. Isidore Guérin, containing his family genealogy and chronology).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJ</td>
<td>&quot;Carnet jaune&quot; de Mère Agnès de Jésus. (&quot;Yellow notebook&quot; of Mother Agnès of Jesus).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMG I, etc.</td>
<td>Carnets manuscrits de sœur Geneviève (CMG I, II III, IV). (Manuscript Notebooks of Sister Geneviève).</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCL</td>
<td>Documentation du Carmel de Lisieux. (Lisieux Carmel's Documentation).</td>
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DE/G Derniers Entretiens recueillis par soeur Geneviève. (Last Conversations set down by Sister Geneviève).

DE/Meu Derniers Entretiens recueillis par soeur Marie de l'Eucharistie. (Last Conversation set down by Sister Marie of the Eucharist).

DE/MSC Derniers Entretiens recueillis par soeur Marie du Sacré-Coeur. (Last Conversations set down by Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart).

G/NPHF Soeur Geneviève, Notes préparatoires à l'Histoire d'une Famille. (Sister Geneviève, Preparatory Notes for The Story of a Family).

Ha 98, etc. Histoire d'une âme, édition 1898 (07 = 1907; 53 = 1953). (Story of a Soul, 1898 edition).

IM Imitation de Jésus-Christ. (Imitation of Christ).

LC Lettres des correspondants de Thérèse. (Letters from Thérèse's correspondents).

LD Lettres diverses des correspondants entre eux. (Diverse letters from the correspondents).

LT Lettres de Thérèse (Letters from Thérèse).


LTS Lettres supplémentaires de Thérèse. (Supplementary letters from Therese).

Ms A Manuscrit autobiographique dédié à Mère Agnès de Jésus (1895). (Autobiographical manuscript dedicated to Mother Agnes of Jesus, 1895).

Ms B Lettre à soeur Marie du Sacré-Cœur, manuscript autobiographique (1896). (Letter to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, Autobiographical manuscript, 1896).

Ms C Manuscrit autobiographique dédié à Mère Marie de Gonzague (1897). (Autobiographical manuscript dedicated to Mother Marie de Gonzague).
Mss I, etc.


(Three volumes of P. François de Sainte-Marie, accompanying the facsimile edition (1956) of the *Autobiographical Manuscripts*).

N

NPPA
Notes préparatoires au Procès Apostolique.
(Preparatory notes for the Apostolic Process).

NPPO
Notes préparatoires au Procès de l'Ordinaire.
(Preparatory notes for the Bishop's Process).

OCL
Office Central de Lisieux (Maison d'éditions).
(Central Office of Lisieux, publishing house).

P
*Poésies de sainte Thérèse de l'Enfant-Jésus (numérotation de Mss I).*
(Poems of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, according to the Mss I numbering).

PA
Procès Apostolique, 1915-1916 (d'après Sum II).
(Apostolic Process, 1915-1916, according to the second volume of the Summary).

PN
*Poésies...numerotation nouvelle.*
(Poems, new numbering).

PO
Procès de l'Ordinaire, 1910-1911 (d'après sum II).
(The Bishop's Process, 1910-1911, according to the second volume of the summary).

PS
"*Poésies supplémentaires*" de sainte Thérèse de l'Enfant-Jésus.
(supplementary Poems of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus).

RP
"Recreations pieuses" de sainte Thérèse de l'Enfant Jésus (numérotation de Mss I).
("Pious Recreations" of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, according to the Mss. I numbering).

VT
*Vie Thérésienne, Lisieux* (revue).
(Therésian Life, Lisieux).

VTL
*Visage de Thérèse de Lisieux* (1961), en deux volumes.*
(Face of Thérèse of Lisieux (1961), in two volumes).
Specific writing on the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face seems to make its first appearance after her canonization in 1925. St. Therese did not write a formal theological treatise on the Blessed Virgin. Rather, her thoughts on the Virgin are contained in her autobiography, letters, poems, dramatic pieces, other minor writings, and the recollection of those who lived with her. Her first commentators extracted her marian themes from her then available writings, but seemed to ignore her own principles of internal coherence and judgments concerning her thought on the Virgin. That is to say, St. Therese depended on the Gospels for her knowledge of Mary when she wrote and spoke to others about her. She reacts to the Gospel scenes and these Gospel scenes form the basis of that part of her spirituality that could be called marian.

The disadvantage that these commentators had is that the authentic theresian texts were not available. On her death bed, St. Therese had entrusted to her natural sister, Mere Agnes de Jesus, the editing of her works. In 1947, the fiftieth anniversary of her death, Mere Agnes turned over to Abbe Combes most of the writings of St. Therese in order for them to be examined systematically. In 1956, the Office Central de Lisieux published the authentic writings of the autobiography and other texts. Meanwhile most of the writers commenting on the marian themes of St. Therese tended to ignore her own principles of interpretation. However, one commentator recalled readers of St. Therese to re-examine her principles of interpretation.
interpretation. One of the most important articles to appear on this subject is a textual criticism of her last poem, "Pourquoi je t'aime, o Marie." It is an exacting interpretation according to Therese's own principles. The most recent article examines the complete works of St. Therese; the first part comments on her marian doctrine, piety and devotion; the second and third parts explore her marian love, imitation and mystical experience.

Specific Problem on the Question

Therefore what could I hope to contribute to the corpus of literature concerning the role of the Blessed Virgin in the life of St. Therese? By entitling my thesis "Under the Veil of the Virgin" I wanted to stress 1) the gradual development and 2) the decidedly evangelical cast of the marian dimension of Therese's entire life. Therese discovered Mary in the Gospels; but, this discovery developed gradually. At first, she "had not discovered the treasures hidden in the Gospels." But as her spiritual life developed, the Gospels revealed to her "new lights, hidden and mysterious meanings." Eventually, the Gospels became the only spiritual book she read. Therese's appreciation of the role of Mary emerged from the Gospels. At the end of her life, she wanted to hear a sermon on Mary only if it could give proofs of her real life from the Gospels, a life "lived by faith just like ourselves." What I

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3A. Combes "Marie pour St. Thérèse de Lisieux," (Divinitas, 14, 1970), 75-124.
4PN 54
5V. Blat, "La espiritualidad mariana de Teresa de Lisieux," (Ephemerides Mariologicae, 33, Madrid, 1983), 5-95.
6Ms A 47r
7Ms A 83v
8CJ 21.VIII.3
hope to add to the corpus of theresian studies is to demonstrate 1) the gradual
development of and 2) evangelical cast of the role of Mary in the life of St. Therese.

Methodology

Usually, when Therese wrote anything, for example, her autobiography or her poems, she did so at the request of someone else, either out of obedience to a superior or in response to fraternal charity. Thus, the genesis of her writings already reflect a marian attitude of obedience and discipleship, of hearing the word of another and responding to it with all her heart. Accordingly, a chronology of selected marian texts culled from the writings either about or by Therese appear as an appendix.

An analysis of these writings will proceed by asking two questions: 1) what did Therese receive?; and 2) what did she do with what she received? Chapter one will consider what Therese received from others concerning Mary. From above, Therese received the grace of her Christmas conversion and the apparition of the Virgin of the Smile. From below, she was influenced by her parents and family, her schooling and Carmel. Chapter Two deals with what Therese did with what she received. This includes her teaching on the Little Way and her final poem on Mary.

Chapter three will attempt to synthesize this gradual development of the appropriation of Mary within the life of St. Therese. It seeks to answer the question: What could this mean? By using the insights of Cardinal Martini, Father Navone, S.J., Father Dulles S.J., and Father Buby, S.M., I hope to show this gradual development's evangelical cast. Finally, some conclusions will be drawn about the originality of Therese who has been considered both "a living word of God,"9 and a "ravishing miniature of the Blessed Virgin."10

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Introduction to Chapter One

Chapter One concerns itself with what Therese received. The first half treats, among other things, her Christmas conversion, the marian apparition and her parents. Chronologically, her mother died on August 27, 1877; Mary appeared to Therese on May 13, 1883; her Christmas conversion occurred that midnight, 1886; she understood the meaning of the marian apparition on 4 November 1887. By pairing parent and event, that is, 1) Therese's relationship with her father and her Christmas conversion, 2) her relationship with her mother and the Smile of the Virgin, I hope to illuminate from these sources the emerging role of Mary in the life of Therese. The second half of the chapter concentrates on her external formation, at first in a general way and then its specific marian characteristics.

Childhood: overcoming self love.

Therese's contemporary, Charles Peguy (1873-1914), was speaking about her, too, when he said that a human destiny is rooted in a soil, an epoch, a family, and is dependent upon an heredity and a history. Therese did not descend from heaven like an angel, but was born on Norman soil, dependent on her ancestors and her country. Like everyone else, she is a product of her education and environment. Therese began her life among the middle class of late nineteenth century France. Her father was a clock maker and jeweller; her mother a lacemaker; both considered fanatics in their day for being so strictly observant in their religious practices. After both having considered religious life, they abandoned the idea; they met; they married; they lived together at first as brother and sister until Zelie persuaded

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Louis' confessor to change his mind.\textsuperscript{12} The last of nine children was Marie Francoise Therese Martin, born 2 January 1873, baptized 4 January, and sent out to be nursed by Rose Taille until 2 April 1874 because her own mother had breast cancer, from which she was to die 28 August 1877. Nonetheless, good parents, a good home and a good education do not mean that one will imbibe the faith lived there. It could always remain exterior, enigmatic, and extraneous. Within this environment, Therese learned how to overcome her self-love and to clarify some confused ideas about God, a God whom she may have confused with her own father, and others who showed her the way to Him.

As an infant, held tightly in her mother's arms, Therese feared nothing, convinced that through her saintly mother, God would look favorably on her, too.\textsuperscript{13} Therese quoted from letters such as these in order to explain her early life. There was an idea in her little head that if she owned up to something, she would be the more readily forgiven.\textsuperscript{14} Once, her father demanded a kiss from his "little Queen", but Therese refused him. Her eldest sister, Marie, scolded her, and Therese cried until she was reconciled with her father. "I could not stand the thought of having offended my beloved parents. Acknowledging my faults was the work of an instant..." Yet such a need to be forgiven, such a desire to be reconciled may not be the result of faith born of religious love\textsuperscript{15}, but rather it may be polishing the idol of self, rubbed with the pride of self-perfection.

\textsuperscript{12}Ulanov, B. The Making of a Modern Saint. (Garden City, N. Y.:Doubleday, 1966), 13-22.

\textsuperscript{13}Ms A 5v, quoting from Zelie Martin's letter to her daughter, Pauline.

\textsuperscript{14}Ms A 5v

Without appearing to do so, she paid close attention to what was said and done around her.\textsuperscript{16} She looked up to her parents and sisters, but it was Celine, her nearest sister, who was her soul-friend and was to remain as such throughout her life, even though as children they argued during their games of blocks. But Therese goes deeper than her mother's letters and the superficial memories of childhood games when she comments: "There was another fault I had when wide-awake, which Mamma doesn't mention in her letters, and this was an excessive self-love."\textsuperscript{17} She would not kiss the ground for a sou and wanted her arms bare because it would be more pretty: pride and vanity lodged within her. Yet, this excessive self-love was mingled with the love of good, as she was called out of darkness into marvelous light. As soon as she began to think seriously, which she did when she was very little, "it was enough for one to say a thing wasn't good and I had no desire to repeat it twice."\textsuperscript{18}

An incident that sums up her "whole life" was the choice she made of Leonie's toys; she, thinking she was too old to play with dolls, came up to Celine and Therese and offered them her collection: "Here, choose." Celine had a look and took a ball of braid. Therese considered for a moment; then exclaiming: "I choose all!" snatched the basket and doll and everything.\textsuperscript{19} This story grasps the very human inner weakness of Therese's nature. In seizing the basket, she displayed a rapacity, an egoism, a spirit of conquest, in a word, an imperialism of quite remarkable energy.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{16}Ms A 4v
  \item \textsuperscript{17}Ms A 8r
  \item \textsuperscript{18}Ms A 8v
  \item \textsuperscript{19}Ms A 10r/10v
\end{itemize}
that would one day have to be given an entirely new direction.\textsuperscript{20} A limitless will to power was written all over her.\textsuperscript{21} She would have to saddle it like a bronco on a mustang.

**Her Father: Distinguishing Papa from "Papa-God"

But the happiness of childhood ended with her mother's death.\textsuperscript{22} Now, her father became her support, his heart filled with a maternal love after his wife's death. She walked with her father on his visits to the Blessed Sacrament; he drank her potions of seed and bark and admired her altars built in the garden: "How can I express the tenderness with which Papa showered his Queen."\textsuperscript{23} Going fishing with her father, she would leave his company and be engaged in real prayer.\textsuperscript{24} The prayerful attitude of the father passed into the daughter. Yet, at the Sunday sermon she looked at her father more frequently than at the preacher, "for his handsome face said so much to me."\textsuperscript{25} At the end of the Lord's day, the Martin family gathered for Compline. "The little Queen was alone near her king, having only to look at him to see how the saints pray."\textsuperscript{26}

I cannot say how much I loved Papa; everything in him caused me to admire him. In the bottom of my heart I was happy that it was only myself who knew Papa well, for if he became the king of France

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Henri Ghéon, *The Secret of the Little Flower*, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1934), 41. [Ghéon]
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ms A 12v
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ms A 14v
\item \textsuperscript{24} Ms A 14v
\item \textsuperscript{25} Ms A 17v
\item \textsuperscript{26} Ms A 18r
\end{itemize}
and Navarre, I knew he wouldn't be happy because this is the lot of
monarchs; but above all he would no longer be my king alone. 27

Such happiness was disturbed by a prophetic vision of the future sufferings of a
mental collapse her father was to endure. 28 This vision helped her to make the
distinction between Papa and "Papa God." For Therese idolized her Father. Indeed,
her own father helped her to realize the goodness of her Father in heaven but still
she needed to make the distinction between them.

Her five years (1881-1886) as a day boarder at the Benedictine Abbey were very
unhappy. Well prepared by Pauline she outranked the other girls her age; placed
with older girls, one of them became jealous and persecuted her and made her pay
in a thousand ways for her little successes. 29 She did not know how to play at
other children's games. Rather, her joy was the intermittent joys of home. For
example, when Celine began to prepare for First Communion, Therese joined her,
in reforming her life and making amends. Her deepest sorrows were again from
home, especially when Pauline left for Carmel. 30 During this time a strange
sickness came over her and her father thought his little girl was going crazy because
she suffered from hallucinations: her father's hat, for example, was transformed into
an indescribably dreadful shape: she showed such great fear at the sight of it, that
her Father left the room sobbing. On May 13, 1883, she was cured through the
ravishing smile of Our Lady. 31 Not only was her body tried but her soul as well,

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27 Ms A 21r/21v
28 Ms A 19v/20r
29 Ms A 22v
30 Ms A 25v
31 Ms A 27r-31r

8
for after the cure she became sick with scruples.\textsuperscript{32} She would confide the burden of such a tyranny to Marie, her eldest sister, feel peace for a moment but once again they would return.\textsuperscript{33} But Marie, too, left for Carmel and her soul felt keenly the separation.\textsuperscript{34}

Her aunt tried to console her by taking her to the sea-side where the pleasurable impression of compliments on her looks showed her how much she was filled with self-love.\textsuperscript{35} She also tried to imitate her cousin who was cuddled when she complained of headaches. Therese did the same but was not pampered like a child but rather chided as an adult, for headaches were considered the result of a guilty conscience.\textsuperscript{36} No longer able to confide in Marie about her scruples, Therese turned toward heaven, to her two brothers and two sisters, who died in infancy. She held dialogues with them about the sadness of her exile and of her desire for the Fatherland.\textsuperscript{37} Therese tried to do things around the house but she was unaccustomed to housework. She tried to do these things for God alone but cried if no one thanked her. "I really was unbearable because of my extreme touchiness."\textsuperscript{38}
The Grace of the Christmas Conversion.

It was on December 25, 1886, that she received the grace of leaving her childhood, or as she says "the grace of my complete conversion." Therese was to leave behind the idol of self-perfection and her confused ideas about God. He worked a miracle to make her grow up in an instant. On that night she began the third period of her life, "the most beautiful and the most filled with graces from heaven." Therese could not achieve her own salvation. The work that she had not been able to do in ten years was done by Jesus in an instant, contenting himself with good will, which was never lacking on her part. Therese simply describes her conversion as charity entering her soul, the need to forget self and to please others. The source of her tears dried up. It was for Therese an experience of the "mystery of love and awe, remaining within the subjectivity as a vector, an undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness."

Yet in her own way she tried to objectify it and the language with which she describes it is important: "Jesus, who reveals the delight of the Trinity, the gentle little child, subject to weakness and suffering for love of me"--("see that Babe in the lowly manger, he's gonna take all my sins away")--"made me strong and courageous,...walking from victory to victory...running as a giant...never defeated in combat." She knew she was loved in heaven, by her dead brothers

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30 Ms A 45r
31 Ms A 45v
32 Ms A 45v
33 Lonergan, 133.
34 Ms A 44v/45r
and sisters because of this peace which flooded her soul, a peace she attributed to
their intercession. 

But "that charity which flooded her soul" is the utmost in self-transcendence
and man's self-transcendence is ever precarious. There now accrued to Therese
"the power of love to enable [her] to accept suffering involved in undoing the effects
of decline." Therese's religious conversion transformed her into a "subject held,
grasped, possessed, owned through a total and so other-worldly love." 

The incident Therese related immediately after the grace of her Christmas
conversion bears out that she both began to conquer her self-love and to clarify her
ideas on God as distinct from her own father. As usual, she had put out her shoes
in the hearth, as Celine wanted to continue her custom and to treat Therese like a
baby. Her father always enjoyed this happiness for Therese, but as she went
upstairs that night she heard her father say as he looked at the shoes "with words
that pierced me to the heart: 'Well, fortunately this will be the last year.'" Tears
came to her eyes, Celine cautioned her not to go downstairs, but "Jesus had changed
her heart." Fighting back her tears, she took the slippers in front of Papa, and,
with the appearance of a little Queen, made her old king laugh. Celine could not
believe her eyes. "Fortunately, it was a sweet reality. Therese had discovered once
again the strength of soul that I had lost at the age of four and a half and she was
to preserve it forever." She had learned from that Child in the manger that all

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her troubles arose from self-sufficiency and self-esteem, from a vainglorious concern about her own reactions and the inordinate value she put on herself.\textsuperscript{50}

Soon after her Christmas conversion, on a Sunday, a picture of Our Lord on the Cross slipped out of her missal. She was resolved to remain in spirit at the foot of the Cross, bedewed with his blood.\textsuperscript{51} Her faith was no longer exterior, enigmatic, extraneous, but interior; she confessed: "Truly this is the Son of God" (Mk. 15:38) in her heart.

This conversion made her experience a great desire to work for the conversion of sinners, a desire she had not felt so intensely before. He made her a fisher of souls. Her "first child" was Pranzini, a barefaced and bestial ruffian, sentenced to death. There was not a single redeeming feature about him. Therese did not want him to die impenitent, so she redoubled her prayers and her efforts at mortification, in order to obtain his conversion. She told Celine, and both of them joined in prayer and waited for a sign. The sign was not long in coming. She read in La Croix the sign she hoped for: he seized the crucifix the priest was holding out to him and kissed the wounds three times.\textsuperscript{52} She was overjoyed at the sight of divine mercy toward sinners.

Likewise, in an important parable of the foreseeing love of the Father, described below, Therese delicately nuanced her own conversion and how, in one sense, she kissed the wounds of the Crucified that Christmas night. A child, the son of a doctor, having tripped over a stone and having broken his leg, would be more than thankful for the healing acts of his father; but if that same father knew beforehand that his son would trip over that stone and, by his foreknowledge, removed that

\textsuperscript{50}Gheon, 99.

\textsuperscript{51}Ms A45v

\textsuperscript{52}Ms A 46r

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stonewood, would not the son, learning of this action, be even more grateful for the loving attention of his father? In the same way, Therese saw herself, even with the obstacles to grace removed from her path in advance by her heavenly Father, as a sinner who had been forgiven not much, but all. Thus, could she love God more than a Magdalene. After the grace of her Christmas conversion, Therese felt she had become a new creation: "When I think of the past, my soul overflows with gratitude when I see the favors received from heaven. They have made such a change in me that I don't recognize myself." She adds, "at the beginning of my spiritual life when I was thirteen or fourteen....I asked myself what would I have to strive for later on because I believed it was quite impossible for me to understand perfection better."

However, she was to understand perfection better, smelted in the crucible of suffering. In a picture of her holding against her breast images of the Holy Face and the Child Jesus taken in 1897, Therese smiles reservedly, gently, serenely, casting a thin veil over the face of one who is strong, tough and obstinate, imperative and victorious, who knows what she wants, who will want it until death, and will not yield an inch from having her own way. Yet holiness can be grafted on to pride, just as grace is grafted on to nature; the last end of holiness is not so much renunciation of the human personality as the possession of God. In the end, her spirit clarified by instruction, by prayer and the Holy Spirit, she willed holiness

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53Ms A 38v/39r
54Ms A 43r
56Ms A 74r
56Gheon, 42.
57Ibid., 62.
wholeheartedly; but before it opened its gates, Heaven was to crush her with all the weight of love.\textsuperscript{58}

The grace of this Christmas conversion at Midnight Mass, 1886, it seem, enabled Therese to understand the apparition of the Smiling Virgin on May 13, 1883, at the Church of Notre-Dame des Victoires, Paris, when she was there with her father and sister on November 4, 1887. However, before this apparition and its subsequent understanding can be explored, it is necessary to turn to Therese's relationship to her natural and "adopted" mothers.

**The two mothers of Therese Madame Martin and Pauline**

Madame Martin (née, Zélie Guerin) played a significant, albeit brief, role in Therese's marian formation. Although it is not the focus of this present paper to offer a psychological interpretation of Therese's life, nevertheless, since salvation engages the whole person, and since one is influenced greatly by such primary significant others like parents, the impact of these analogues cannot be ignored as they influence conceptions and preconceptions about God and the things of God. The following story illustrates this point.

A retreatant had been in psychotherapy for wounds of abuse, received as a child. She wrote to a retreat director:

I had become so turned off to the concept of mothers that I consciously rejected the love of Mary, Jesus' mother. After your talk about personal conversion, I went outside—feeling deeply alone. I prayed for some kind of conversion. I wanted to cry, but haven't for months. You may have noticed the small round building near the cemetery. Curiosity is one of my strongest traits. So I walked to it and opened the door. When I looked inside, I was filled with fear. There stood a large statue of Mary. My first impulse was to run away in anger. But something drew me slowly to the kneeler at her feet. Then I fell to my knees, weeping into the folds of her robes. When it was over, I felt cleansed and new. I felt willing to be a trusting child. Even more important, I felt that a mother's love had touched me, leaving in me a true desire to forgive my natural mother.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid., 63.

This story contrasts sharply with Therese own "incomparable mother;" yet, its inclusion suggests that maternal analogues influence preconceptions and conceptions about Mary. The relationship of Therese to her mother is examined below.

In four short years, Mme. Martin awakened within the heart of her last child, love, particularly to love to pray to the Blessed Virgin. Correspondance Familiale reveals the heart of Mme. Martin, which she pours out to her brother, her sister-in-law, and her sister, a Visitandine. To them, she first announced the coming birth of Therese. To them, she reveals just a few months before her death that her only happiness is her children, her anxious concern, their salvation.

Madame Martin tells her family how Therese sticks close to her even if it is constraining. But what is particularly revealing is Therese's question.

Little Therese asked me the other day if she will go to Heaven. I told her yes, if she were well-behaved; she answers me: `Yes, but if I was not little, I would go to hell... but I know what I'll do; I'll go with you when you go to Heaven', how will the good God take me? You will hold me tightly in your arms. I saw in her eyes that she positively believed that the good God could do nothing if she were in the arms of her mother.

Such an embrace full of confidence and security will sustain Therese as the silhouette of her heavenly mother emerges.

Within the maternal embrace Therese's heart expanded to love both disinterestedly and forgivingly. Her disinterest is unusual:

60 Ms. A 4
61 VT 83:3, 63; Correspondance Familiale de Zélie Martin (fragments) 1863-1877. Office Central de Lisieux, 1958. [CF]
62 CF 83:15.XII.72
63 CF 192: 4.III.77
64 CF 119: 25. VI.74
65 CF 170: 29. X.76

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Baby is a little imp; she'll kiss me and at the same time wish me to die. "O how I wish you would die, dear little mother!" When I scold her she answers: "it is because I want you to go to heaven, and you say we must die to get there!" She wishes the same for her Father in her outbursts of affection for him.66 Yet her desire to be forgiven is profound. Her mother went to kiss her one morning but she did not respond, pretending to sleep. Finally, Therese covered herself with a blanket, and said with the tone of a spoiled child, "I don't want anybody to see me." It didn't take long for Therese to seek forgiveness for such cheekiness. "Her face was bathed in tears and throwing herself at my knees she said: 'Mamma, I was naughty; forgive me!' Pardon was quickly granted. I took my angel in my arms pressed her to my heart, and covered her with kisses."67Once again, Mme. Martin's embrace holds in harmony word and deed, forgiveness and love, salvation desired and accomplished.

Little by little, Mme. Martin taught Therese to pray by showing her the crucifix, a statue of the Blessed Virgin, and explaining their meaning in words a child could understand.68Moreover, Mme. Martin's own devotion toward the Blessed Virgin was great, and poured itself into the heart of her little Therese.

The statue of Our Lady of the Smile, given to Louis Martin, Therese's father, by the same charitable woman who set him up in his watch making business,69became the center of spiritual life in their home.70When Marie, the oldest wanted to replace the large statue (35" high) with one of better proportions

66CF 172: 8. XI.76
67CF 188: 13. II.77
68CF 124: 8. XI.74
70Piat, 149.
her mother protested. "When I am gone you can do as you wish, but while I'm here the Virgin doesn't leave her place."\textsuperscript{71}

Yet it was Marie who had charge of decorating the May altar with flowers and candles for a mother who was more difficult to please than the Blessed Virgin herself.\textsuperscript{72} Even the ceremonies at Notre Dame did not please Mme. Martin! The chants are impossible, "cooings" difficult to understand, more like an irritating café-concert.\textsuperscript{73} Meanwhile, Therese participated in the home May devotions with great joy, placing bouquets of flowers at the foot of the statue.\textsuperscript{74}

Mme. Martin's contagious devotion to Mary went beyond her home. In 1864 she wrote her brother asking him to light a candle for her at Notre Dame des Victoires. Little did he know that his sister, "who had good reason to trust in Our Lady" was asking by this candle and his daily "Ave Maria" for his own conversion.\textsuperscript{75} Eventually after marriage and setting up his own pharmacy he became editor of a local newspaper and a champion of the Catholic cause, inspired and encouraged by devotion to Our Lady of Victories.\textsuperscript{76} She returned the favor by lighting a candle for him and his wife at Lourdes.\textsuperscript{77}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{71} Piat, 149.
\item \textsuperscript{72} CG I, 100: 9.V. 77
\item \textsuperscript{73} CF 159: 14.V. 76
\item \textsuperscript{74} CG I 100: 9. V.77; PA, 267:PA, 154.
\item \textsuperscript{75} CF 6;11. III. 64; CF 16:3.XII. 65
\item \textsuperscript{76} Piat, 60.
\item \textsuperscript{77} CF 209: 24. VI. 77
\end{itemize}
Mme. Martin entrusted all of her nine children to the Virgin; all of them had the first name of "Marie." She prayed that they all became saints and was especially concerned about Leonie, whom she commended to the Virgin through the prayers of her dying Visitandine sister. Soon after that sister's death a miraculous change came over Leonie. Another girl, Marie Helene, died at five and a half. The mother was distraught that her child might be in purgatory. She had recourse to the family statue of the Virgin of the Smile and asked for some sign of her little girl's salvation. She thought she heard a voice distinctly say: "she is beside me in heaven."

Toward the end of her life, Mme. Martin made a pilgrimage to Lourdes. Although her cancer was not cured, her faith was strengthened. Marie often found her on her knees, pale and bent in pain before the family statue, praying the rosary. In her letters to her brother she entrusts her sufferings to the Virgin.

For the last two days I have washed with Lourdes water, while the pain has been very severe, especially under the arm...what can be done? If the Blessed Virgin does not cure me, it is because my time is up, and Our Lord wants me to rest elsewhere than on earth.

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79Piat, 43

80Piat, 72.

81Cf A, 6 note 57 of M. Agnes.

82A, 28 note 24.

83Piat, 252-253.

84CF 212; 8. VII. 77; CF 215, 24. VII.77

85CF 217; 24. VII.77.
On August 28th, she calmly died amid the sobs of her husband and the tears of her children.

Thus within the first years of her life before her mother's death, Therese absorbed a childlike, simple trust like that of her own mother in the Mother of God. The same sentiments passed from the heart of the mother to the heart of her child. It seemed that Therese was incapable of disassociating her Maman from the Maman of the Little Jesus. It seems that the love of Therese confused them, and identified them incorrectly.

Her mother noted early that baby Therese had a tender heart and her death devastated the heart of Therese. She takes three pages in manuscript A to describe these events, "the winter of trial" for a "springtime flower". All the details are present to her: Mme. Leriche did not remain to pray with the morning of her mother's death as was the custom; the beautiful apricot offered to Mme. Martin but not eaten because she could no longer eat the fruits of the earth, but awaited a draft of that mysterious wine.

Therese remembered both the ceremony of extreme unction which had been imprinted on her soul and the sobs of her father. She felt exiled. Accustomed to live with her mother, she was now faced with her death. She assisted at her deathbed neither crying much nor speaking but wondering to whom she would confide her heart, her life. With the help of her father she kissed her mother for the last time on the day of her death. She distinctly remembered her mother's coffin standing in the hall and, seeing the coffin of Mother Genevieve, one of the

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86 CF 172:8.XI.76
87 Ms A 12r
88 Ms A 12v
89 Ms A 12v
foundresses of the Carmel of Lisieux, fifteen years later, caused the memories of her mother's death to come flooding back.\footnote{cf. Ms A 12v} But the difference between her mother's obsequies and those of M. Genevieve was not an intense unspeakable grief, but a joy that longs for heaven. She claimed her trial was over. What happened? How was this crushing blow softened? How was this deep wound healed?

Pauline

It largely fell to her second mother, Pauline, to comfort and guide her. Pauline became her second mother the day after the funeral. Their maid, Louise, commented that the two little girls, Celine and Therese, no longer had a mother.\footnote{Ms A 12v} Celine chose her eldest sister, Marie. In a break from her usual habit, Therese on this occasion did not imitate Celine but chose her sister Pauline.\footnote{Ms A 13r} Years later Therese told Celine that she did not want Pauline to suffer the pain of being without a little girl.\footnote{VT 23, 1983, 173.} Therese intuited that her first mother could never be replaced. Yet, Pauline was her ideal and to her she confided all her secrets, and from her she received light to illumine her doubts.\footnote{Ms A 18v} Pauline cherished Therese yet did not spoil her. On her part, Therese would do nothing without Pauline's consent.\footnote{Ms A 19v} Therese felt, by a luminous experience of the tender care of Pauline, what a mother is. In a similar fashion, Therese loved the Virgin Mary, the "maman" of the Infant Jesus. Yet once again, Therese would learn the difference between the mothering of Pauline and that of the Mother of Jesus.
The Smile of the Virgin

With the death of her mother, Therese entered "the second phase of my existence, the most sorrowful of the three."\(^{96}\) This second phase began when she was four and a half, 28 August 1877, the day her mother died, and lasted until she was nearly fourteen, 25 December 1886, the date of her Christmas conversion (discussed earlier). Inclusive is the departure of Pauline for Carmel, 2 October 1882 and the "strange sickness"\(^{97}\) that overtook her from that date until the smile of the Virgin on Pentecost, 13 May 1883. The above mentioned events give the context for the last one mentioned: the smile of the Virgin.

With the death of Mme. Martin, Therese's temperament completely changed. No longer the happy child trailing her mother,\(^{98}\) she was given over to touchiness,\(^{99}\) excessive tears,\(^{100}\) crying for having cried.\(^{101}\) The shock of her mother's death necessarily affected her relationship to Mary. "The spontaneous identification she made in her heart between her maman and the Blessed Virgin is undermined in a muted fashion."\(^{102}\) Therese was deprived of her mother who taught her to love the Blessed Virgin. The foundations were shaken; nevertheless, Therese persevered in her filial affection toward the Blessed Virgin.

\(^{96}\)Ms A 13r
\(^{97}\)Ms A 28v
\(^{98}\)Ms A 13r
\(^{99}\)Ms A 24r
\(^{100}\)Ms A 44v
\(^{101}\)ibid.
\(^{102}\)VT 23, 1983, 176.
Her father, her godmother and sister, Marie, and her second mother, Pauline, strove to fill the void left by Mme. Martin.\textsuperscript{103} They showered Therese with "maternal affection" and in it Therese recognized the grace of God, caring for his little flower under the snow of trial.\textsuperscript{104} Nonetheless, Therese felt tranquil and happy\textsuperscript{105} as they prayed each evening before the statue of Our Lady. In fact only there, among her family\textsuperscript{106}, did she find herself less touchy and at ease.

Soon, however, Therese was to suffer another loss. She overheard Pauline telling Marie that she planned to enter Carmel. Therese was cut to the quick.\textsuperscript{107} As Pauline was explaining her decision to enter Carmel, Therese likewise felt drawn to this desert not for Pauline's sake, but for the Good God.\textsuperscript{108} On 2 October 1882, Pauline left the family for Carmel amid tears and blessings.\textsuperscript{109} Therese felt keenly the deprivation: no more kisses, no more embraces from her dear Pauline. Even the visits in the parlor after Pauline's entrance brought no consolation to Therese. Later, Pauline would regret not sounding the depths of Therese's grief,\textsuperscript{110} yet, recognized the hand of God in her error because of what happened next. Therese never openly complained. Her first mother died a natural death, leaving her quite alone. Now her second mother seemed to ignore her. Thus, little by little, a strange sickness overcame Therese.

\textsuperscript{103}Ms A 13r
\textsuperscript{104}ibid.
\textsuperscript{105}Ms A 22r
\textsuperscript{106}ibid.
\textsuperscript{107}Ms A 25v/26r
\textsuperscript{108}Ms A 26r
\textsuperscript{109}Ms A 26v
\textsuperscript{110}CG 131: note b
The Strange Sickness

Toward the end of 1882, Therese had a constant headache. As it did not interfere with her studies, she continued at the Abbey until Easter 1883.¹¹¹ That Easter, her maternal uncle, Isidore Guerin, took Therese and Celine for a vacation. Easter evening, 25 March 1883, quite by accident, her uncle reopened Therese's wound of grief. According to Leonie, during these years, Therese called her aunt, the wife of Isidore, "maman". Her cousins objected. This hurt Therese; however, she remained full of affectionate care for them.¹¹² He spoke lovingly of his sister, their mother. So deeply affected was Therese, that as she was getting ready for bed that same evening she was seized with a strange trembling.¹¹³ Her uncle judged it to be serious; Dr. Nolta had never seen it in a young child; her own father thought his little girl was crazy or was about to die.¹¹⁴

"This sickness was not unto death but like that of Lazarus, it was to give glory to God".¹¹⁵ The only light in the darkness was Pauline's clothing, 6 April 1883. Therese was well enough to attend and enjoy once more the kisses and caresses of her "maman". She believed herself well but the next day the sickness attacked her with a vengeance. Neither Dr. Nolta, nor her uncle, a pharmacist familiar with all kinds of maladies, could identify it.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹Ms A 27v
¹¹²cf. PO 352
¹¹³Ms A 27v
¹¹⁴Ms A 28r
¹¹⁵ibid.
¹¹⁶Ms A 27v
Therese was later convinced it was the work of the devil.\textsuperscript{117} Her cousin, Jeanne Guerin concurred.\textsuperscript{118} Whether the strange sickness resulted from a demon, or the loss of her first and second mother, or her uncle’s words about his sister, is not altogether clear. What is certain, however, is that Therese was in a very weakened state. Although her whole family treated her with maternal tenderness,\textsuperscript{119} her real consolation was to receive letters from Pauline and to weave crowns from daisies and forget-me-nots for the statue of the Virgin. Meanwhile, her father sent to Notre Dame des Victoires for masses seeking a healing for his little girl.\textsuperscript{120}

The Blessed Virgin Appeared to me Beautiful

On Pentecost Sunday, 13 May 1883, during the novena of masses, Marie went into the garden and left Therese in her bedroom under Leonie’s care. Therese called out “Mama... Mama”. Leonie thought nothing of it since Therese in her sickness was always calling for her mother. But she called out all the louder. Marie returned and with Celine and Leonie they turned to the statue of the Smiling Virgin, begging for a cure. Marie, praying with the fervor of a mother asking for the life of her child obtained what she desired. Therese, likewise, turned to the statue, joining the gesture of the others, imploring the Mother of mercy.\textsuperscript{121}

"All of a sudden the Blessed Virgin appeared beautiful to me, so beautiful that never had I seen anything so attractive, her face was suffused with an ineffable..."
benevolence and tenderness, but what penetrated to the very depths of my soul was the "ravishing smile of the Blessed Virgin". 122

Therese was twenty-two when she recalled this apparition. The Virgin looked at her in silence and simply smiled, a sight Therese had never seen before, not even the most beautiful, most tender smile of Mme. Martin could match it. Therese telescopes the experience into one word "the smile" and did not try to make others understand what penetrated to the very depths of her soul.

Immediately, after the smile all her symptoms vanished never to appear again, to which both Leonie and Pauline attested on separate occasions. 123 Therese recognized that her extreme touchiness was healed not all of a sudden, but sweetly, gently, until five years later "she blossomed on the fertile mountain of Carmel". 124

"Ah, I thought, the Blessed Virgin smiled at me, how happy I am, but never will I tell anyone for my happiness would then disappear". 125 But Marie divined what had happened and because she felt she owed this "smile" to the prayers of her sister, she told her sister what transpired. "Therese is healed" and Marie wanted to tell the Carmelites. 126 When Therese had been taken to Carmel and saw Pauline in the habit of the Blessed Virgin she was filled with joy but this soon vanished when the other Carmelites hounded her with questions about her vision. 127 Therese was

122 ibid.
123 PO 344; PA 139
124 Ms A 30v
125 Ms A 30r/v
126 Ms A 30v
127 Ms A 30v/31r
mortified and even began to think she had faked her illness and lied about the smile. Only Father Pichon would convince her that no one would feign such an illness; moreover, it was the Virgin herself, at the Church of Notre Dame des Victoires, who would confirm the truth about her ravishing smile.

To the bottom of my soul

Years later Therese was convinced the Virgin smiled at her in the morning of her life. She realized that in divulging her secret to Marie and the Carmelites, God used this humiliation to keep her from vanity. Thus Therese considered the trial that followed the grace of the smile, a purification.

But she never forgot the smile. On her coat of Arms she lists the gifts given to her by Her Spouse...."the Smile of the Virgin, May 1883". This smile is both sensible as to her eyes, and expressed in human language; and insensible, inasmuch as the knowing and loving action of God directly on the soul is insensible. On her coat of Arms she mentioned only the smile. Yet the smile became as it were a sacrament of divine penetration, to the bottom of her soul.

Earlier her own mother duly records the joy of Therese who knew her with a beautiful smile. The silent language of love between mother and daughter is expressed in that smile. It seemed the Virgin herself adopted this language in order to express her own maternal affection for Therese. Again Therese never forgot this smile, and it seemed to have imprinted itself on her own lips; for her contemporaries

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128 Ms A 31r
129 Ms A 28v; Ms A 70r; Ms A 56r
130 PN 54:25,3-4
131 Ms A 86r
132 CF 185:16.1.73
133 cf. Ms A 8v concerning her keen memory
at one time or another comment on her beautiful if inexplicable smile, especially the irritable and irritating Sr. Therese de Saint Augustin. Earlier in her childhood Therese seemed to expect others to smile at and caress her for which Celine reproached her. Now with the ravishing smile of the Virgin, Therese forgot herself and considered only the joy in the heart of the Virgin that expressed itself silently on her lips. "By her smile, the Blessed Virgin officially takes the place, as in a relay, of Mme. Martin: she continues to form the heart of her daughter... sweetly, gently."

At Notre Dame des Victoires

M. Martin took both Celine and Therese with him on his pilgrimage to Italy in the autumn of 1887. On 4 Nov 1887, they entered the Church of Our Lady of Victories. There, adoring the Blessed Sacrament, they moved to pray before the venerated statue. Neither her father, nor Celine, nor it seemed anyone else, guessed at what was passing through the soul of Therese. In fact, when writing to their sisters about the trip, Celine mentioned nothing about the visit to the Church while Therese wrote she was happiest in the church. Why?

"Ah, what I felt kneeling at her feet cannot be expressed. The graces Notre Dame des Victoires granted me so moved me that my happiness found expression only

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134 Ms C 29v
135 Ms C 14r
136 CGI, 100
137 VT juillet 1983, 191.
138 Ms A 55r
139 CGI, 261; LD 5-6.XI.87.
140 LT 30, 6.XI.87

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in tears, just as on the day of my First Communion.\textsuperscript{141} What Therese perceived, she was unable or unwilling to express, perhaps because of the pain she suffered from divulging the secret smile of the Virgin. She was filled with joy and had never been happier since the day of her First Communion, 8 May 1884. In her description of what cannot be expressed, two graces emerge from this marian encounter. The first grace, the Virgin made her "feel" \textsuperscript{142}, without a word passing between them, that on 13 May 1883 it was truly she who had smiled upon her and healed her.\textsuperscript{143} At that moment the first sorrows of her soul disappeared. Yet, during the subsequent four and half years a nagging doubt had troubled her soul: had she merely imagined the smile and then lied about it? The Virgin, with the tenderness and sweetness found in the heart of a mother eased this burden: ..."it was really herself who smiled on me and brought about my cure."\textsuperscript{144} Therese perceived her motherly mark in this new found freedom.

"I understood that she watched over me." She did not want to forget neither that painful doubt nor its wonderful resolution "I understood that she watched over me, like a mother watches over her baby...that I was her child."\textsuperscript{145} Thus, Therese expressed in very simple terms what profoundly marked her soul. Throughout her childhood, Therese referred to the Blessed Virgin as "Mother". At age seven, she wrote in her notebook: "the Blessed Virgin is my dear mother and ordinarily little children resemble their mother."\textsuperscript{146} Like all Christians, she

\textsuperscript{141}Ms A 56v
\textsuperscript{142}Ms A 56v
\textsuperscript{143}ibid.
\textsuperscript{144}ibid.
\textsuperscript{145}Ms A 56v/57r
\textsuperscript{146}VT juillet 1983, 201, n. 65: premier cahier scolaire, été 1880
believed this. Yet now at the sanctuary of Notre Dame des Victoires a change had taken place. Therese no longer needed human words to understand the depths of Mary's maternal love. She "understands" this tenderness and spontaneously calls her "Maman"."147"I could no longer give her any other name but "Maman" as this appeared ever so much more tender than Mother."148 Therese maintains this intimacy and confidence in all her prayers.150 "Maman" is what would spring to her lips and in her heart as she prayed to the Blessed Virgin.

The second grace to emerge in this marian encounter at Notre Dame des Victoires is manifested in three aspirations from the heart of Therese. The first aspiration is general and encompasses the other two. Therese was keenly aware of her own weakness and sought the protection of "Maman", praying to her instinctively and fervently for such a grace. Secondly, she wanted to be hidden "beneath the shadow of her virginal mantle."151 The protection implored in the first petition is nuanced by the second. Carmel was that protection, that desert where she will be hidden under the Virgin's mantle.152 Moreover, the third aspiration partially explains the first two. More explicitly, she wanted nothing to tarnish her purity. Therese was ignorant of evil and feared discovering it on her trip through Italy. Her idea of purity goes beyond acts of chastity but rather encompasses the purity of God.

147Ms A 56v/57r

148Ms A 57r

149ibid.

150On addressing Jesus as "tu," see CSG, 82.

151Ms A 57r

152Ms A 26r
in whose image she was made. After a prayer to St. Joseph, she undertook "without any fear the long journey; being so well protected what was there to fear?"\textsuperscript{153}

Part II

The second half of this chapter now deals with Therese's external formation. In a general way, it looks at the need for others in forming souls and other influences, such as books and Carmel itself. In a particular way, it considers the marian characteristics of this external formation. These include marian piety as it was practiced in the Martin home, a brief summary of Mary's place in Carmel, and Therese's experience of being under the veil of the Virgin.

The Need for Others in Forming Souls.

While caring herself for young children, Therese realized the importance of direction given early in childhood: "Jesus will to be helped in His divine cultivation of souls, seconding the action of grace by learning virtue from the soul responsible for forming them."\textsuperscript{154} She concludes that the theological virtues planted deep within at Baptism are worth the sacrifices required to bring them out. In her own parable on formation through others, Therese compares it to little birds learning to sing by listening to their parents: "So do children learn the science of virtues, the sublime song of Divine Love from souls responsible for forming them."\textsuperscript{155}

Even before her Christmas conversion, Therese was being formed by those around her: her father, her sisters, her schoolmates, her teachers and books. Moreover, when God had extricated her from scruples and its excessive sensitiveness, that narrow circle in which she turned without knowing how to come out, then the biggest step had been taken: "But there still remained many things for

\textsuperscript{153} Ms A 57r

\textsuperscript{154} Ms A 53r

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
me to leave behind."\textsuperscript{156} This formation through detachment came during her attempts to enter Carmel, through the separation of sisters and her father's illness, and Carmel itself with its traditions and superiors, in short, the daily martyrdom of religious life.\textsuperscript{157}

**Sunday with her Father.**

Sunday at the Martins was the archetype of Therese's childhood and her spiritual formation at that time.\textsuperscript{158} Her king would kiss her hand more tenderly than usual that day.\textsuperscript{159} One April Sunday, 1878, in Church with her father, she understood her first sermon which was on the Passion—consequently understanding all the others afterwards.\textsuperscript{160} On their Sunday walks together, they frequently met poor people and it was always little Therese who was put in charge of bringing them alms, which made her quite happy.\textsuperscript{161} But, the happiness of Sunday gave way to the later sufferings of her father. His mental collapse began during their trip to Rome in May of 1887 and continued until his death on 29 July, 1894.\textsuperscript{162} When they went to visit the Pope, the Holy Father placed his hand on her father’s head. Therese saw it as a prophetic gesture of the martyrdom he would endure.\textsuperscript{163}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{156}Ms A 46v

\textsuperscript{157}In her book, *Written in Heaven*, (Eyre and Spottiswood: London, 1937.), 79-100, Frances Parkinson Keyes provides telling anecdotes about Therese by her own former teachers and playmates, still living at the time of her book.

\textsuperscript{158}Ms A 17r "I longed for that never ending repose of heaven that everlasting Sunday in the Fatherland."

\textsuperscript{159}Ms A 17v

\textsuperscript{160}Ms A 17v

\textsuperscript{161}Ms A 11v

\textsuperscript{162}Ms A 72r

\textsuperscript{163}Ms A 64v
\end{flushleft}
example, they all suffered deeply when he disappeared on 24 June, 1888. He was found three days later in Le Havre by Celine and her uncle, M. Guerin.\textsuperscript{164} His health further declined after Therese's Clothing Day. But she was happy to suffer this,\textsuperscript{165} because her Father wanted to suffer, wanted to offer himself as victim.\textsuperscript{166}

**Pauline**

"Having nothing but good example around me, naturally I wanted to follow it."\textsuperscript{167} As noted earlier, after her mother's death she threw herself into the arms of Pauline in an almost prophetic gesture and called her "Mama."\textsuperscript{168} Pauline was her ideal from childhood.\textsuperscript{169} A mother's heart understands her child even when it can but stammer, and so I'm sure of being understood by you who formed by heart, offering it up to Jesus.\textsuperscript{170} Pauline was chosen to lead Therese, forming a bond between their souls.\textsuperscript{171} It was Pauline, too, who received all her intimate confidences and cleared up all her doubts.\textsuperscript{172}

Pauline taught both by word and example. In the morning Pauline used to come to Therese and ask her if she had raised her heart to God, and then she would dress

\begin{footnotes}
\item[164]Ms A 72r
\item[165]Ms A 73r-75v
\item[166]A, 154, n. 182.
\item[167]Ms A 8v
\item[168]Ms A 13r
\item[169]Ms A 6r
\item[170]Ms A 3v
\item[171]Ms A 6r
\item[172]Ms A
\end{footnotes}
her. It was Pauline who took care of her when she was sick in the winter with bronchitis or in the summer with stomach aches. It was Pauline who sacrificed her mother-of-pearl-starred knife for a sick Therese, leaving her very happy.

"I wonder at times how you were able to raise me with so much love and tenderness without spoiling me; for it is true you never allowed an imperfection to pass, you never scolded me without a reason, you never went back on something once you made a decision."

Not only did Pauline watch over her tenderly, she also taught Therese how to read and to write and to overcome her natural fears. Pauline, for example, would have her overcome her fear of the dark by making Therese search for an object in a far-off, unlit room at night: "I consider the overcoming of my fears as a grace I received through you, dear mother."

Moreover, Pauline's ability to communicate the most sublime truths to her young mind delighted Therese. Therese wondered why God did not give equal glory to all the Elect in heaven, and "I was afraid all would not be perfectly happy...

Then Pauline told me to fetch Papa's large tumbler and set it alongside my thimble and filled both to the brim with water. She asked me which one was fuller. I told her each was as full as the other and that it was impossible to put more water than they could contain. My dear Mother helped me to understand that in heaven God will grant His Elect as much glory as they can take, the last having nothing to envy in the first. And it was in this way that you brought the most sublime mysteries down to my level of understanding and were able to give my soul the nourishment it needed.

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173 Ms A 13v
174 Ms A
175 Ms A 19r
176 Ibid.
177 Ms A 18v
178 Ms A 19v.
Pauline took care, also, to guard Therese's heart from vanity when, at Trouville by the sea, Therese was admired for being pretty. Yet at that same sea, at Trouville, "every thing made her soul consider God's grandeur and power." Near Pauline, she resolved never to wander far away from Jesus; near the sea, she considered the sun's reflection on the water as God's grace shedding its light across the path her little white sailed vessel was to travel.  

2 October 1882 marked the sad day Pauline separated from Therese; for, on that date, Pauline entered the Carmel of Lisieux. But, even behind the grille, Pauline instructed her charge. Pauline sent Therese a doll dressed as a Carmelite. Earlier, Therese wanted to be a religious like Pauline: now her vocation had definition: she wanted to be a Carmelite. To Pauline, suffering with her in her attempts to enter Carmel, Therese applies Lk 22:28: "It is you who have been with me in all my trials." Moreover, after an inconclusive trip to Rome seeking the Holy Father's permission to enter Carmel, Therese was delighted to see Pauline once again and to open up her wounded soul: to her who understood it so well; to her to whom a word, a look were sufficient to explain everything. When Therese finally entered Carmel it was Pauline who introduced her to the devotion to the Holy Face, a devotion that was to shape her life in Carmel.

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179 Ms A 21v
180 Ms A 22r
181 Ms A 25v
182 Ms A 29v
183 However, "the desire to enter Carmel was not because of the example of Pauline but the certitude of the divine call given by Jesus alone which left a great peace in my soul." Ms A 26r
184 Ms A 55v
185 Ms A 67r
where she fathomed the depths of the treasures hidden in the Holy Face.\textsuperscript{186} When Pauline was elected Prioress, Therese considered her her living Jesus\textsuperscript{187} and doubly as her mother.\textsuperscript{188} As Therese had always looked upon Pauline as her ideal she desired to be like her in everything.\textsuperscript{189} The effects of Pauline's influence on Therese's total formation from her cradle through Carmel are inestimable.

Marie

Nonetheless, other influences held sway. After Pauline was enclosed, Marie replaced her as catechist.\textsuperscript{190} "You are the one who taught me divine instructions."\textsuperscript{191} Marie prepared Therese for her first Communion; Therese's sacrifice was not to be prepared for this great event by Pauline. But Marie told her of life's struggles and the palm given to the victors, explaining the way of becoming holy through fidelity to little things. So touched by this teaching of Marie on holiness through fidelity to little things, Therese felt others, even sinners, would lay aside perishable riches and long for those of heaven.\textsuperscript{192} From Pauline and Marie, Therese received warmth, gentle dew, springtime breezes;\textsuperscript{193} for it is easy to learn from teachers you love. Yet, what Therese said of spiritual directors could

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[186]{Ms A 71r; Therese also makes reference to Is. 53:3; Jn. 18:36. Imitation: Bk.I ch.2 n.3; Bk.III ch.49 n.7.}
\footnotetext[187]{Ms A 80v}
\footnotetext[188]{Ms A 2r}
\footnotetext[189]{Ms A 81r}
\footnotetext[190]{Ms A 33r}
\footnotetext[191]{Ms B 1r}
\footnotetext[192]{Ms A 33r}
\footnotetext[193]{Ms A 13v}
\end{footnotes}
also be applied to Pauline and Marie: "Directors are faithful mirrors reflecting Jesus in souls: for me, God was using no intermediary, He was acting directly."\textsuperscript{194}

Celine

The lessons of Pauline and Marie were reinforced by the friendship of Celine and Therese. Celine and Therese were inseparable.\textsuperscript{195} On the day Celine received her first Communion, Therese was inundated with joy and resolved to prepare herself for her own Communion with the Lord from that day forward. Both of them found the practice of virtue natural and sweet; eternal rewards had no proportion to life's small sacrifices. Frequently they had pious conversation together like Monica and Augustine at Ostia.\textsuperscript{196} After Therese's Christmas conversion they became spiritual sisters, Celine became the confidant of her thoughts; age and height no longer made any difference. Therese used the words from St. John of the Cross's \textit{Spiritual Canticle} to express the bond formed in their hearts that was stronger than blood: \textsuperscript{197}

\begin{quote}
Following your footprints  
Maidens run lightly along the way;  
The touch of the spark,  
The special wine,  
Cause flowings in them from the balsam of God. (St. 25) \textsuperscript{198}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{194}Ms A 48v  
\textsuperscript{195}Ms A 24r  
\textsuperscript{196}Ms A 48r  
\textsuperscript{197}Ms A 47v  
Again, Therese uses the words of St. John of the Cross to express "the suffering and contempt" they both endured during their father's protracted illness. Therese had left for Carmel before her sister who took care of their ailing father. At one point, during their separation, Celine was invited to a ball and Therese was worried that her sister's head might be turned by some young man. Therese asked God to prevent her sister from dancing; later Celine told her that all her escort could do was walk her around the floor: "This incident, unique in its kind, made me grow in confidence and love." Celine, who cared for her father with some difficulties, to whom a possible but not realized mission was proposed in Canada, and, although one of the Sisters did not want one more Martin in the Carmel of Lisieux, eventually came to join her sister, Jesus having arranged all of her affairs for entrance: she is the flower Therese wanted: "She is the one that I offer Him as my most delightful bouquet."

Childhood Companions.

If Celine was her childhood companion and source of joy, other children made Therese suffer. She was not good at their games so she invented her own, like burying dead birds with great ceremony and telling fairy tales during play time. However, the Benedictine Sisters soon put a stop to these as they thought it better for the children to run and play. Therese considered herself a good student even though her Uncle thought she was a dunce. She liked history, composition, and


200Ms A 82 r

201Ms A 82 v

37
having a great zeal for catechism, was called "my little doctor" after her namesake by the priest who taught it.  

Success in studies did not win her success in friendship. In fact, childhood friendships taught Therese that there is only bitterness in earth's friendship, especially after the experience of longing for the return of a friend who, upon returning, had completely forgotten Therese. "But there is no merit here for her because she was preserved through God's mercy and not detached through fidelity." She felt Confirmation had given her the strength to suffer this and more and wondered why there was not more than one day's preparation to receive this sacrament. Eventually, she left the Abbey during her illness and took up studies afterwards with Mme. Papineau. She had always loved the great and beautiful but at this epoch of her life she was taken up with an extreme desire for learning. Nonetheless, she remembered the admonition given in the Imitation (3:43) on learning and mortified her quest by limiting the number of hours. Although she was no longer a student at the Abbey, she went there in order to become a Child of Mary but she had no teacher with whom she could pass the time. So after finishing her task, she went to chapel, to Jesus her only Friend. Her soul was filled with longing for eternity which she saw as a family reunion. Finally, Therese interpreted her school days as Jesus "changing into bitterness all the consolations of earth."  

Books

The effect of books on the life of Therese has already been mentioned. The family read from Dom Gueranger's *Liturgical Year* on Sundays. Before entering

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202 Ms A 37v
203 Ms A 38r
204 Ms A 36v
205 Ms A 38r
Carmel, Therese preferred the *Imitation* to all other books; she knew it by heart and could repeat whole chapters on request. She received an eschatological awareness from Fr. Arminjon's *On the End of the Present World and The Mysteries of Future Life*. In Carmel she received many lights drawn from the works of St. John of the Cross. But in the end it was the Holy Scripture that expanded her heart.

**Attempts to enter Carmel**

After her Christmas conversion the formative trial of Therese's life, however, was the attempts she made to enter Carmel at such a young age. Man proposes but God disposes. Marie opposed her; Pauline tried her; Celine alone helped her. Moreover, her greatest difficulty was in telling her father. On Pentecost Sunday 1887 she summoned up courage, like the apostles in the upper room, to ask her father's permission. Not with the fateful resignation of Agamemnon's immolation of Iphigenia but with the obediential faith of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, did he consent. In a symbolic action he plucked a little white flower without breaking it from its roots, giving it to Therese and explaining how God had made it flower under his loving care: "I believed I was hearing my own story." She placed it in her copy of the *Imitation* at "One must love Jesus above all things." When it later broke at its roots, she recognized it for a presentiment of her short life. Finally, after three days of a dark night, her Uncle, too, consented: "he told me I was the little flower God wanted to gather."

But the Superior of Carmel would not consent until she was twenty-one. To overcome his opposition, Louis took Therese to the Bishop of Bayeux. She told the Bishop that she wanted to be a religious when very young, and a Carmelite when she

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206 Ms A 47r
207 Ms A 50v
208 Ms A 51r/51v
had heard about it, since this order filled all the aspirations of her soul. But the Bishop would not consent without first speaking to the Superior; to Therese, it seemed a wasted visit. Nonetheless, Therese was determined to live out the grace of her conversion and its demands: if the Bishop of Bayeux would not consent perhaps the Bishop of Rome would.

During her trip to Rome, the high-born by their affectations taught her that all things are in vain; the priests by their example taught her why Carmelites pray for them; the scenery by its beauty taught her to remember all that she had seen with thanksgiving when Carmel's garden enclosed her. Finally, on the seventh day of the trip, she met the Pope from whom she requested entrance into Carmel in honor of his jubilee: "You will enter if God wills it." She was pierced to the quick by his answer but remained firm in hope. The rest of the trip held no attraction for her: she did not desire luxurious hotels, only the bare cell of Carmel.

Finally the Bishop of Bayeux did consent but not according to Therese's timetable. Not entering on Christmas Day 1887 as she had hoped was a trial for her. To those whose faith is small like a mustard seed he grants miracles until he tries their faith; (Mt. 17:19): to his intimate friends, however, He works no miracles until He tries their faith. Therese's faith was further tried by a delay she did not anticipate. Mother Gonzague received the Bishop's letter of consent on 28 December 1887 but delayed her entrance until 9 April 1888.

Carmel

The three months passed quickly, however, and finally Therese's barque arrived at the blessed shore of Carmel. Carmel, the holy mountain, the fertile mountain,

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208Ms A 63v Therese likens her suffering to Lk. 12:32; 22:29; 24:26; Mt. 20:21-22.

210Ms A 49r
the garden, the holy ark became her finishing school. There she was taught secrets "in a place no one else appeared" as she quotes St. John of the Cross's *Dark Night* (st. 3&4). There she was taught the things of His love hidden from the clever and learned. (Mt. 11:25) There she received peace at her entrance that never left her.211

The Carmelites had known Therese since childhood but she never ceased repeating to God that it was for him alone that she entered Carmel.212 At her entrance she took her Sisters for models but three are outstanding in this regard: her prioress, Mother Gonzague, the Novice Mistress, Sister Marie of the Angels and Mother Genevieve, one of the founders of the Carmel of Lisieux. Early on, by a meeting of minds, Mother Gonzague wished her to take the name Therese of the Child Jesus; yet, through Mother Gonzague, Therese was to grow in abandonment and in other virtues by suffering at her hands. It commenced with her delayed entrance into Carmel and continued throughout her religious life. Although Therese was an open book to her superiors, Mother Gonzague tried her severely without being aware of it. Therese was thankful for such a firm and precious education. However, she opened up with difficulty to her Novice Mistress: because of her well-meant orders, which the Mistress would forget, but which Therese obeyed to the letter, she frequently caused the young novice to be scolded by the Prioress who considered Therese lazy and indolent. At her Profession, the Novice Mistress reassured her about her sudden doubts; the Prioress simply laughed. Yet, Mother Genevieve, whom Therese considered to be a prophet, consoled her in her troubles: "Serve God with peace and joy; remember, my Child, our God is a God of peace."213

211 Ms A 69v
212 Ms A 26r
213 Ms A 78r
Mother Genevieve had no revelation, she gave none; Therese wanted to imitate that kind of sanctity as the truest and most holy. At Mother Genevieve's death, it seemed that Therese herself received some of the joy that the holy foundress was enjoying in heaven.

Carmel itself instructed her and she suffered no illusions about its life. Fr. Pichon declared that she had never committed a mortal sin for which she was to thank God because it was by no merit on her part: "May our Lord always be your superior and your novice master." Carmel taught her detachment from herself and from things, even sensible consolation. Her failings, like falling asleep during meditation, did not leave her desolate; for "does not a doctor put a patient to sleep?" Distractions and sleepiness during her communion meditations made her resolve to be thankful throughout the day. Trials themselves did not take away her deep peace. Carmel taught her to love Jesus, as her newlywed cousin Jeanne did her Francis, with the attentions of a bride for a bridegroom. Yet, for all this, God repays even in small things one hundred fold, even including a corn cockle seen only in Alençon, among the sheaves of wildflowers sent to the Carmel of Lisieux.

General themes in Therese's external formation have been considered. Yet, these themes have some specific marian characteristics. Marian piety in the Martin home and in Carmel marked the life of Therese in such a way that she used the language of both to describe her experience in July, 1889, as being under the veil of the Virgin.

The Martins: A Family Record

Each evening the family said its prayers before the statue of Our Lady. When Pauline would prepare Therese for bed, the little girl asked her "maman", "Is the

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214Ms A 70r

215Ms A 75v/76r: Therese quotes Ps. 102:14: "He knows that we are dust."
Blessed Virgin happy with me?" The answer was invariably "yes" otherwise "I would have cried the whole night." She had her own May altar, replete with flowers and candles, and, while her father and sisters were attending devotions at Church, her own devotions, which evoked in Therese amusing anecdotes about Victoire the maid. Each morning, Pauline asked if she spoke to God "...and the Blessed Virgin."

Later, around six years of age, Therese confessed for the first time, convinced she spoke to God through the priest; and through the priest, God spoke to her. Thus, his words were embedded in her soul; "Father encouraged me to be devout to the Blessed Virgin and I promised to redouble my tenderness for her." She responded wholeheartedly with all the affection of a girl of six.

I then passed my rosary through to have him bless it. It was evening and on my way home when we passed a street light I looked at it from all sides. "What are you looking at Therese?", you asked. "I want to see what a blessed rosary looks like!" This amused you; I remained a long time affected by the grace I received.

The effects showed themselves in her school books. In the summer of 1880, she wrote, "The Virgin went to the temple at the age of three. She was remarkable among her companions for her piety and angelic sweetness. Everyone loved her but especially the angels who considered her as their little sister...I want to be a very good daughter. The Blessed Virgin is my dear mother, and ordinarily children resemble their mothers."

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216 DCL, 65, note on Mother Agnes' copy of Autobiography
217 Ms A 18v
218 Ms A 15v
219 Ms A 13v; PN 22,5
220 cf. A, 41, n. 38
221 VT juillet 83, 201, n. 65: premier cahier scolaire été 1880 DCL
During this time, pictures fed her marian piety.\(^{222}\) "I owe to the beautiful pictures you [Mere Agnes] gave me as rewards, one of the sweetest joys and strongest impressions which aided me in the practice of virtue."\(^{223}\) What did they represent? Usually they were pictures of the Blessed Mother of no artistic value, but having some doctrinal thought at the bottom. On one was painted a thought from St. Ambrose: "Mary considers as her children all those who are united to Jesus Christ by divine grace." Another had a caption from St. Ephraim: "Mary is the mother of those whom Jesus makes His brothers and sisters." One represented a flowering plant before the Tabernacle door, and Therese added: "How I longed to be that flower pleasing Him and living for Him, and finally to be gathered by His hand." Another engraving encouraged the reader to remember the happy passage of those who die under the eyes of Mary. St. Grignon de Monfort was quoted in another; "Happy the soul that throws itself, looses itself into the divine mold, which is Mary. It soon becomes like Mary and with her like Jesus Himself."\(^{224}\) Through these pictures which Therese lovingly regarded, her soul was nourished on marian piety.

From 3 Oct. 1881 to February, 1886, Therese entered the Benedictine Abbey School at Lisieux as a day boarder. These were unhappy years for her as was already mentioned. In May, 1884 she replaced the practices of the Association of the Holy Angels with the ribbon of an aspirant of the Children of Mary, but she had to leave the Abbey before being received into the Association of Mary.\(^{225}\) It was her constant headaches, at the beginning of 1886 that caused her departure and made

\(^{222}\) For description of images found in Carmel Archives, see Blat, 53-54.

\(^{223}\) Ms A 31v

\(^{224}\) Piat, Our Lady of the Smile, 27.

\(^{225}\) Ms A 40v
her take up her lessons with Mme. Papineau. Her teacher had a great many visitors and they never failed to comment the "very beautiful young girl." Yet, the Lord kept her from vanity and "The Blessed Virgin, too, watched over her little flower and, not wanting her to be tarnished by contact with worldly things, drew her to her mountain before she blossomed." Fearing to be less of a child of Mary than her sisters who had been members, Therese returned to the Abbey and there fulfilled the conditions of the organization. Lonely and socially awkward, "it was for the Blessed Virgin alone" that she returned to the Abbey. On May 31, 1887, she was admitted to the Association of the Children of Mary.

Dates played an important part in the life of Therese as she herself wrote. And this was no less true in her marian calendar. From her childhood up to the end of her life she continually called May "the beautiful month" echoing the sentiments of Mme. Martin. For example, on 30 May 1889 she wrote to her cousin Marie about that cousin's scruples and about her own sorrow about the fact that Marie had given up her communions because of these scruples on the Feast of Ascension and on the last day of Mary's month. For another example, Saturday was consecrated to the sweet Queen of heaven and it was on a Saturday that her uncle permitted her to enter Carmel. Moreover, other marian dates figure prominently in the life of

226Ms A 39v
227Ms A 20r
228Ms A 40r
229Ms A 41r
230PO 347; Ms A 29v; CJ 1.5.2
231CF 20: 10. V.77
232LT 92, 30. V.89
233Ms A 51v
Therese. Here are more examples. She entered Carmel on 9 April 1888, that year the feast of the Annunciation, because of the date of Easter that year; henceforth, Therese maintained a special devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation throughout her religious life.\textsuperscript{234} On 8 September 1890, she made her profession, happy to be presented by the Little Virgin as her little flower to the Little Jesus.\textsuperscript{235} That evening she placed her crown at the foot of the Virgin "without a trace of sadness."\textsuperscript{236} On 30 May 1896, she received her second spiritual brother, Fr. Rolland; later, she wrote to him that his apostolic vocation was saved on 8 Sept. through the intercession of Notre Dame de la Delivrande.\textsuperscript{237}

Therese had great confidence in the sacramentals of the Church. She liked to distribute medals of the Blessed Virgin without doubting their efficacy. She put medals around the necks of two little poor girls whom she had instructed\textsuperscript{238} and persuaded a woman who did not believe in them to wear the one she offered her.\textsuperscript{239} On 16 July 1894 she wrote to her childhood playmate, Celine Maudelonde, "I am happy that you are involved with the holy scapular. It is an assured sign of predestination and thus are you not united more intimately to your little sisters at Carmel?"\textsuperscript{240} Finally, as at her first sickness so at her last, she was pleased with

\textsuperscript{234} PO 279

\textsuperscript{235} Ms A 77r

\textsuperscript{236} ibid.

\textsuperscript{237} In LC 25-26. IX. 96 note K Fr. Roland confirms this.

\textsuperscript{238} Ms A 52v

\textsuperscript{239} CSG, 89

\textsuperscript{240} LT 166: 16.VII. 94
the Masses offered for her at the sanctuary of Notre Dame des Victoires,\textsuperscript{241} a sanctuary dearer to her heart than all other sanctuaries she had visited.\textsuperscript{242}

She also had her favorite marian prayers. All of her life a particularly favorite gesture of hers was to offer flowers.\textsuperscript{243} After her First Communion a particularly favorite prayer was to recite the Memorare.\textsuperscript{244} In Carmel, she was particularly devoted to the daily Angelus.\textsuperscript{245} And what was particularly astonishing to many when the original manuscript was published in 1956 was her attitude toward the rosary.\textsuperscript{246} The confraternity of the Rosary in the Church of St. Peter at Lisieux inscribed Therese 25 Sept 1884.\textsuperscript{247} From 31 May 1887 she imposed on herself as a "child of Mary" the regular recitation of the rosary.\textsuperscript{248} Two years earlier, in 1885, she tried to recite one or two decades of the mysteries each day.\textsuperscript{249} But, on 20 August 1897, she echoes a sentiment which her sister would eventually delete from the Autobiography: "When I think that I have all my life so badly said my

\textsuperscript{241}LT 224: 9.VI. 97 a l'abbé Belliere

\textsuperscript{242}For lists of sanctuaries, see Blat, 58.

\textsuperscript{243}PA 233; PA 267; Ms A 17r, 34r,45v

\textsuperscript{244}CSG, 89; PO 345; PA 267; PA 413

\textsuperscript{245}CJ 4.9.4

\textsuperscript{246}T. O'Brien, O. Carm and W. Carlin, O. Carm., "The Autobiography of Therese of Lisieux," (Sword, 1957), 294; Ms C 25v

\textsuperscript{247}ACL

\textsuperscript{248}DE, 535

\textsuperscript{249}cf Blat, 58

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Yet she was not desolate since the Queen of Heaven was her mother who must see and be satisfied with her good will.\footnote{250}{CJ 20. 8. 16}

Marian books are notable by their absence. Authors like St. Bernard, St. Alphonse de Liguori, St. Louis de Montfort, are not directly quoted. Although she heard them in the refectory, she not seem to have read either Mary of Agreda or Catherine Emmerich\footnote{252}{cf. DE, 546, n. b.} and she took only one theme "Virginal Milk"\footnote{253}{PN 1} from Mary of St. Peter\footnote{254}{cf DE, 517, n. b.} which will be explored later. Celine and Pauline read d'Argentan\footnote{255}{cf. Poesies, Tome II, 46} but it is not clear if Therese did. She enjoyed Faber\footnote{256}{F. W. Faber. The Foot of the Cross or the Sorrows of Mary. Le Pied de la Croix ou les douleurs de Marie, 10th ed., (Paris: Bray et Retaux, 1877).} but, again, above all, her favorite book on Mary was the Gospel.

In addition to all these influences on her Marian piety, the Liturgy itself left its mark. She felt unworthy to recite the Divine Office\footnote{257}{Ms C 25v} as a Carmelite, although this prayer of the Church was already felt within the Martin home. From the Divine Office Therese specifically mentions Compline which has as its last hymn an antiphon to Mary,\footnote{258}{ibid.} exemplar of the Church in all that she hopes to be. Moreover, Dom Gueranger's \textit{Liturgical Year} continued to instruct her both at home and within

\begin{thebibliography}{9}

\footnote{250}{CJ 20. 8. 16}
\footnote{251}{Ms C 25v}
\footnote{252}{cf. DE, 546, n. b.}
\footnote{253}{PN 1}
\footnote{254}{cf DE, 517, n. b.}
\footnote{255}{cf. Poesies, Tome II, 46}
\footnote{256}{F. W. Faber. The Foot of the Cross or the Sorrows of Mary. Le Pied de la Croix ou les douleurs de Marie, 10th ed., (Paris: Bray et Retaux, 1877).}
\footnote{257}{Ms C 25v}
\footnote{258}{ibid.}
\end{thebibliography}
Likewise, the sacraments themselves had their marian dimension. For example, on the day of her First Communion, Therese read the act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin: "had she not placed in the heart of her little flower her Jesus, the Flower of the Fields and Lily of the Valley (Sg of Sg 2:1)."

On so sensitive a child, young girl, and religious all of these external acts of marian piety had a powerful influence. Nevertheless, the most powerful influence was in July 1889 when she felt within herself to be under the Veil of the Virgin. But suspended between these external actions and internal sentiments is the bridge of Carmel's history. Using historians of the Order, the Carmelite "family record" (Mt 1:1) will be briefly followed. They explain Carmel 1) as totus marianus est, 2) the legends that surround its origins, 3) its first historical documents, 4) three marian interventions, 5) saints given by Mary, 6) medieval Carmelite Marian literature, 7) the devotion to the Holy Scapular, 8) the Reformers of Carmel, 9) the Marianform Life, and finally 10) St. Therese and her affect on Carmel. The following overview of Carmelite history is for the sake of its influence on St. Therese.

Carmel: Totus marianus est

Carmel as a proper religious order dates from the beginning of the twelfth century, born at a moment when the West became conscious of the role of Mary in the

\[259\] A, 43, n. 40.

\[260\] Ms A 35v


life of the baptized. Bernard of Clairvaux, wholly devoted to Mary, preached the second crusade at that time. The first Carmelites were men of that crusade, rooted in this marian fervor of the Melifluous Doctor. Curiously, Carmel has no discernable founder like the Benedictines, Dominicans, or Franciscans. However, Elijah the prophet has been regarded from the beginning as its patriarch and model; but the patronal feast accorded to the Order by the Avignon Papacy was not his, but a feast of Our Lady. Thus, the origins of Carmel are obscure but its marian piety is not: "Christ, having wanted to reserve to his Mother a gift of royal dignity to him and to herself, made her a gift of a religious order called to honor her for ages without end."

The legends attribute to Elijah a prophetic awareness of the time of Mary's birth, her Immaculate Conception, her Perpetual Virginity and her Divine Maternity. Philip of the Trinity collected such legends which profoundly influenced the Carmelite soul and which for seven centuries were accepted as true. William of Sandwich's chronicles report that after the Saracens recaptured the Holy Land, some of the Carmelites sought refuge in Europe "where they would be permitted to serve in security the Lord God and the Virgin his mother." This statement establishes subsequent official texts that indeed the Order of Carmel, from its origin, is vowed to the cult of Our Lady, more than pious legends.

William of Sandwich also reports the first of three interventions of Mary on behalf of Carmel. Through the intercession of Mary, the prior of the Holy Land hermits allowed some of the brethren to return to Europe and to allow themselves to

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262 Elisée, 835; Smet. vol. 1, 1.
263 Elisée, 836; Smet vol. 1, 25.
264 Smet, Vol. 3, pt. 2, 467-468
265 Smet, Vol. 1, 64
be subsumed by the Mendicants.\textsuperscript{266} Despite his own prohibition against new religious orders, Honorius III (1216-1227), at the command of the Virgin it is said, approved the Order of Carmel on January 30, 1226.\textsuperscript{267} Finally, amid tension between Carmel and the secular parochial clergy,\textsuperscript{268} St. Simon Stock\textsuperscript{269} beseeched the Virgin, Flos Carmeli, for a sign of her favor for her Order. He was granted the Vision of Our Lady and Her Child holding out to him the scapular of his Order. Although its beginnings were precarious, through these interventions Mary marvelously sustained her servants.\textsuperscript{270}

The Carmelite saints, Albert of Sicily, (+1360) Andrew Corsini (+1373), and Peter Thomas (+1366), likewise reflect the intervention of the Virgin on behalf of her Order. St. Albert of Sicily was born to parents who sought a child through the intercession of the Virgin. The Carmelite liturgy holds him up as the norm of purity, innocence and continence, guarded by the Mother of Mercy herself. St. Andrew Corsini,\textsuperscript{271} another child beseeched of the Virgin, after leading a disappointing youth, put on the habit of Carmel. Mary appeared to "her servant"\textsuperscript{272} at the beginning and end of his priesthood and was indeed "glorified" by her "chosen one". St. Peter Thomas,\textsuperscript{273} Carmelite Patriarch of Constantinople, was noted by his Franciscan biographer, Carmesson, as taking the Virgin for a special patron: "She

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{266} Smet, Vol.1, 15
\item \textsuperscript{267} Smet, Vol. 1, 9
\item \textsuperscript{268} Smet, Vol. 1, 40-41
\item \textsuperscript{269} cf. Smet, Vol. 1, 26-27
\item \textsuperscript{270} cf. Elisée, 842
\item \textsuperscript{271} Smet, Vol.1, 54
\item \textsuperscript{272} Elisée, 843
\item \textsuperscript{273} Smet, Vol.1, 56-57
\end{itemize}
was his hope, she was his support, she was his extraordinary consolation." These three Carmelite saints represent a "life in Mary by Mary".

Eventually, the Carmelites moved into the schools\(^{274}\) and produced both men of great learning, like Gerard of Bologna (+1317)\(^{275}\), Guy of Perpigan (+1342)\(^{276}\), and John Baconthrop (+1348)\(^{277}\), and great works of theological, scriptural, and marian literature. The marian literature principally concerns itself with a defense of the Immaculate Conception and the Patronage of Carmel. Concerning the Immaculate Conception, Carmelites allowed the palm to go to the Franciscans, but feel they contributed more effectively to the triumph of the dogma. The writings of John Baconthrop especially, exposed in lengthy fashion the why and the how of the Carmelite vow to the cult of Mary.\(^{278}\)

In 1465, Bendouin Leersius\(^{279}\) published a work, well researched for the time, of Mary's protection afforded the Carmelites, a sort of marian Fioretti. Arnold Bostius (+1499) was the enthusiastic panegyrist of the scapular of which he spoke "in such terms that in sum since then none better has been said and one could hardly say more."\(^{280}\)

All of their medieval marian literature "profoundly marked the Carmelite soul."

Nevertheless, devotion to the Scapular was critically examined.\(^{281}\) St. Simon Stock's vision of 1251 is regarded by Carmel as the sign of its definite triumph over

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\(^{274}\) cf Smet, vol. 1, 59-71
\(^{275}\) Smet vol. 1, 59
\(^{276}\) Smet, vol. 1, 60
\(^{277}\) Smet, vol. 1, 60
\(^{278}\) Elisée, 846; Smet, vol. 1, 65
\(^{279}\) Smet, vol. 1, 136
\(^{280}\) Elisée, 846, 848, 850
\(^{281}\) Smet, vol. 2, 222-225
its precarious beginnings. Accordingly the scapular's increasing popularity, especially after the Protestant revolt\textsuperscript{282} of the sixteenth century represent the lay Catholic's fidelity to the Church and the cause of Mary. To the faithful the scapular represented a shield against the assaults of Hell, the grace of salvation and the much debated Sabbatine Privilege.\textsuperscript{283} Most importantly the humble origins of the scapular must be kept within a historical framework. Around 1400 John Grossi (+1434) recounts in his \textit{Viridarum}, a catalogue of Carmelite saints, the vision of St. Simon Stock, stripped of all embellishments, reduced to six very sober lines, and "apparently truthful."\textsuperscript{284} Moreover, contrary to the practice of the Dominicans, from whom they borrowed much of their rule, the Carmelites, under pain of excommunication, are never to be found without wearing their scapulars.\textsuperscript{285}

The Reformers of the Carmelites recalled the order to its first goal, the eremitic and prophetic life which leads to divine control under the action of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{286} But its other goal, the veneration of Mary, was not forgotten either by St. Teresa of Avila\textsuperscript{287} or St. John of the Cross.\textsuperscript{288} More than ten times and in diverse ways, Teresa underscores the Order of Carmel as the Order of the Virgin. She lauds the intervention of Mary, even claiming that Philip II was chosen "to protect and raise again"\textsuperscript{289} Carmel. A Carmelite must be before all "a true child

\textsuperscript{282} cf. Smet, vol. 1, 215-276
\textsuperscript{283} Elisée, 853
\textsuperscript{284} Smet, vol. 1, 137
\textsuperscript{285} Elisée, 853
\textsuperscript{286} Elisée, 846
\textsuperscript{287} Smet, Vol. 2, 22, 39, 233
\textsuperscript{288} Smet, vol. 1, 49, 87, 233
\textsuperscript{289} Elisée, 854
of Our Lady" by practicing mutual charity. As she recounts her labors, trials, and foundations, she rejoices in "the glory of God and the habit of His glorious Mother." Likewise, her male counterpart, St. John of the Cross, speaks of Mary five times in his works. Mary saved him from drowning as a child, called him to her service, convinced him through Teresa to embrace a solitary, contemplative life wearing the habit of the Virgin, freed him from Toledan captivity, and granted him numerous favors. He died happy going to recite the Matins of Our Lady of Heaven on the night of 13 Dec. 1591.

During the seventeenth century, Michael of St. Augustine and his spiritual daughter Marie of St. Teresa, championed Marianform life. Together they affirmed a spirituality, a "life in Mary and by Mary". No grace is given to men without passing through the hands of Mary. Mary is the one who directs the soul into the state of entire transformation in God.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Carmelites vied for the palm, the better to glorify Mary, especially in France. After the winter of the Revolution and after the Restoration of the nineteenth century, there blossomed the 'Flower of Lisieux' who rendered more simple and more evangelical the notion of marian piety', who calls Mary more mother than Queen, who realized

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290 Elisée, 855; PN 54
292 Elisée, 856
293 Elisée, 857
294 Smet, vol. 3, pt 1, 497
295 Elisée, 858
296 cf. CJ, 21, VIII, 3
Carmel's marian piety within every moment of her life: silent, hidden interior by preference. Hence that moment in her life, which Therese designated as "under the veil of the Virgin", draws attention to her marian formation, from that of external acts of piety to those of internal sentiments which occur within the context of Carmel: "totus marianus est."

**Under the Veil of the Virgin**

Therese's desires to enter Carmel were fulfilled on 9 April 1888. On 10 January 1889 she took the habit of Carmel. But it was not until 11 July 1897 that she revealed to Mother Agnes a grace she received through the hands of Mary, during the month of July 1889. This grace emphasizes 1) the role of Mary in the life of the baptized with 2) a palpable manifestation of divine control under the action of the Holy Spirit that now, 3) as a Carmelite, she is "a true child of Our Lady" and, finally, 4) Carmelite marian piety "hidden, silent, interior by preference."

What is this grace? In brief, Therese told Mother Agnes that she understood by experience what is called "a flight of the spirit" and described it as hidden under the veil of the Virgin. She remained "hidden" for a week and seemed to be outside of herself. In a later oblique reference to being under this veil, she would discover Jesus nursed there by his mother Mary.

In the yellow notebook Mother Agnes wrote on 11 July 1897: "During Matins, she spoke to me of her prayers at other times, the evening during the silence of summer and told me to have understood by experience what a 'flight of the spirit' was. She

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287 Elisée, p. 859, note 46
288 Elisée, p. 855
289 Elisée, p 859
300 cf. CJ, II, VII
301 PN 1,1
told me of another grace of this kind, received in the grotto of St. Mary Magdalene, in the month of July 1889, a grace which was followed by several days of quietude."

The authentic ownership of this language in this preface to the description of Therese is difficult to ascertain. Words like "flight of the spirit" and "quietude" are technical words of the great mystics, rarely found in Therese's own writings. Whether Mother Agnes is defining terms of "this kind" or they were actually used by Therese in this conversation remains of secondary importance. What is helpful though, is the place and date mentioned wherein Therese received this grace.

Sr. Genevieve gives a sober description of the place, a grotto dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene: "It is a grotto made of flint...constructed at the back of the cemetery, against the wall. The little statue of St. Madeleine, since painted differently, occupies the same place in the cleft of the rocks." The same grotto is surmounted by a statue of the Immaculate Conception, plainly in view. Within this grotto, following the custom of the Carmelites, Therese took her "hermitage day". As to the date, no other precision is given other than "July 1889". Prior to this date, the Martin sisters had been concerned about the health of their father who had been committed to the Bon Sauveur in Caen. That is the context of the grace Therese recounted exactly eight years later:

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302 CJ. 11, VII, 2; cf. Last Conversations, 88, n. 31, 32, 33
303 Teresa of Avila, The Interior Castle, 2:123
304 Teresa of Avila, The Way of Perfection, 2:123
305 CJ. 11. VII. 2, note b
306 Ms A 73r note; PO 573; CGI: 451s

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"It was though a veil had been cast over all the things of this earth for me...I was entirely hidden under the veil of the Blessed Virgin. At this time, I was placed in charge of the refectory and I recall doing things as though not doing them, it was as if someone lent me a body. I remained that way for one whole week."

The experience seems to have profoundly marked this Carmelite's soul.

Hidden

"Hidden under the veil" is a striking image and it reappears frequently in her letters (1888-1894) and after 1894 in her poetry. The Carmelites had three veils, a short one for work, a longer one for choir and a transparent one that veiled their faces, as on certain retreats or in the parlor. Having taken the veil, the novice wore white and the professed, black. Beyond the literal sense, Therese attached a symbolic sense. She reminds Sr. Marie of the Eucharist that the black veil means the spouse of Jesus is in exile. Without reporting the grace of 1889, the veil maintains the sense of "hidden". The letter to Sr. Agnes during her ten day retreat, May 1890, echoes the grace of the grotto. Like a grain of sand, hidden, insignificant, Therese desired to remain hidden, within the dark shadows of this exile, she wants to hide under the veil in order to share her light.

"Tell Jesus to look at me so that the four o'clocks may penetrate with their bright rays the heart of the grain of sand..." This floral symbolism comes from a prayer to the Holy Face composed by Sr. Agnes of Jesus. She compared each of his

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307 CJ. 11. VII. 2
308 cf. Elisée, 846, 848
309 LT 150 13, V, 88
310 Ms A 35v, 71r, 75r, 86r; Ms B 2r
311 LT 234 2. VI, 97
312 Ms A 20v, 48r, 13r; Ms C 7r, 26v, 27r, LT 201 1, IX, 96; LT 226 9, V, 97

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features to flowers, the eyes being "belles-de nuit" or four o'clocks. Sr. Agnes introduced her sister to this devotion, influenced by the writings of Sr. Marie of St. Peter of the Tours' Carmel. Therese entered deeply into this devotion in a very personal way because of the events in her own life and also her own reading, but especially when she made the discovery of chapter fifty-three of Isaiah. In a letter to Sr. Martha of Jesus she attached "of the Holy Face" to her name for the first time 10 Jan 1889. This Holy Face is also hidden, with eyes lowered, he gazes upon all the tribulations of his Therese and her sisters of which she writes in her letters. Her Jesus reflects the same. Thus toward the month of July 1889, Therese is marked by the words of Isaiah "His face was hidden" (Is. 53:3). She perceived the realization of these words in the Incarnation, in the Passion, in the Eucharist; forgetfulness of self no longer suffices, she must be hidden like the Suffering Servant, Jesus. Penetrating more and more this mystery with pure faith the Veil of the Virgin remains a refuge, a hiding place, a place of

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313 cf LT 103 note 5
314 cf LT 80 note 2
315 LT 87, 95, 98, 102, 105, 108, 110, 115, 117, 120, 127, 134, 140, 149, 156, 161
316 PN 23, 2; 24, 1, 28; 32, 3; 40, 5
317 cf VT juillet 83, 215
318 PN 13, 4
319 PN 1, 1; PN 13, 4; LT 161 26. IV. 94

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repose, peaceful sleep, in short, a child's symbol of security, the place of abandonment.

What Therese expresses simply: "It was as though a veil had been cast over all the things of the earth for me... I recall doing things as though not doing them; it was as if someone had lent me a body..." the great Carmelite mystics St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross are at pains to articulate.

St. Teresa of Avila describes this state in the Way of Perfection: "Those who enjoy this favor ... see with evidence that they are not entirely at their exterior occupations. They lack the principle, I want to say the will, which, according to me, is thus united to her God, and leaves the other powers of the soul free so that she occupies herself with the service of his glory." St. John of the Cross nuances this experience even more.

When the soul is united with God, she lives without form or images, the imagination disengaged, the memory prolonged in a fine sovereign in a great forgetfulness, without remembering what may be. For, this union with God empties her of imagination, brushes away all images and knowledge and raises her to the supernatural... The cause of this forgetfulness is the purity, the simplicity of this knowledge. And this knowledge occupies the soul and renders it pure, simple and limpid, disengaged from all human attainments, from images which furnish ordinarily the senses and memory, and which yields the soul to act in time. This is why it leaves the soul in forgetfulness and without time....

Therese "remained that way for one whole week."

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320 PN 5, 11
321 PN 44, 8; 54, 12
322 cf Poésies, tome II, 90
323 Teresa of Avila, Way of Perfection, 2:123
324 John of the Cross, Ascent of Mt. Carmel, 255, 310, 307
325 ibid. 170, 187; 164
326 CJ. 11.VII.2
This grace given to beginners seems to be like the other graces: the smile of 13 May 1883 and the experience at Notre Dame des Victoires of 4 Nov 1887 which are bathed in a marian light. In this grace of July 1889, Therese is under the Veil of the Virgin, a symbol of this great forgetfulness. This rapport seems to be suggested by John of the Cross himself who at the end of his explanation of it concludes: "Such are the works and prayers of the ever glorious Virgin, Our Lady, who from the beginning being raised to this high state, never had in her soul a form imprinted by any creature and never put one there herself, but always under the action of the Holy Spirit."\(^\text{328}\)

Yet, Therese does not forget this forgetfulness, nor to give it its marian dimension, that of being under the veil of the Virgin. Not willing to risk what happened on 13 May 1883, this grace seems to go the way of that of 4 November 1887: it remains hidden, silent, interior by preference. Although she finds herself powerless to express in human language the secrets of heaven, she does reveal something of them in her poetry where human language reaches its pinnacle. Her first poem, "The Divine Rose," requested by Sr. Therese of St. Augustine, couches St. Therese of the Child Jesus' experience of the flight of the spirit in veiled language.

\textit{The Divine Rose}

A quick perusal of the dates Therese's verses, listed below, indicates a recurrence of this image "under the veil," to express this experience of the flight of the spirit. Thus:

\(^{327}\)ibid. 256, 311; 307

\(^{328}\)ibid. 257, 313-314
2-2-1893 "Ah! Allow me to hide under the Veil."

1-6-1894 "Oh Mother, allow me to repose under your Veil."

12-25-1894 "I will hide you and the Veil where the King of Heaven takes refuge, but for that I always take refuge under my veil close to Jesus."

10-21-1895 "The shadow of your Veil is luminous and pure."

12-28-1896 "Under the starred Veil hiding your blond head"

May 1897 "Jesus sleeps in peace under the folds of your Veil."

As mentioned above, Sr. Therese of St. Augustin elicited Therese's first poem. For St. Therese of the Child Jesus, this sister was more irritating than a hair shirt, everything about her seemed disagreeable. Sr. Therese of St. Augustin recounted her part in bringing these verses about.

"One day I asked her to compose a song on one preferred subject. 'It's impossible, she told me, I know nothing about poetry.' 'What are you doing? It's not a question of sending it to the Academy; I'm only talking about pleasing me and satisfying a desire of my soul.' 'I hesitate a little because I do not know if it is the will of God.' 'Oh! for that I will give you a little counsel. Before beginning, go to our Lord saying: 'My God, if it is not your will, I ask you for the grace not to be able to perform this successfully, but if it procures your glory, come to my aid.' I believe after that you could without worry. She followed my advice."

That was the proximate source. The remote sources were themes from the Liturgy, already well known to Therese from the days of Les Buissonnets when the

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328PN 1,5
330PN 5,11,3
331PN 13, 1, 2, 4, 5
332PN 44, 8, 3
333PN 44, 8, 3
334PN 54, 12, 5
335Ms A 26v; Ms C 13v/14r
336Poésies, tome II, 46s-47

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family read Gueranger's *Liturgical Year*, its repetition in the Divine Office at Carmel, the texts of Sr. Mary of St. Peter who was influenced by d'Argentan, and Sr. Therese de St. Augustin's own well loved poem "*Le Lys Virginal*" and a verse from "*Les Mages au Carmel de Lisieux*" dedicated to her by its author Sr. Agnes of Jesus, January 6, 1884. In short, the well loved theme, and dominant image of this first poem, was Mary nursing the child Jesus "...under the Veil..."\(^{337}\) Within this context comes forth a cascade of images. This "rose of Mary" blossoms "on the Cross", his flesh and "blood", "the bread of Angels", is "the Virginal milk".\(^{338}\) Jesus suckles "under the Veil" of the Virgin and there Therese "will find a foretaste of heaven".\(^{339}\)

Nonetheless, the power of this image "the Virginal milk" is difficult to decipher in the writings of Therese. She uses it rarely, seven times in the first poem, only seven times after that.\(^{340}\) Therese seems to sense that a Mother not only gives life, but watches over its growth. Could our spiritual Mother, Mary, do any less? For we can read of St. John of the Cross, "All is mine, all is for me, the earth is mine, heaven is mine, God is mine and the Mother of my God is mine."\(^{341}\) In July 1889, Therese is hidden, with Jesus "nursing" under the Veil of the Virgin. Her desire realized itself more and more: she is a child of the Virgin, her mama.

Through her natural family and through her religious family, Jesus showed her the way to please Him and to practice the most sublime virtues. "And now I have no other desire except to love Jesus unto folly. My childish desires have all flown

\(^{337}\) PN 1, 1

\(^{338}\) PN 1, 4

\(^{339}\) PN 1, 1

\(^{340}\) LT 185; PN 18, 21; 24, 14; 26, 8; RP5; RP6

\(^{341}\) LT 137 19.X.92 following "Spiritual Canticle," 25

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away." However, soon the student will be asked to teach her teachers so well had she learned their lessons.

CHAPTER TWO

Chapter one dealt with what Therese received. Chapter two deals with what Therese did with what she received. The first part of chapter two looks at the little way in general. It goes on to consider it again but from a specifically marian perspective. The second part of chapter two examines Therese's final poem whose subject is Mary. The poem's context is the final stage of Therese's gradual development, marked by an ever deepening reflection upon and practice of fraternal charity.

Act of Oblation to Merciful Love

While writing Manuscript A, during the year 1895, Therese sought permission from her sister and superior, Mother Agnes of Jesus, to offer herself to merciful love, along with her second self, Celine. In a letter to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, now called Manuscript B she explains merciful love in the terms of the little way of spiritual childhood, passing on the fruits of her contemplation. This twofold mediation of meaning corresponds to the twofold theology in Luke/Acts. Therese explains merciful love to herself; having effected a mediation of meaning, she passes it on to the larger world; for "to explain oneself to others, one first must be able to understand oneself: one must be able to tell one's own story. Moreover, one must give a mature response to the challenge of the world." Therese does just that. Although she never intended to systematize her thoughts and intuitions, nor the

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342Ms A 82v
343N, 501

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elements of her spirituality in the scattered texts of her writings and in her conversations, there are recurring themes that constitute a theology.

On a retreat conducted from 8 to 15 October 1891, a Franciscan recollect who was supposed to do good to great sinners, but not to religious souls, did a great deal of good to Therese. She felt understood by him who launched her full sail on the waves of confidence and love because he told her that her faults caused God no pain. She had never heard that before. If Pauline had been so ready to forgive her little offense, how much more so God who is more tender than a mother. "My nature was such that fear made me recoil; with love not only did I advance, I actually flew." Therese was not discouraged by her miseries but found a way to profit from them and to be happy because Jesus seemed to be encouraging her on this way.

Therefore, from experience, like painting pictures and writing poems, she distinguished vanity from happiness. Happiness consists in hiding oneself, in remaining ignorant of created things, in understanding that without love all works are nothing, even raising the dead or converting the multitudes. It is love alone that attracted her. On the way of love, one can fall or commit infidelities, but, knowing how to draw profit from every thing, love quickly consumes every thing that can be displeasing to Jesus. Love leaves nothing but a humble and

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345 Ms A 80r/80v
346 Ms 80v
347 Ms 81r
348 Ms 83r
profound peace in the depths of the heart. Through love, Therese contemplated all the other perfections of God.

From her youth, Therese, realizing all the many natural and supernatural goods she had received, wanted to share now her love. In fact, if all creatures had received the same graces as she did God would be not feared but loved; through love, not fear, no one would ever consent to cause Him any pain. But this love has to be chosen freely. After her illness, she returned to Alençon. While being admired and pampered, she received the grace to know the world just enough to despise it. Thoughts of death were the cure for worldly vanities: the only good is to love God with all one’s heart and to be poor in spirit here on earth. Yet, this exposure to the world enabled her to choose freely the way she was to follow: Love.

The way she was to follow was ratified in the Act of Oblation of Merciful Love which she made on Trinity Sunday 9 June 1895. It sums up Therese’s understanding of herself. Realizing how much Jesus desired to be loved she offered herself up as a victim of Divine Love. It is cast in the language of sacrificial love born of religious faith. Therese desired to be purified and consumed by the fire of Divine Love. She wished to make this act incessantly, living and dying in love.

Manuscript B: Therese’s Letter to Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart.

Therese had sufficiently pondered this mystery for herself. But her sister, Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, wanted to know the secrets Jesus was communicating to her soul. In a letter to her, Therese begins to unfold the

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349 Ms A 83r
350 Ms A 83v
351 Ms A 83v
352 Ms A 32v
implications of her offering to Merciful Love, "her little doctrine." Therese gives her sister Jesus who will teach her everything that she must do, allowing her to read in the Book of Life wherein is contained the science of love.  

Therese understood so well that it is only love which makes us acceptable to God and it was this love as the only good Therese desired ambitiously. But, like Shakespeare's Cordelia, she could not but love and be still, weeping with gratitude. Again and again she struggled to write, to tell her sister about love. Love made her desire much: she realized her three privileges summed up her true vocation: Carmelite, Spouse, Mother; but love made her desire more: Warrior, Priest, Apostle, Doctor, Martyr. Her immense desires caused her a "veritable martyrdom."

I Corinthians 12 and 13 quenched her desires. The twelfth chapter convinced her that not everyone can do everything in the Mystical Body of Christ. But that did not satisfy her completely. She read on and discovered that charity is the more excellent way. She had her answer. Surely, the Body had a heart; within "the heart of the Church, my mother, I shall be love."

Without love the apostles would not preach the Gospel, martyrs would not shed their blood. I understood that love comprised all vocations, that love was everything, that it embraced all times and places, in a word, that it was eternal--my vocation. I have found it: MY VOCATION IS LOVE.
Thus, a new way, a new meaning informed her life: Love is everything. Within the Church, she would perform the smallest acts, like picking up a pin, for pure love, because they are of more value to the Church than all other works put together.

Elements of the Little Way Contained in the Letter.

She desired to suffer for love and to rejoice through love. Love is repaid by love alone and she wanted to use her riches to make friends; because, if Divine Justice demanded pure and spotless victims, then Love lowered itself to the weak and imperfect, transforming nothingness into fire: Therese would ransom souls through love by having them understand her little way: a) divine condescension; b) spiritual childhood; c) abandonment; d) suffering; e) the practice of hidden virtues.

a) Divine Condescension: "For us men and for our salvation, he came down from heaven." Christ lay aside his divinity and clothed himself in humanity. This is the presupposition in all of Therese's writing. He taught her little by little that His love is revealed as perfectly in the most simple soul that does not resist his grace as in the most excellent soul. His grace is a condescending grace, to simple souls, in little ways. Therese had hoped for snow on her Clothing Day 10 January 1889, but the weather was too mild for snow. Yet after the ceremony, in which she herself was mantled in white, so was the world outside: "What bridegroom could do the same?...This accentuated even more the incomprehensible condescension of the Spouse of Virgins."

b) Jesus remains present in His Church. Therese saw herself as a child of the Church, her Mother. Her own glory would be the reflected glory which shines

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359 Ms B 4r
360 Ms A 2v
361 Ms A 73r

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on her Mother's forehead.\textsuperscript{362}As a child she had a dream of two sprites dancing on a barrel in the garden. When they saw Therese approach they fled. She felt God had permitted her to remember that dream in order to prove to her that a soul in a state of grace has nothing to fear from demons who are cowards, capable of fleeing before the gaze of a little child.\textsuperscript{363}Marie had told her, as she prepared her for her communions, about suffering, but that Therese would probably not walk that way: God would always carry her as a child.\textsuperscript{364}In Carmel, when deprived of Fr. Pichon as spiritual director, Therese turned to the Director of directors: "It was he who taught me the science hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to little ones."\textsuperscript{365}But, Therese does not understand spiritual childhood in terms of Matthew's injunction "Unless you become like little children you shall not enter the kingdom of God"; (Mt 18:4) but rather in terms of the Old Testament: "Whoever is a little one let him come to me" (Pr 9:4). "For to him that is little, mercy will be shown." (Ws 6:7). "As one whom a mother caresses, so will I comfort you; you shall be carried at the breasts and upon the knees they will caress you." (Is 66:12-13).\textsuperscript{366}

c) The means of spiritual childhood, however, is the surrender of a little child who sleeps without fear in its Father's arms.\textsuperscript{367}Jesus does not demand great actions from us but simply surrender and gratitude.\textsuperscript{368}At Jacob's

\textsuperscript{362}Ms B 4r
\textsuperscript{363}Ms A 10v
\textsuperscript{364}Ms A 36r
\textsuperscript{365}Ms A 71r
\textsuperscript{366}Ms B 1r
\textsuperscript{367}Ms B 1r
\textsuperscript{368}Ms B 1v
well, he asks the Samaritana: "Give me to drink" (Jn 4:7). Jesus is parched; for he met only the ungrateful and indifferent among His disciples in the world, and among his own disciples, he finds few hearts who surrender to Him without reservations, who understand the real tenderness of His infinite love. Therese lamented her own weakness. She saw the saints as eagles and herself as a small little bird. The eagles soar toward the sun; the small bird is distracted by the things of this earth. Yet, even when the Sun is hidden she will continue to believe in it. Yet, even when unfaithful, that small bird will not weep or die of sorrow. Rather, it recounts in detail all its infidelities, thinking in the boldness of its full trust that it will acquire in even greater fullness the love of Him who came to call not the just but sinners.  

d) The little way is the way of suffering—the only way to attain holiness. The Lord only parcels out trials according to the strength he also gives. When Pauline announced her entrance into Carmel, Therese saw life as nothing but continual suffering and separation: "I did not understand the joy of sacrifice." When Therese herself was in Carmel she was to draw on the riches of her Spouse in order to repay Pauline for all she suffered on her account, because He repays one hundredfold. Marie had told her that she would walk without suffering while preparing Therese for communion; but, instead Therese's desire for suffering grew. She believed Jesus had a great number of crosses for her. Suffering became her attraction; Her Beloved

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369 Ms B 5r
370 Ms A 10r
371 Ms A 25v
372 Ms A 29v
suffered without loving suffering.\textsuperscript{373} In imitation of Jesus, who came into this land of exile, willing to suffer and to die in order to draw souls to the Blessed Trinity,\textsuperscript{374} so did Therese want to taste the sweet bitterness of martyrdom.\textsuperscript{375}

e) But one cannot become a martyr unless one is prepared to live like one. Therese therefore applied herself to the practice of hidden virtues, not having the capability of practicing the great. She had a love of mortification but was allowed nothing in the way of satisfying it. Rather, the penances the superior allowed her consisted in mortifying her self-love, which did her much more good than corporal penances.\textsuperscript{376} She would not ask for her lamp back, once taken, nor excuse herself for a vase she did not break, nor talk to Mother Agnes of Jesus unless it was important. These are small in appearance but they cost her a great deal. In Carmel, Mother Genevieve had practiced the ordinary hidden virtues with humble trust in Divine Mercy. Therese desired to imitate her. Therese dreamed that Mother Genevieve, being about to die, was disposing of her property; to Therese she repeated three times with emphasis: "To you, I leave my heart."

Again and again, Therese repeats that true glory is that which will last eternally, and to reach it, it isn't necessary to perform striking works,\textsuperscript{377} but rather in breaking a will so ready to impose itself on others, in holding back a reply,

\textsuperscript{373}Ms A 36v  
\textsuperscript{374}Ms B 5v  
\textsuperscript{375}Ms B 5v  
\textsuperscript{376}Ms A 74v  
\textsuperscript{377}Ms A 32r
in rendering little services without any recognition.\textsuperscript{378} She realized this not in prayer but in the midst of her daily occupations. In another dream, Venerable Anne of Jesus, the foundress of Carmel in France, reassured her that God was pleased with her poor little actions and desires: "He asks no other thing from you. He is content, very content."\textsuperscript{379} It struck her all the more because previously she had been indifferent to Venerable Anne of Jesus.\textsuperscript{380} She would prove her love by not allowing one little sacrifice to escape, not one look, one word, profiting by all the smallest things and doing them through love.\textsuperscript{381} It is only the first step that costs anything.\textsuperscript{382} Yet, she humbly admitted that she is far from practicing these hidden virtues but the desire to do so gave her peace.\textsuperscript{383}

I have always wanted to be a saint... but God cannot inspire unrealizable desires. I can, then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness. It is impossible for me to grow up, and so I must bear with myself such as I am with all my imperfections. But I want to seek out a means of going to heaven by a little way, a way that is very straight, very short and totally new.\textsuperscript{384}

If the elevator can take the rich upstairs without strain on their part, so will the arms of Jesus lift her up to Perfection. These characteristics of the Little Way have their marian dimension, a kind of Magnificat follows as Therese "stammers... to express things which the human heart can hardly understand."\textsuperscript{385}

\textsuperscript{378}Ms A 68v
\textsuperscript{379}Ms B 2v
\textsuperscript{380}Ms B 2v
\textsuperscript{381}Ms B 4r/4v
\textsuperscript{382}Ms C 18v
\textsuperscript{383}Ms C 17r
\textsuperscript{384}Ms C 2v
\textsuperscript{385}Ms B 1r.
The Little Way (of discipleship): its marian characteristics

"What you have as heritage, take now as task: for thus you make it your own."\textsuperscript{386} Underneath the "arms of Jesus and Therese,"\textsuperscript{387} Therese lists her "days of Graces accorded by the Lord to his Little Spouse." Among them are "the Smile of the Virgin, May 1883," "The Entrance into Carmel, 9 April 1888," that year the feast of the Annunciation, and the very last one "The Offering of myself to Love, 9 June 1895." Above their arms is the legend "I will sing eternally the mercies of the Lord." Between the two escutcheons is the motto "Love is repaid by love done."\textsuperscript{388} Such merciful love is the inheritance of Therese. Her task is to make it her own and to make it known.

His Mercy: context of the Little Way

Elsewhere, the Act of Oblation to Merciful Love has been noted. Now its marian implications are unfolded. Mother Agnes had permitted her sisters, Celine and Therese to make this "holocaust" on Trinity Sunday, 11 June 1895. Later, on 24 February 1896, the day of Celine's profession, Therese put into her sister's cell a large print of the Holy Face, Jesus, "Only Son of God and the Virgin Mary" who will give to his "poor, exiled spouse" "the Wheat of the Elect" and "wine...sprouting from Virgins," "nourishment through the hands of the humble and glorious Virgin, the Mother of us both."\textsuperscript{389} To the Mother of them both, had Therese confided the "Act of Oblation to Merciful Love". Finally, "I offer you O Blessed Trinity the Love and merits of the Blessed Virgin my dear mother. It is to

\textsuperscript{386}B. Buby, SM. Mary the Faithful Desire. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) frontpiece quoting Goethe's Faust.

\textsuperscript{387}Ms A 85v

\textsuperscript{388}quoted from John of the Cross, Explication on the Spiritual Canticle, strophe IX

\textsuperscript{389}LT 183, 24. II. 96

72
her I abandon my offering, begging her to present it to You". Later, Celine, that is Sr. Genevieve, said that Therese placed in the hands of the Virgin all the merits of each day, applying them as she wished and also those that would be given to her after death.\textsuperscript{380}

This continuous offering had a practical expression. At three o'clock each day Therese recited the "Hail Mary", offering to her the work she was doing.\textsuperscript{391} In fact, Therese recommended all of her intentions and enterprises to the Virgin, thinking that all conversions must be obtained by invocation to her.\textsuperscript{392} Conversions were the desire of Therese, expressed in a letter carried on her heart the day of her profession, the Liturgical celebration of Mary's birthday, 8 September 1890. "Jesus allowed me to save many souls".\textsuperscript{393} She repeats this desire in the Act of Oblation five years later. "...to work for the glory of Holy Church by saving souls on earth..."\textsuperscript{394} All is placed in Mary's hands; Therese, therefore, had unabashed confidence. "Her Divine Son, my Beloved Spouse, told us in the days of His mortal life: "Whatsoever you ask in my Father's name he will give it to you." I am certain, then, that You will grant my desires..."\textsuperscript{395}

Divine Condescension

Why did Therese express such confidence, a sure sign post on the Little Way? Such confidence is born of "what the Almighty has done for me" of "divine

\textsuperscript{380}PO 282, PA 286
\textsuperscript{391}CSG 89s
\textsuperscript{392}PO 291; CSG 49, 89
\textsuperscript{393}cf. Mss Appendices, 317
\textsuperscript{394}cf. Mss Appendices, 318
\textsuperscript{395}ibid.
condescension. It is for Merciful Love to come down to the little, the weak, "the lowly" (Lk 1:48,52). Neither Mary nor Therese are diminished by this but "raised up" (Lk 1:52). "The Almighty" even consents to calling them Mother and Sister (Lk 8:21), such is divine condescension that the only Son of God is an obedient Son to Mary and Joseph. He hides his power; nevertheless, each deed, each attitude of his, Mary adores without fully comprehending - "like us". Therese, the "little bird" of Jesus is happy to be "weak and little" but she has the desires of an eagle. Mary seemed to Therese much the same because in her littleness, in her weakness, hidden from human concern, Therese intuited, God's holiness triumphs! That is to say, the Word of God comes down to Mary; joyously she responded in her fiat, faithfully guarded "all those things in her heart" (Lk 2:19); without measure, she adhered to the reality of its content and embraced the Little Child, the Word of God Himself announced to her. Thus, concerning the divinity of her Son, she knew it as do all believers, "from hearing" (Rm 10:17), by the light of the word of the angel, and by the signs that followed his message, all of which meditation on the Bible always renders more comprehensible.

Perhaps, the most intense experience for Therese of divine condescension was in Holy Communion. Elsewhere it has been noted, what Therese thought about the significance of the Eucharist, but in her last poem she tells the Virgin what she thinks:

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396 cf PN 54, 5; Ms B 3v
397 PN 54, 2; CJ. 21. VIII. 3
398 Ms B 4v
399 Nicolas, 516
400 Nicolas, 512
O Beloved Mother, in spite of my littleness like you I possess within myself the Almighty, but I do not tremble while seeing my weakness. The treasure of the Mother belongs to the child. And I am your child; Oh my dear Mother, your virtues, your love, are they not mine? Also when in my heart descends the white Host, Jesus, your sweet lamb, believes to repose in you.\(^{401}\)

Her sisters repeated similar expressions, heard from the lips of Therese. Sr. Therese of St. Augustine recalled that while making her preparations for Communion, she did so in union with the Virgin, asking her to clothe her soul with her own dispositions.\(^{402}\) To her sister Pauline, Mother Agnes, she wrote in her first manuscript about this more explicitly. She imagined her soul as a piece of land and begged the Blessed Virgin to remove any rubbish that would prevent it from being free. The Virgin must set up a tent, adorn it with her own jewels, invite all the angels and saints, and provide music. Jesus would know such contentment there that his Therese would be happy as well.\(^{403}\) To a young novice she returns to a theme mentioned above, that of clothing. She tells, Sr. Marie of the Trinity, her novice, that she sometimes sees herself as a little girl three or four years old, playing with all her might, yet dishevelled and dirty. Soon the Virgin comes, puts her arms around her, then straightens her apron, arranges her hair and adorns it with a ribbon or maybe even a little flower. It was enough for Therese to thank "her mama" and approach the festival of angels without blushing.\(^{404}\) Thus did Therese respond to her sisters about Holy Communion, each thought given with thought to the receiver, such was her own delicate condescension.

\(^{401}\) PN 54, 5

\(^{402}\) PO 329

\(^{403}\) Ms A 79v/80r

\(^{404}\) cf VT janv. 1979, 59
Spiritual Childhood

Just as the "Almighty looked with favor on his lowly servant", so the way of spiritual childhood emerged for Therese as an appropriate response to this favor of divine condescension. Therese's initial predilection was for the Child Jesus, the Little One. But with her introduction to the Holy Face, subsequently added to her religious name, she seemed to concentrate less on "the Child" and more on the God-Man; as God grew within her, Therese became less: she became the child, weak and imperfect, but full of trust. She reflected this child-like quality in her prayers to the Virgin.

Her faithfulness to the Memorare and her trouble with the rosary and acceptance of it have already been noted. In her spontaneous prayers, as well, she revealed yet another signpost along the Little Way, a child-like disposition. Mary never failed to protect her as soon as she was invoked. "If I was troubled, I quickly turned to her, and like always, like the most tender of mothers, she took care of all my interest." With the candor of a child she prayed likewise: "My good Blessed Virgin, make it such that your Little Therese never puts holes in herself." An exact theologian would see in this apparent childishness a manner of practicing conditional prayer. But she saw herself as a child and with a child's spontaneity, graced with recourse to Mary, permitted herself this kind of trust and confidence.

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406 A, 152, note 175


407 Ms C 26r

408 VT juillet 1983, 231, n. 37

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When her profession was delayed she found the sacrifice difficult, but also saw it as an opportunity to grow in "wisdom, age, and grace." She wanted to come to Jesus in a beautiful dress and the Virgin helped her "prepare the dress of my soul." Meanwhile, she wrote to her sister Celine, who was on pilgrimage to Lourdes in May of 1890. She hoped the Virgin would grant her sister her graces, either of consolation or light; she urged Celine to hide well in the shadow of her virginal mantle; she herself prayed to the Virgin so much for her. Her prayer to the Virgin is at every instant, as indispensable to her soul as breathing is to the body. "I love her very much... I so love the Blessed Virgin... Virgin Mary I love you with all my heart."

In the Spring of 1889, she wrote to Marie Guerin not to fear, it was impossible to love the Virgin too much, for Jesus is very happy when she is loved as his mother. In the Autumn of 1892, she wrote to Celine about the Virgin. To her, she confided one of her simplicities. Sometimes she caught herself saying "But my Good Blessed Virgin I find that I am happier than you because I have you as a Mother and you have no Blessed Virgin to love... It is true that you are the Mother of Jesus but this Jesus has given us you completely,... and on the cross he gave us you as our Mother; we are richer than you because we possess not only Jesus but

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409 Ms A 75r
410 ibid.
411 LT 105 10. V. 90
412 CJ. 11. IX. 7; Ms C 25v; CJ 4. IX. 4
413 PA 471
you."\textsuperscript{414} She suspects the Virgin laughs at her naivete but Therese knows the thought to be true. Her last written words were to echo the same sentiment.\textsuperscript{415}

In 1894, Celine entered Carmel and brought with her the family statue of the Virgin of the Smile, the same one Mme. Martin had venerated so much, in whom she had great confidence, from whom she had received favors known to her alone.\textsuperscript{416} When Therese went to the convent door to receive the statue, she picked it up rapidly, as if picking up a pen, and easily carried it off. She astonished the sisters because it was very heavy. She put the statue on a white table brought from Buissonnets, within an ante chamber near her cell, separated from it by a light wooden folding screen. It became a sort of little oratory of the Blessed Virgin.\textsuperscript{417} Before this same statue, then placed in the infirmary, at the end of her life, Therese wove crowns of forget-me-nots in order to give her "mama" pleasure.\textsuperscript{418}

Such was her childlike simplicity and trust in the Mother of the Lord. Mary took charge of her affairs. For the Little Way of little souls is the way of pure Love in pure faith without great exterior works. Mary is the model of this love, of this faith, not as a double of Jesus, but totally dependent on Him, "daughter of Your only Son."\textsuperscript{419} The mediating role of Mary, her maternal character which predestined her to help the Little Ones, is understood because, not only her soul, but her life

\textsuperscript{414}LT 139 19. X. 92
\textsuperscript{415}CJ 21. VIII. 3; cf Mss III 34
\textsuperscript{416}CF 1. I. 63
\textsuperscript{417}PA 434
\textsuperscript{418}CJ 11. 9. 3
\textsuperscript{419}Dante, Commedia Divina, "Paradiso" Canto XXXIII.I
had been simple in its sublimity.\textsuperscript{420} "He remembers his promises of mercy... to his children." (Lk 2:54-55)

**Abandonment**

Her sublimity as Mother of God, Immaculate, holiest of all creatures, beloved of Christ, illumines the marian implications of the Little Way. Indeed Mary lived the most perfect human life possible. The Church renders all this light more visible, and gives it its full value and meaning. Yet, Therese, not a theologian in the professional sense, is therefore content to apply spontaneously to the Virgin her notion, derived from experience, of holiness - a life lived with Jesus and for Jesus alone. Therese applied her experience - of abandonment, of surrender, of letting go and letting God - to the Virgin. At the foot of the Cross, Mary felt more than compassion; she felt the same abandonment as Jesus on the Cross. For Therese the cross was a matter of purification and participation. Jesus leads all those who he loves along the way of his cross, the way of abandonment and suffering.

It was among her novices especially that Therese learned to let go and let God. For example, "Many times, while speaking to the novices, it happened that I invoked (Mary) and felt the benefit of her motherly protection,"\textsuperscript{421} thus renouncing her own preferences, her own conceptions, her own way, while waging war on imperfections.\textsuperscript{422} Often her novices would say she had an answer for everything: "Where do you get everything you say?"\textsuperscript{423}

Therese never failed to lead them to her source. For example, at the Apostolic Process Sr. Marthe, the companion of Therese in the novitiate, said that she was

\textsuperscript{420} Nicolas, 519.
\textsuperscript{421} Ms C 26r
\textsuperscript{422} MsC 23v
\textsuperscript{423} Ms C 26r
suffering very much. She tried to hide it from Therese by speaking to her in a very 
friendly manner. But Therese said to her: "You are troubled, I'm sure of 
it."\textsuperscript{424} Sr. Marthe could not figure out how she knew.\textsuperscript{425} Therese told her her secret, on a similar occasion. She never made an observation without invoking the 
Blessed Virgin, asking her to inspire her with a word or action that would produce 
the most good: "I myself am often astonished at the things I teach you. I feel simply 
that in speaking them to you that I am not mistaken."\textsuperscript{426}

Sr. Mary of the Trinity related similar astonishment. In direction with Therese, 
she had things to say that bothered her. Therese would lead her to the statue of the 
"Smiling Virgin" and would say that it was not to her but to the Blessed Virgin that 
she told her troubles. Sr. Mary revealed her tensions as Therese listened to her 
confidences. Following that, Therese made her kiss the hand of Mary, a mark both 
of tenderness and submission. She gave her some advice and peace returned to her 
soul.\textsuperscript{427}

Therese confided to Mother Gonzague that she was overwhelmed at the thought 
of directing souls.\textsuperscript{428} Her prioress assured her she had what was necessary, 
perhaps remembering that "His secrets" are revealed "to the little ones." "I prefer 
to agree very simply that the Almighty has done great things in the soul of His 
divine Mother's child, and the greatest thing is to have shown her her littleness, her

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{424}{ibid.}
\footnotetext{425}{PA 418}
\footnotetext{426}{cf VT juillet 1979, 228.}
\footnotetext{427}{PA 471}
\footnotetext{428}{Ms C 4r}
\end{footnotes}
Therese numbered herself among the lowly, those lacking, because she had abandoned herself to the Almighty "God her savior". (Lk 2:47)

**Suffering**

Therese recognized early her "excessive self-love" at the end of her life she could write that she has understood charity. Jesus alone who is acting in her. In between, such love cost her a great deal: it "takes place in the midst of sacrifices". Suffering alone attracted her. Love, when it is pure, actual and perfect, renders the soul capable of experiential awareness. Therese became capable of living "now" and accepted her ignorance of the "hour". Therese suffered as Mary did, enlightened little by little, keeping all things in her heart and turning them over and over. Such suffering, such love, such faith is mentioned in the Lucan marian text, "narratives...coming from the Virgin herself" (who) "invites us to comprehend also how much her suffering, her love, her faith was human, meditative, progressive, going from light to light, rather than given perfectly in the first instant."

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429ibid.

430Ms A 8v

431Ms C 11v

432Ms C 12v

433Ms C 8v

434Ms A 32r; Ms C 10v

435Nicolas, 514.

436Nicolas, 513.

Once again, Therese the novice mistress perceived a suffering heart. On Christmas Eve 1896, she left a note for her sister, Celine, i.e. Sr. Genevieve. The envelope was labeled as sent from the Virgin to her child without ease in a foreign land. The Virgin told her how much she rejoiced her heart and the heart of her child. But she neither perceived nor understood this, and her soul sorrowed. "I would like to be able to console you; if I do not do it, it is because I know the prize of suffering and anguish of heart."{438}

In the last months of her life, Therese reflected on commingling of this abandonment and suffering. "Our Lord really died as a Victim of Love, and you see what his agony was."{439} Nevertheless, Therese desired a beautiful death to please her sisters. She asked the Blessed Virgin to arrange it because asking her was not like asking God. She did not want to oblige God. It seemed to her other saints sought the intercession of the Virgin; just so, Therese decided to go to her first, seeming immediately to receive the grace she requested: "Do it yourselves and see". {440} She requested to die and told the Blessed Virgin so; yet said she could do as she pleased with her "little wish". {441} For "when we pray to the Blessed Virgin and she doesn't answer, that's a sign she doesn't want to. Then it's better to leave her alone and not torment ourselves."{442} In her prayers to the Virgin, Therese put no limit. She might hide her suffering from the Good God, whom she always wanted to make happy, but she did not hide anything from Mary. {443}

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{438}LT 211 25. XIII. 96
{439}CJ 4. VI. 1
{440}PA 156
{441}CJ 6. VI. 9
{442}CJ 23. VIII. 8
{443}PA 471
In the course of her dying days, she did not guard her thoughts but expressed quite openly "I have asked the Blessed Virgin that I be not so tired and withdrawn as I have been all these days. I really felt I was causing you pain. This evening, she answered me." Neither Mother Agnes nor Celine could stop looking at Therese who that day was no longer suffering and seemed transfigured. Getting better to her surprise, Therese forced herself not to be sad. "The Blessed Virgin really carried out my message well...I tell her often: Tell Him never to put Himself out on my account...I am totally content with what God does, I desire only His will." Did Therese no longer suffer because she had so completely abandoned herself to "God her Savior" or did she suffer like Him who cried out: "My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?" (Mk 15:34) "I was asking the Blessed Virgin yesterday evening to stop me from coughing in order that Sister Genevieve would be able to sleep, but I added: If you don't do it, I'll love you even more." 

During her illness, her sisters moved the miraculous statue of the Virgin of the Smile into the infirmary, at the foot of Therese's bed, as has been noted earlier. "My good Blessed Virgin, here is what gives me the desire to leave: I tire out my little sisters, and then I give them pain when being so sick...Yes, I would like to go." Just hours before she died she murmured, "O my good Blessed Virgin, come to my help." Such were her last prayers in which she repeated so often

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444 CJ 4. VI. 1
445 CJ 10. VI
447 CJ 15. VIII. 4
448 CJ 28. VIII. 9
449 CJ 30. IX.
what she wanted from Mary: to be protected in her woundedness. Once again, it is the cry of "Mama", not Therese, the child, bouncing off each step of the stairs and calling out to Mme. Martin, but now in her dying, directed to her heavenly mother with each step of her life. In her weakness, in her suffering, both physical and spiritual, she had the same need to be sustained, the same confidence to be protected by her whom "all generations call blest". (Lk 1:48)

Hidden Virtues

"Let the priests, then, show us practicable virtues!" Therese was struck by the ordinariness of Mary's life as revealed by the Gospels. Her life consisted of humble work, like the majority of women, and it was hidden from the majority of people, most Carmelite in its expression: "hidden, silent, interior by preference." Mary's life, for Therese, is without visions, interior words, revelations, ecstatic phenomena, or charismatic graces like miracles or prophecies. Thus, the highest love can be attained on this earth with neither extraordinary light nor felt experience, according to Therese, because this was the Virgin's own inner life. The Hiddenness of Mary is echoed in the Gospel even to her Assumption. "...it is necessary above all that we can imitate her." Therese prefers imitation to admiration, and "Mary's life was so simple!"

Therese's novices knew this well. In order to excite one of them to virtue, a novice said, "Therese competed with me to make little sacrifices which were marked

\[450\text{cf Ms A 32v, 35v, 57r; Ms C 25v, 26r}\]
\[451\text{cf. Ms A 5r/v; A, 18, n.6}\]
\[452\text{CJ 23. VIII. 9}\]
\[453\text{Nicolas, 515}\]
\[454\text{CJ 23. VIII. 9}\]
\[455\text{ibid.}\]
each day, placing the list each Sunday at the foot of the Virgin."\textsuperscript{456} Therese's love manifested itself in a multitude of these kinds of little actions in which the Virgin, together with Jesus, intervened. Thus, for example, she struggled with herself to care for Mother Gonzague's sisters from Tours.\textsuperscript{457} She struggled not to succumb to thoughts against authority because of Mother Gonzague's imposition, but implored God to help her overcome them. She did this by thinking she prepared the night-light not for Mother Gonzague's relatives, but for the Mother and her Child, no longer feeling angry and fidgety, but peaceful and sweet. Even if she had taken the wrong lamp and had to do it over, the thought of the Virgin and Jesus needing it filled her with sweetness that she resolved never to question obedience which had gained for her such delight. This child Jesus was obedient to His Mother - could she do less? Moreover, she encouraged another novice to make a trousseau for the Infant at Christmas, in the same spirit of obedience.\textsuperscript{458} She herself offered morsels of her food to the Holy Family as she ate in the refectory.\textsuperscript{459} Hidden, silent, ordinary - such practicable virtues profited her a great deal.

Such virtues were those of the Virgin. Therese constantly represented Mary as an active presence in heaven as she had been on earth, so human, so approachable, so imitable. Mary's life was a continual witnessing that heaven is in continuity with earth: there, in heaven, flowers what had been lived here on earth; there in full light what was possessed in darkness here; there revealed what was hidden here; there proclaimed what was silent here; there extraordinary what was ordinary here:

\textsuperscript{456}PA 434
\textsuperscript{457}CJ 12. VII. 1
\textsuperscript{458}cf. Ms C 13r
\textsuperscript{459}CJ 24. VII. 1
the greatness of Mary's soul, there and here favored, there and here blessed: "Holy is his name." (Lk 1:49)
PART II

Therese's Life: Manuscript C

By the time Therese had written Manuscript C, in obedience to the wish of Mother Gonzague, she had been perfected through suffering. To paraphrase Hebrews 5:8, daughter though she was she learned obedience through what she suffered; for Mother Gonzague had given her to drink of the living waters of humiliation. This obedience curbed Therese's self-seeking ego and the living waters of humiliation made her grow. Writing under obedience, Therese felt powerless to express all that was within her soul and longed for heaven where each would be understood in a single glance. However, here below, those who are able to express themselves, those who are more enlightened, show God's love in as much as those more enlightened nourish with their thoughts those less enlightened. Nonetheless, perfection does not consist in receiving spiritual lights; thinking beautiful thoughts is nothing without doing good works. Thus, within the context of doing the job of Novice Mistress while Mother Gonzague held the title; of dying from tuberculosis; of enduring a dark trial of faith, Therese like Jesus, was perfected through suffering in body, mind and soul. To Mother Gonzague she gave the fruits of her passion: thoughts on communion; contemplation; prayer; faith; and above all, the compenetration of fraternal and divine charity.


461 Ms C 2r
462 Ms C 32r
463 Ms A 56v
464 Ms C 19v
Presbyter (the Mature)

Therese’s thought, now brought to maturity, was to nourish novices; Mother Gonzague had appointed her Novice Mistress in March, 1896. While Novice Mistress she learned much because she was forced to practice what she was teaching to others. However, she would rather receive reproofs than give them, while trying not to attract hearts to herself but to lead them to God and to see Jesus in their Superior. In directing souls, she realized that while all have the same battles to fight, there are a great many differences: "Souls vary more than faces do" Fr. Pinchon used to say. It was prayer and sacrifice which gave her all her strength in directing souls. For instance, she told one Novice that a Carmelite’s duty was to pray and not to write letters in order to obtain conversions; shortly thereafter they, having joined in prayer, won over the sought-after convert without the letter. Again and again, Therese received nourishment for souls from Jesus while renouncing her own likings, her own conceptions, her own way, while waging war on imperfections. In the eyes of others she may have traveled the road of honors, but deep within her heart she suffered.

As Novice Mistress, Therese saw her greatest asset in littleness; she did not disagree with Mother Gonzague’s assessment of her humility. God had done great things for her and the greatest thing was to make her powerless. If, when the veil was lifted from her imperfections and the novices let her know about it, then she

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465 Ms C 19r
466 Ms C 23r
467 Ms C 23v
468 Ms C 24v
469 Ms C 23r
470 Ms C 4r
counted it a joy;\textsuperscript{471} for not only was she content in her weakness but she gloried in it.\textsuperscript{472}

Like the psalmist's silver, Therese was seven times refined by suffering. When she saw Pauline go to Carmel, her soul was far from being mature and she was to pass through many crucibles of suffering like her departure before attaining the end she so greatly desired.\textsuperscript{473} Her end was glory and her glory was to become a great saint despite her weakness and imperfections. She aspired to holiness and virtue while reading the account of Joan of Arc; but she did not realize then that one had to suffer much in order to reach sanctity.\textsuperscript{474} Sometimes, however, virtue can be mistaken as an imperfection and vice-versa. For example, once the Procuratrix needed a third party to go to the door to let in some workmen; Therese rose slowly in order to give this small pleasure to her companion; but another sister remonstrated with her for her slowness: "Since one can take little acts of virtue as imperfection, one can also be mistaken in taking for virtue what is nothing but imperfection."\textsuperscript{475} Yet, suffering itself became the greatest of joys when it is sought as the most precious of treasures.\textsuperscript{476}

**Sacrament of Unity**

From her earliest days Therese was devoted to the Mass and the Holy Eucharist. Each Sunday, she waited for Celine to bring her the Blessed Bread. If there was none left at Church then Celine at home would take a piece of bread, solemnly

\begin{itemize}
  \item\textsuperscript{471} Ms C 26v
  \item\textsuperscript{472} Ms C 15r
  \item\textsuperscript{473} Ms A 27r
  \item\textsuperscript{474} Ms A 32v
  \item\textsuperscript{475} Ms C 13r
  \item\textsuperscript{476} Ms C 10v
\end{itemize}

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pronounce a "Hail Mary" over it and give it to Therese: only then would she be satisfied. With Celine, too, she experienced another kind of communion, a communion of spiritual sharing. At her own First Communion, Therese felt that she was loved and she wanted to vanish like a drop of water in the immensity of the ocean. On that day, she wanted to imitate Pauline, now in Carmel, "who gave herself irrevocably to Him who gave Himself so lovingly to me." But even this brilliant day was followed by darkness: "only the day of the first unique, the eternal communion of heaven will be endless." During her travels in Italy, she and Celine received in the House of Loreto: "What shall our happiness be when we receive Communion in the eternal abode of the King of Heaven?" There in heaven, Therese hoped to see her joy never ended; there in heaven, there would no longer be the sadness of departing; there in heaven, His home will be her home forever more. But, Communion in heaven begins on earth; in Carmel, Therese realized: "Unity must take place in the midst of sacrifices."

Communion, both in heaven and on earth, supported her Contemplation; for she believed that no one could taste this joy anywhere else but in religious communities. Yet, during their childhood games, Therese and Celine played at being hermits at Les Buissonnets. Every thing was done with such mutual understanding, silence and so religiously that it was perfect; however, when they walked through the streets with their eyes closed and knocked over a fruiter's

477 Ms A 7r
478 Ms A 35v
479 Ms A 35v
480 Ms A 60r
481 Ms C 9r
482 Ms A 33v
stand, their game was put to a stop. Therese made her most profound meditations in bed before Celine came into to dress her. On her free afternoons from the Benedictine Abbey, she went behind her bed to an empty space and thought about God, life and eternity. This was the answer given to one of the nuns who asked her; the sister only laughed at Therese's simple, profound but true answer. Her First Communion filled her with contemplation of love but:

There are certain things that lose their perfume as soon as they are exposed to the air; there are deep spiritual thoughts which cannot be expressed in human language without losing their intimate and heavenly meaning.

Prayer

She can only describe her prayer in similar terms:

Prayer is an aspiration of the heart; it is a simple glance directed to heaven; it is a cry of gratitude and love in the midst of trial as well as joy; finally, it is something great, supernatural which expands my soul and unites me to Jesus.

Therese was lifted up by the fervor of her sisters when they recited the Divine Office. Yet, to her shame, she could not pray the rosary without distraction. In times of aridity, an "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" satisfied her. The apostolic zeal of a Carmelite embraces the whole world; therefore, desiring like her holy mother Teresa, she prayed for the intentions of the Holy Father which surely must have embraced the world. But how could she pray for them, especially for two missionaries entrusted to her care? A simple soul, like herself, wanted a simple

483Ms A 23r/23v
484Ms A 31r
485Ms A 33v
486Ms B 1v
487Ms C 25r/25v
488Ms C25v
means: "Draw me; we shall run after you in the odor of your ointments (Cant. 1:3)";
"-Draw me' suffices."489The other souls whom she loved were drawn, likewise without effort. Moreover, her prayer for those united to her was the Priestly Prayer of Jesus in John 17. She quotes it almost exactly in her manuscript and asked that she may repeat it on her last night in this exile.480

Faith

Francois Mauriac writes in Viper's Tangle:

In fact nobody goes through life with his face uncovered--nobody at all. Most people ape highmindedness, nobility. Unknown to themselves, they are conforming to types, literary or otherwise. The saints know this: they hate and despise themselves because they see themselves as they really are.491

In her prayer, Therese saw herself as she was in God's eyes: a poor little thing, nothing at all, a conviction that the praise of creatures could not change.492 She became convinced of this by passing through many trials: as a child she suffered with sadness; as a Carmelite she suffered with peace and joy, even the temptation against faith.493 More and more, her suffering became interior, less apparent to creatures, despite her beautiful poems which expressed the happiness of heaven and the eternal possession of God in which she wanted to believe.494 Yet, she was happy to suffer even this if she could prevent or make reparation for one single sin

489Ms C 34r/34v

490I would like to think this prayer was granted to Therese just before she died because she had an ecstasy that lasted the "space of a Credo" according to M. Agnes of Jesus. DE, 384; but this is only conjecture; no one else holds this opinion.


492Ms C 2r

493Ms C 4v

494Ms C 7v
against faith. She desired suffering and this trial of faith mingled a salutary bitterness with all her joys.

Love

Even in her struggle of faith, Therese's love became constant and continual, without struggling to practice it. In the last of her life, God gave her to understand charity in a way she had never understood it before, penetrating its mysterious depths. First, the teachings of Jesus are contrary to the feelings of nature; without the help of his grace it would be impossible not only to put them into practice but even to understand them. Nevertheless, she began to understand love of neighbor within the context of the Last Supper. How and why did Jesus love his disciples? For those he calls his friends and brothers, he lay down his life. There is no greater love than this (Jn 15:13-15). On every page of the Gospel, the Lord explains in what this new commandment consists. Therese gives her own commentary on this commandment, by reflecting on her own desire to practice it heroically.

Therese understood that charity consisted in bearing with the faults of others, in not being surprised at their weakness, in being edified by the smallest acts of virtue we see them practice and above all to love them to distraction. It is no
longer a question of loving one's neighbor as oneself but of loving her as Jesus has loved her and will love her until the consummation of the ages. Yet, it is by the power of Jesus within her that she loved.

Love enabled Therese to go against herself. One sister whom she found very disagreeable received prayers and all possible service with a smile; Therese would rather take flight from the situation than do otherwise. Only charity can expand the heart in this way. Even the gifts of mind and heart like a witty remark, or a light in prayer, belong to others even if they wished to quote it as their own without attributing it to its proper source. Love is nourished only by such sacrifices, and the more a soul refuses natural satisfactions, the stronger and more disinterested becomes her tenderness, rather than if it had concentrated upon one egotistical and unfruitful love.

Furthermore, Therese contented that it was easy to love saints. But what about loving those who lack judgment and good manners or are touchy: "I want to be friendly with everybody, to give joy to Jesus, to spread a banquet for my sisters of loving and joyful charity." Therese had to guide old Sister St. Pierre from the chapel to the refectory. The old Sister would grumble continually and it cost Therese much. But this little act left her so full of joy and she did it with so much love that she could not have done better had she been guiding Jesus Himself. However, when a small sacrifice like this slipped from her, she was left with less peace, but more

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503Ms C 12v
504Ms C 12v
505Ms C 14v
506Ms C 16r
507Ms C 22r
508Ms C 28v
vigilant for the next one to come her way. One sister's clicking sounds in chapel made her break out in a nervous sweat. Another sister splashed her with dirty water, unknowingly, in the laundry. Therese did not show consternation at these; rather she was a little soul and these little sacrifices she offered to God. But little sacrifices touched by Divine Love have infinite merit.

"So it is not a question of man's willing or doing but of God's mercy." (Rm 9:16). "Your love has gone before me and it has grown within me, and now it is an abyss whose depths cannot be fathomed." Love attracts love and Therese borrowed the love of Jesus in order to love. (Jn 17:23). "I cannot conceive a greater immensity of love than the one which it has pleased you to give me freely, without any merit on my part."

"Draw me" she prays "and we shall run". "For no man can come after me, unless the Father who sent me draw him." (Jn 6:44) Like an iron rod transformed in the fire of a forge, Therese desired to be drawn into the flames of Divine Love, to be united closely with her Beloved, to have Him act in her and thereby draw other souls along with her. She would lift the world, like Archimedes with a lever and a fulcrum: the fulcrum, Jesus Alone, the lever, prayer which burns with a fire of love. Repeating the Publican's prayer, imitating the Magdalene's loving audacity, she ends her manuscript:

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509 Ms C 29r
510 Ms C 31r
512 Ms C 35r
513 Ms C 35r
514 Ms C 35v

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Yes, I feel it; even though I had on my conscience all the sins that can be committed, I would go, my heart broken with sorrow, and throw myself into Jesus' arms for I know how much he loves the prodigal child who returns to Him. It is not because God, in His anticipating Mercy, has preserved by soul from mortal sin that I go to Him with confidence and love....

Her Final Poem

Sr. Genevieve noted that this was Therese's swan song, in the full force of the term. With her first hemoptysis, on the night of April 3, Therese's health begins to decline. But as her health declines, she sensed more than ever the role of fraternal charity in Christian life and her mission. Instinctively she turns to the Blessed Virgin as she had throughout her life. "My heart was entirely filled with a heavenly peace today. I prayed so much to the Blessed Virgin last night, thinking that her beautiful month was about to begin!"

Her poem on Mary is not an outpouring of emotion, nor the recounting of personal favors received through Mary's intercession, but rather all that she thinks about the Blessed Virgin. For Therese, "idea" and "thought" are not the same. An idea frequently had the sense of project of plan in her writings; but, her thoughts are bathed in prayer. It is with a prayerful attitude that one approaches this almost liturgical hymn of two hundred alexandrines.

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515 Ms C 36v
516 Poésies, Tome I, 238, n. 1
517 Ms C 5r
518 Ms C 11r; DJ 21.V.2; CJ 9.VI.3
519 CJ 1.V.2
520 Poésies, Tome I, 238, n. 2
521 Ms A 33v
522 Poésies, Tome I, 238
important to note that Therese, at this point in her life, can only nourish herself on the truth.\textsuperscript{523} She desires to see things as they really are.\textsuperscript{524} Hence her thoughts on Mary are concerned only with her "real life, not her supposed life".\textsuperscript{525} Yet for previous commentators this was difficult to ascertain as they did not have the most primitive text. Combes, for example, takes all of these previous commentators to task because they disregard the text,\textsuperscript{526} sought edification, rather than exegesis, pious lessons rather than the fullness, nuances, and synthesis of Therese's thought.\textsuperscript{527} Combes argues that only this poem is worthy of study as it reveals all that Therese thought about the Virgin. Yet, it has been the thesis of this commentator that this thought develops, matures, and refines itself. This is why this poem has not, more or less, been interspersed throughout the present text. Now it is for Therese to sing \textit{Pourquoi je t'aime, O Marie}, to tell us all she thinks of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

\textbf{Stanzas One and Two}

"Pourquoi je t'aime, O Marie," the title of the poem, is not a question. Rather, the title expresses all that Therese was thinking about Mary and the reasons for her love. After some hesitation, the title was retained by Therese.\textsuperscript{528} But she had no hesitation about its content. Therese is resolved to explain her love and not merely

\textsuperscript{523}CJ 5. VIII. 4

\textsuperscript{524}CJ 21. VII. 4

\textsuperscript{525}CJ 21. VIII. 3

\textsuperscript{526}A. Combes, "Marie pour Sainte Thérèse de Lisieux", in \textit{Divinitas}, 14 (1970), 77, n. 7. [Combes]

\textsuperscript{527}ibid. 82-83, n. 30-35

\textsuperscript{528}François de Ste. Marie, "La maternité spirituelle de Marie", \textit{Rapports doctrinaux du Congrès} (Direction du Pèlerinage et Lethielleux 1962), 138 [François de Ste. Marie]
give a catalog of ideas.\textsuperscript{529} Although this is not necessarily the place to speak of Therese's epistemology, it bears repeating that Therese knows by the connaturality of love; she understands by participation.\textsuperscript{530} In the first stanza she hands on her contemplation by giving three "pourquoi", three reasons for her love. From the above, her first reason is deduced.\textsuperscript{531}

Oh! je voudrais chanter Marie pourquoi je t'aime\textsuperscript{532}

If Therese passes from thought to love, it is to underscore her loving participation in all that she is about to express in her poem. Therese writes as a victim of holocaust to Merciful Love;\textsuperscript{533} it is this offering that has given her strength in her trials. Heaven is closed to her; it seems like a wall has been thrown up to the sky,\textsuperscript{534} a black hole where we can see nothing.\textsuperscript{535} Yet she has "astonishing peace".\textsuperscript{536} In this, the Blessed Virgin is present; she is not hidden by the night of faith.\textsuperscript{537} Therese affirms her love for the Blessed Virgin\textsuperscript{538} and uses her as her commissioner with God who is not to trouble himself with his little

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{529}{Poésies, Tome II, 297-298}
\footnotetext{530}{Summa Theologica IIa-IIae q. 188 a.6c.}
\footnotetext{531}{PN 54, 1; 2}
\footnotetext{532}{Oh! I would like to sing Mary about why I love you. The translation of the text are the author's.}
\footnotetext{533}{cf Ms. Auto. p. 318-320, made 9.VI.95}
\footnotetext{534}{Ms C 7v}
\footnotetext{535}{CJ 28. VIII. 3}
\footnotetext{536}{CJ 24. IX. 10}
\footnotetext{537}{CJ 8. VII. 11}
\footnotetext{538}{CJ 23. VIII. 2, 5}
\end{footnotes}
Thus, she can truly say her heart is thrilled, a strong verb, laminated by trial, by a Therese who no longer knows any joy in life.

*Pourquoi ton nom si doux fait tressaillir mon coeur*

The third reason for her love is one of the most fundamental and universal elements of the Little Way.

*Et pourquoi la pensée de ta grandeur suprême Ne saurait à mon âme inspirer de frayeur.*

 Therese acknowledges Mary's greatness but does not fear it. If Therese desired to articulate her thoughts on Mary, why didn't she start with her supreme grandeur? Certainly, she was captivated by it. For, according to Sr. Genevieve, she forgot to eat and drink as she listened to A.C. Emmerich read in the refectory. At the same time many of the nuns were taken with the mystical revelations of Mary of Agreda. Yet, Therese rejects this approach and others like it.

*Si je contemplais dans ta sublime gloire Et surpassant l'éclat de tous les bienheureux Que je suis ton enfant je ne pourrais le croire*

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539CJ 10. VI
540Poesies, Tome II, 298, n. 1, 2
541CJ 13. VII. 17
542Why your name so sweet thrills my heart
543And why the the thought of your supreme grandeur would not inspire my soul to fear.
544cf LT 226
545Francois de Ste. Marie, 139
546Ibid.
O Marie, devant toi, je baisserais les yeux

Therese's love of Mary is not of a subject for its Queen, but of a child for its mother. Of course, Therese is convinced of the grandeur of the Blessed Virgin; she does not condemn those who contemplate her as such. Yet, she feels that this is a contemplation of separation. Therese prefers not just union but unity: "in unity there is only one." We know very well that the Blessed Virgin is Queen of heaven and earth, but she is more Mother than Queen; and we should not say, on account of her prerogatives, that she surpasses all the saints in glory just as the sun at its rising makes the stars disappear from sight. My God! how strange that would be! A mother who makes her children's glory vanish! I myself think just the contrary. I believe she'll increase the splendor of the elect very much. Hence, she has no desire for a duality, a separation caused by admiration and veneration. Therese cautions that this may cause "estrangement", where "one will go off into some little corner". No, only the child at fault lowers her eyes before her mother.

Therese uses the word "child" seven times in this poem, the word "mother" appears twenty-one times, fourteen times in reference to Therese, seven times in

547 If I were to contemplate you in your supreme glory and surpassing the brightness of all the blessed that I am your child I could not believe it O Mary, before you, I would lower my eyes!...

548 CJ 23. VII. 5

548 Concerning P. Argetan to whom Therese refers here, see DE 575

550 CJ 21. VIII. 3

551 ibid.

552 ibid.

553 cf LT 191

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reference to Jesus. Indeed "your child" is one of the key words of the entire poem.\footnote{554}{The underlying sense of this word appears throughout the life of Therese. It has the same sense as when Therese became a child of Mary, as when at Notre Dame des Victoires she decided to call her "maman," as when she asks "her dear mother" to present to the Trinity her "offering of holocaust".\footnote{557}{This mother-child relationship is more than an external relationship of dependence, protection, or mediation; rather it is an intimate bond, a true communion of life,"from union to unity".\footnote{558}{It is easy to see that a contemplation of separation would easily damage, if not totally destroy, this intimate bond. In the rest of the poem, Therese takes care to explore the nature and depth of such a profound union between mother and child.}}}

In the second stanza, the child of the Virgin who smiled at her does not lower her eyes before Her. She tells Mary plainly that she looks upon her only as her life is revealed in the Gospels. In choosing only the Gospels, Therese adopts the commonwealth of all Christians. Considering the context of the time which seemed to rely more on the private revelation and mystical experience, her choice of public revelation, namely, the Gospel seems unforeseeable and paradoxical.\footnote{559}{Il faut pour qu'un enfant puisse chérir sa mère
Qu'elle pleure avec lui, partage ses douleurs\footnote{560}{It happens that a child can endear its mother that she cry with him, sharing his troubles}}

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Il faut pour qu'un enfant puisse chérir sa mère
Qu'elle pleure avec lui, partage ses douleurs
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\footnote{554}{cf. Poésies, Tome II, 298; 1,7; 2,7; 5,5; 25,8; 2,1; 5,4; 24,8}
\footnote{555}{Ms A 40v; LT 23 signed "Therese e.M."}
\footnote{556}{Ms A 57r}
\footnote{557}{Ms. Auto p. 318}
\footnote{558}{CJ 23. VIII.5}
\footnote{559}{Combes, 89; Francois de Ste. Marie, 138}
\footnote{560}{It happens that a child can endear its mother that she cry with him, sharing his troubles}
Therese offers as a condition, but gives no reason why, a mother must share in the sorrows of her child.\textsuperscript{561} Perhaps Therese's own condition of suffering offers a clue: "I understood that she suffered not only in soul, but also in body; she suffered a lot on her journeys from the cold, the heat, and from fatigue...yes, she knew what it was to suffer."\textsuperscript{562} Therese seems to reason that if the Blessed Virgin could not share our sorrows in this valley of tears, than there is fixed a great abyss between Therese and all the Saints. Therese resolves to bridge this gap between Mary's glory and the suffering of the human race, not to mention her own. Therese emphasizes this communitarian aspect by deemphasizing her own marian graces. All come to the Queen of heaven and witness her goodness and power; through her, all experience a growth in holiness and spiritual progress. Yet, this Queen, who now no longer suffers, shares with her children their tears and sorrow. This precisely is their consolation.

\begin{quote}
O ma Mère chérie sur la rive étrangère
Pour m'attirer\textsuperscript{563} à toi, que tu versas de pleurs!...
\end{quote}

Combes stresses that this relationship of mother and child is not a matter of Therese superimposing her own relationship with her natural mother.\textsuperscript{565} Yet, I think it is an important analogue. This poem is not merely the experience of Therese, but the fruit of her evangelical meditation.\textsuperscript{566}

\textsuperscript{561}Francois de Ste. Marie, 141.
\textsuperscript{562}CJ 20. VIII. 11
\textsuperscript{563}cf Poésies, Tome II, 299; this word appears sixty-five times in Therese's writings as the initiative of love
\textsuperscript{564}O my dear Mother, on this foreign shore in order to draw me to you, you shed tears!...
\textsuperscript{565}Combes, 90
\textsuperscript{566}CJ 21. VIII. 3: "I have said everything I would preach about her."
To have lived in this exile, to have felt tears, to have taken the initiative to
desire the love of Therese, the Queen knew and chose the method that would attract,
like a magnet, this child to herself. The manner of attraction is not a prodigy of
miracles, but the mediation of the gospels. Just as all are drawn to Mary, the
Queen of Heaven, so all can come to the Gospels that reveal the life of the humble
Virgin of Nazareth. In the gospel, Mary's glory has not yet separated her from the
human race. Hence, Therese confidently, even boldly, approaches her, and raises
her eyes to her. The Gospels, as they have come to do so in her own life, sustain
and nourish the child-like love of this poem. Moreover, Therese makes the
point to her sister, Mere Agnes, during the very month that she writes this
poem: "As for me, with the exception of the Gospels, I no longer find anything in
books. The Gospels are enough." 

Me croire ton enfant ne m'est pas difficile
Car je te vois mortelle et souffrant comme moi...

Three points, then, are to be noted. As has been already pointed out, the
Gospels were all sufficient for Therese at the end of her life. Therese senses that
the love of the Gospel and the love of Mary are one, like two tuning forks of the same

567 While meditating on your life in the Gospels
I dare to look at you and to approach you

568 In 6:30, "You look for signs"...

569 CJ 15. V. 3

570 Ibid.

571 Believing myself your child is not difficult for me
For I see you mortal and suffering like me...
frequency in sympathetic resonance. Therese knows the Gospels by heart\textsuperscript{572} and they enlightened her mind.\textsuperscript{573} The Gospels, in short, consumed Therese.

Secondly, for Therese, human impossibilities are resolved by the Gospels as something revealed to her by faith.\textsuperscript{574} For example, her elevator image recalls that it is God who draws close to us.\textsuperscript{575} This is the "littleness" of her little way. Similarly, the Queen of Heaven draws close to her child in order to heal her, making Therese love Mary all the more.\textsuperscript{576} Moreover, the little way does not reduce human importance. What is "little" about the Theresian "way" is the distance between God and Man; it pleased God to abolish the distance by the Incarnation of the Second Person. What remains to man is to be completely dependent on this divine initiative.

Thus, thirdly, Mary bridged the gap between the Divine and human by offering to God her mortal life and by accepting suffering. But Mary's gift of self did not excuse Therese from the necessary efforts to learn this evangelical truth, nor to scrutinize its depths, nor to assume the heroism of imitation. The proof of offering and acceptance is in this poem's intense marian meditation, energetically applied to every aspect of the relationship between the Mother and her child.

In the first two stanzas of her poem, Therese has contrasted two spiritualities. On the one hand, there are the great souls who may admire the glories of the Virgin, but, because of this admiration, fear imitation and thus miss out on union with their Queen. On the other hand, others put aside Mary's glories in order to concentrate on her humble earthly life as it is expressed in the Gospels. These others prepare

\textsuperscript{572} CJ 12. IX
\textsuperscript{573} CJ 29. V
\textsuperscript{574} cf LT 226
\textsuperscript{575} Ms C 3r
\textsuperscript{576} cf Ms A 30 r; v; 31r
themselves for eternal glory by deliberately sharing in the human condition of the Incarnation.

In addition to this, Therese supposes the Gospels to be what they really are - the Living Word of God, a permanent actuality, more adapted, in a sense, to our daily lives than to the transcendent actuality of heavenly realities. Therese uses the Gospels to uncover the most intimate personal problems. The poem reveals the above as it continues. The Gospels are not simply past episodes but a living reality, here and now. In the Gospels, Therese has discovered the reason for her love and feels that there could be nothing better than to open up the Gospels and meditate on its marian themes one by one. In twenty-five stanzas she thoroughly tells what she thinks about, and why she loves, Mary. However, it is a mistake to believe that each stanza represents a gospel scene. For example, because the fifth stanza has no mention of the Gospel, some commentators have left it out. Yet, Therese is not merely recounting Gospel scenes but her reaction to them, a kind of cinéma vérité. These call forth from Therese a love for Mary. Because the inner sanctuary of Therese is often impenetrable; "to keep the King's secrets", it is worth taking the whole poem apart, stanza by stanza, verse by verse. Thus, this plan will reveal how the Gospels inspired Therese's child-like love of Mary.

**Stanzas Three and Four**

In these stanzas, Therese does not merely recall the Annunciation, she sees the scene as an eye witness. The object of her attention is neither the angel nor the message nor even the divine election of the Mother. Rather, it is the Mother's heart and its mysterious disposition at this extraordinary election.

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577 CJ 6. IV. 2

578 Combes, 94, n. 60

579 Ms B 1v
Lorsqu'un ange du Ciel t'offre d'être la Mère
Du Dieu qui doit régner toute l'éternité,
Je te vois préférer, ô Marie, quel mystère!
L'ineffable trésor de la virginité.\textsuperscript{580}

Earlier in the poem Therese said that the connection between Mother and child was tears and suffering. But, once again there seems to be this unbridgeable gap. Mary is chosen by this divine election to be an instrument of salvation; hence the gap between mother and child seem to widen and the fear mentioned in stanza one, verse four, seems to recur. Yet, even in this, Therese discovers her love for Mary. What makes Mary close to Therese is that Mary is ready to renounce her proffered election rather than to renounce her professed Virginity. Here, Mary teaches Therese the value of this virginal preference.\textsuperscript{581} From this preference Therese receives two lights.

\begin{verse}
Je comprends que ton âme, ô Vierge Immaculée
Soit plus chère au Seigneur que le divin séjour.
Je comprends que ton âme, Humble et Douce Vallée\textsuperscript{582}
Peut contenir Jésus L'Océan de l'Amour!\textsuperscript{583}
\end{verse}

First, the Lord is attracted by the soul of the Immaculate so pure, so perfect, so powerfully that He prefers her to his heavenly abode. Secondly, Mary's humility is such that it can contain an Ocean of Love, Jesus Himself. What remains for Therese is to establish once again the rapport between Mother and child.

\textsuperscript{580} When an angel of Heaven offers you to become the Mother
Of God who must reign for all eternity
I see you to prefer, O Mary, what mystery!
The ineffable treasure of your virginity.

\textsuperscript{581} cf LT 122, 124, 129, 130, 134, 149, 161; 182, 183 to Céline; 140, 156 to Pauline; 186 to Léonie; 224 to P. Belliere; RP 6, 1.

\textsuperscript{582} cf. L'Année Liturgique, Dom Gueranger 2 Sat. Advent; Story of a Soul p. 43, note 40

\textsuperscript{583} I understand that your soul, O Immaculate Virgin
May be more dear to the Lord than the divine abode
I understand that your soul, Humble and Sweet Valley
can contain Jesus, the Ocean of Love!...
Oh! je t'aime, Marie, te disant la servante
Du Dieu que tu ravis par ton humilité

What delights Therese about Mary is the humility of this handmaid which indeed delights God. This is not a metaphor but a reality.

Cette virtu cachée te rend toute-puissante
Elle attire en ton cœur la Sainte Trinité

God manifests his absolute initiative in this election announced by the angel. Yet, the heart of the Immaculate Virgin is so laden with virtue that it exercises a powerful influence on the Trinity. Two years earlier, Therese had a similar insight in her poem Vivre d'Amour: "O Trinity, you are Prisoner of my love." This seems to be an adequate formula for the Trinity's indwelling. In the poem under discussion, Mary is the model of this kind of love and even the reason for it. Yet, Therese does not confuse this mystical indwelling with the Incarnation. Therese carefully maintains the distinction between the Virgin's humility which attracts the Trinity and the Trinity's absolute and sovereign will in the matter of her divine election as the Mother of God. In two lines of rare quality, she evokes this supreme indwelling of the Trinity in the womb of the Virgin.

Alors l'Esprit d'Amour te couvrant de son ombre
Le Fils égal au Père en toi s'est incarné.

Who cannot be awed by the "supreme grandeur" of this mystery? How can Therese hope to be bonded to the Mother, overshadowed by the Spirit, from whose womb the Son, equal to the Father, is made flesh? Here the reality of the dissimilarity between

---

584 Oh! I love you, Mary, you tellin the servant
Of God that you whom you charm by your humility

585 This hidden virtue you render all-powerful
It draws into your heart the Holy Trinity

586 PN 17, 2:7-8

587 Thus the Spirit of Love covering you with His shadow
The Son equal to the Father in you is incarnated.
Mother and child seems starkly contrasted. Yet, in this mystery of the Incarnation, Therese looks ahead to a multitude of sinners, brothers and sisters to Jesus, whose Savior he is. Therese is among them. Thus any separation between Mother and child is overcome as Mary beholds the mystery of her first born son.

Def ses frères pécheurs bien grand sera le nombre
Puisqu'on doit l'appeler: Jésus, ton premier-né!

Stanza Five

Therese "understands" within herself that Mary's heart, like her own heart, is for Jesus "another Heaven which is infinitely dearer to him than the first." In this stanza Therese explores this mystery of Jesus within, and contrasts her "littleness" and "weakness" with the "Almighty". One can imagine the little Therese looking up at a mosaic dome of the Pantokrator, gazing at her with his terrible aspect, and yet, as the eastern monks say, see Him smile.

O Mere bien-aimée, malgré ma petitesse
Comme toi je possède en moi Le Tout-Puissant.

Therese makes no mention of the rapport between Mother and child, based on tears and suffering, here. Rather, Therese states that they are alike not only in their virginity but also in their possession of the Almighty. What counts here is not tears and suffering but the grace of the embrace of the self-same God.

Mais je ne tremble pas en voyant ma faiblesse:
Le trésor de la mère appartient l'enfant

588 cf. Rm 8:29; PN 46, 4; Lk 2:7

589 Since his brothers will be a very great number of sinners then one must call Him: Jesus, your first-born!

590 Ms A 48v

591 O Beloved Mother, in spite of my littleness like you I possess in me the Almighty

592 But I do not tremble while looking at my weakness:
The treasure of the mother belongs to the child

108
Like an inscription on a monument, Therese chisels this short, precise, and elegant phrase. Earlier, Therese explained that she has no fear to approach Mary because "I see her mortal and suffering like me." (2:8) If "like me" was a key word in stanzas one and two "like you" is the key word in stanzas three, four and five. The treasure of both has been personified: it is Jesus. Jesus is all love, the perfection of every virtue.

Therese feels herself not belittled but elevated by such a sublime inheritance. Since this belongs to Therese, this treasury of love and virtue, and since the communion between her and Mary is so real, even Jesus is taken in.

"It seems to me that when Jesus descends into my heart He is content to find Himself so well received, and I, too, am content."Thence, this "mistake" of Jesus is no illusion for Therese. She says in these verses exactly what she thinks. Not only is the expression concise, it also represents a stage in her spiritual journey. For nine or ten months, she knows herself to be at the heart of her mother, the Church. Therese, yielding to the Holy Spirit without reserve, alludes to her union. Far from lessening the value of the Gospel, stanza five shows forth its fruitfulness and underscores the littleness of her way.

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593 And I am your child, oh my dear Mother
Your virtues, you love, are they not mine?

594 Also when into my heart descends the white Host
Jesus, your Sweet Lamb, beleives he reposes in you

595 Ms A 80r

596 Ms B 3v
Stanzas Six, Seven, and Eight

Not only is Mary "Queen of Saints" she is also the Mother of Jesus, Brother to all sinners. The exceptional example of Mary, under the influence of grace, traces out the narrow way; perhaps Therese associated this topology with the hill country of Ain Karim; her example lights up the way with its brilliance. Thus, Therese begins the sixth stanza.

Tu me le fais sentir, ce n'est pas impossible
De marcher sur tes pas, ô Reine des élus,
L'étroit chemin du Ciel, tu l'as rendu visible
En pratiquant toujours les plus humbles vertus

With such a lesson, Therese chooses to remain little, like Mary, after whom she measures the greatness of the world to be nothing but emptiness. In short, Therese follows Mary on the little way.

Après de toi, Marie, j'aime à rester petite,
Des grandeurs d'ici-bas je vois la vanité,

"To remain little" and "practicing humble virtues" are the same thing. She follows this with her only comment on the Visitation. Once again Therese is not merely recalling but participating in each evangelical episode. Therese herself is the one who receives Mary and learns to practice charity.

Chez Sainte Elizabeth, recevant ta visite,
J'apprends à pratiquer l'ardente charité.

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597 You make me feel it, it is not impossible
To walk in your footsteps, oh Queen of the Elect,
The narrow path to Heaven, you have rendered visible
While practicing always the humblest virtues.

598 CJ 23. VIII. 9 Therese quotes these lines; cf LT 191, 226, 257

599 After you, Mary, I love to remain little,
Of the grandeurs here below I see emptiness

600 CSG, 41

601 At St. Elizabeth's home, receiving your visit,
I learn to practice ardent charity.
Therese will write in June of 1897 what she probably already understood when she wrote her poem in May: "the grace of penetrating into the mysterious depths of charity." Her image of ardent charity evokes two illustrations. First, she writes to her novice, Sr. Marie of the Trinity, about the "burning lamp of fraternal charity" at the same time she was writing manuscript C: "It seems to me that this lamp represents charity which must enlighten and rejoice not only those who are dearest to us but all who are in the house without distinction."

Secondly, this image of the burning lamp of charity seems to stem from an incident in her own life, noted earlier. She related it to another novice, her sister Celine, or Sr. Genevieve. Therese was required to prepare a night lamp for some visitors. She was put-out that those responsible could easily have done this themselves. "Suddenly, however, divine light invaded my soul, and I was inspired to place myself at the service of the Holy Family at Nazareth." Therese no longer considers the burden of her task and the interior grumbling it aroused, but rather the "Infant Jesus" and her "heart overflowing with fervor and consolation". "Ever since that memorable night, when I find myself in a tight spot, I have recourse to this practice and it never fails to restore my peace."

In stanza seven, Therese remains there and listens to the Magnificat, springing from the heart of Mary. The word "heart" enjoys a central place in this poem and is mentioned fourteen times; ten times concerning the Virgin Mary, three times concerning Therese and once concerning Jesus.

602 Ms C 18v
603 LT 245
604 Ms C 12r
605 CSG, 100; CJ 12. VII.97
606 CJ 12. VII. 1
Là j'écoute ravie, Douce Reine des anges,
Le cantique sacré qui jaillit de ton cœur.⁶⁰⁷

If Mary seems more "Queen of Angels" than "humble mother" in her exaltation of God, Therese is neither surprised nor dismayed by the appearance of another "gap" between Mother and child. Rather, she draws a new lesson from this maternal joy and re-establishes her rapport: she, too, will glorify Jesus her Savior.

_Tu m'apprends à chanter les divines louanges
A me glorifier en Jésus mon Sauveur._⁶⁰⁸

Therese underlines this verse in order to render its full meaning. Her only glory is Jesus.⁶⁰⁹ Yet, she returns quickly to Mary's prophecy about the ages to come.

_Tes paroles d'amour sont de mystiques roses
Qui doivent embaumer les siècles à venir._⁶¹⁰

The image of the rose bower is a very Theresian image.⁶¹¹ Mary's words, like roses, will sweetly scent the ages. Both mother and child will recount the great things He has done for them.

_En toi le Tout-Puissant a fait de grandes choses
Je veux les méditer, afin de l'en bénir._⁶¹²

Such praise was habitual with Therese: "Do not think that it is humility that prevents me from acknowledging the gifts of God. I know He has done great things

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⁶⁰⁷ There I hear, Sweet Queen of the Angels, the sacred song that springs from your heart.

⁶⁰⁸ You teach me to sing the divine praises to glorify myself in Jesus my Saviour.

⁶⁰⁹ cf LT 109

⁶¹⁰ Your words of love are mystical roses Which must perfume the ages to come

⁶¹¹ LT 124, 127, 141, 172, 182, 224, 246; CJ 9. VI. 3; CJ 14. IX

⁶¹² In you the Almighty has done great things I want to meditate on them, in order to bless Him in them.
in me and I sing of this each day with joy" as she writes to Fr. Belliere. In fact in all her autobiographical manuscripts, Therese's only desire to write is "to sing of the mercy of the Lord."

The eighth stanza brings into closer view the mystery of the Nativity. Therese ponders not only the great things of the Lord, but also on their mysterious characteristics, which, in the first place, include suffering.

> Quand le bon Saint Joseph ignore le miracle
> Que tu voudrais cacher dans ton humilité
> Tu le laisses pleurer tout près du Tabernacle
> Qui voile du Sauveur la divine beauté!

Therese treats this difficult subject with sobriety. What is striking about this suffering caused by the trial of Joseph's ignorance is its silence. Mary is silent about the mystery of the Incarnation not only for the sake of humility, but also, as Therese would have it, because of her exclusive confidence in God.

The rapport of Mother and child is of one accord here: in God, both have absolute confidence and this silence was its guardian. Sr. Genevieve revealed many times the admiration of Therese for the silence of Mary in this circumstance. Therese was never troubled by what others might be thinking about her, even when there was a question of apparent disedification. Even when an explanation would exonerate her, Therese would not give it. Her model in this was

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613 LT 224

614 cf Ms A 2r; Ms B 1r; Ms C 3r

615 When the good Saint Joseph does not know of the miracle
> Which you would like to hide in your humility
> You allow him to weep very near the Tabernacle
> Which veils the divine beauty of the Saviour...

616 cf Poésies, Tome II, 301 on how Therese followed St. Bernard here

617 ibid., 302 "le silence et l'éspérance" comme dit la Regle du Carmel

618 CSG, 27

113
Our Lady who preferred to lose her good name than to reveal her secret to St. Joseph.\footnote{cf Ms A 61v; PN 3}

Therese often conversed about this simple, heroic and inspiring conduct.\footnote{CSG, 27} Like Mary, silence was her great weapon. Such silent confidence was the source of Mary's grandeur and power. The melody of silence enchants Therese as much as the Magnificat.

\begin{quote}
Oh! que j'aime, Marie, ton éloquent silence,
Pour moi c'est un concert doux et melodieux
Qui me dit la grandeur et la toute-puissance
D'une âme qui n'attend son secours que des Cieux.....\footnote{Oh! what I love, Mary, [is] your eloquent silence, for me it is a concert, sweet and melodious Which tells me of the greatness and almightiness Of a soul that awaits help only from the Heavens....}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Stanzas Nine and Ten}

Added to this silence are common trials like finding no room in the inn.

\begin{quote}
Plus tard à Bethléem, ô Joseph et Marie!
Je vous vois repoussés de tous les habitants
Nul ne veut recevoir en son hôtellerie
De pauvres étrangers, la place est pour les grands...
\footnote{Later at Bethlehem, oh Joseph and Mary! I see you repulsed by all the inhabitants None wants to receive into his inn The poor strangers, the place is for the great ones...}
\end{quote}

While adding nothing to this episode, Therese, nevertheless, adds a chastising verse about the pride of Man, the humility of God, and the holy indignation of Therese at this scandal of universal refusal.

\begin{quote}
La place est pour les grands et c'est dans une étable
Que la Reine des Cieux doit enfanter un Dieu.\footnote{The place is for the great ones and it is in a stable That the Queen of the Heavens must bear a God.}
\end{quote}
A major concern of Therese throughout her life was not only the refusal of unbelievers but also the indifference of believers. Jesus has so few who will receive Him into their own lives. Therese can hardly believe that anyone could refuse so sweet a guest until she began to eat bread, not in the House of Bread, Bethlehem, but at the table of sinners. Yet, this child is surrounded by the love of His mother, more than ever "dear", because she submits to ever increasing and almost cruel humiliations. Therese is not so much concerned with the trappings of Christmas as much as she is with the symbol of the stable. "Such a poor place" reveals to her both the emptiness of human pomp and the admirable compassion of Mary.

O ma Mère chérie, que je te trouve aimable
Que je te trouve grande en un si pauvre lieu!...

If the ninth stanza is one side of a diptych on the Nativity, then the tenth stanza is the other side. Therese prepares a vigorous antithesis in this stanza to the stanza before. Here Therese views the Word in swaddling clothes from the level of the angels.

Quand je vois L'Eternel enveloppé de langes
Quand du Verbe Divin j'entends le faible cri
O ma Mère chérie, je n'envie plus les anges
Car leur Puissant Seigneur est mon Frère chéri!...

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624 eg Lt 137 "Has He not set up his abode in your heart to console Himself for the crimes of sinners?"

625 eg LT 122 "giving to others a heart that belongs to Him."

626 Ms C 6r

627 O my dear Mother, how I find you lovable
How I find you great in so poor a place!...

628 When I see the Eternal One enveloped in swaddling clothes
When I hear the weak cry of the Divine Word
Oh my dear Mother, I no longer envy the angels
For their Almighty Lord is my dear Brother...
These verses reveal the contrast of the place to the Person whom the angels adore, of feeble cries to the ineffable Word, of swaddling clothes to the Lord whom the whole world cannot contain. They reveal and recall the littleness of her way. Her first impulse is not toward Mary, but to her Child who came down from heaven, thus raising up Therese and indeed, the whole human race to level of the angels. Here, she verifies one more time the dignity of Man over the superiority of angels. They know Him as their almighty Lord. But by the fact of the Incarnation, Therese can rightfully call Him "my dear Brother". Once again, Therese returns to Mary because in some measure she is the cause of this joy, these terms of endearment.

Que je t'aime, Marie, toi qui sur nos rivages
As fait épanouir cette Divine Fleur! .........

She sees the joy on Mary's face, who, like any young mother, delights in others' admiration of her Child.

Que je t'aime écoutant les bergers et les mages
Et gardant avec soin toute chose en ton coeur! ...

Celine recounts a brief scene of Therese's imitation of this marian and characteristic silence: "with a serious and gentle look, I don't recall any longer the occasion, but she had been misunderstood: 'The Blessed Virgin did well to keep all these things in her 'little' heart... They can't be angry with me for doing as she did'". 631

Stanzas Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen

The Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple brings forth two new reasons for her love.

629 How I love you, Mary, you who on our shores
has made this Divine Flower to blossom! .........

630 How I love you listening to the shepherds and the wisemen
And guarding with care everything in your heart! ...

631 CJ 8. VII. 10; CSG, 27

116
Je t'aime te mêlant avec les autres femmes
Qui vers le temple saint on dirigé leurs pas
Je t'aime présentant le Sauveur de nos âmes
Au bienheureux Vieillard qui le presse en ses bras.

There is charmed by the simplicity of Mary's life at Nazareth and the familiarity of the women who would come to join her in the Temple ceremony with the same familiarity. They would ask Mary if her child could "play with my little boy". Yet, "with reference to the Aged Simeon's prophetic words" "...it wasn't for the present" as if the Virgin constantly had before her eyes the Passion of her Son, but, "it was a general prediction for the future." Both walked by faith each day, with trouble enough of its own. Thus, Therese is present not only in the stable in Bethlehem, at the home in Nazareth, but also at the Temple in Jerusalem. The smiles and cooing of the women give way to Simeon's prophecy of tears and sorrow. Here, Mary becomes the Queen of Martyrs.

D'abord en souriant j'écoute son cantique
Mais bientôt ses accents me font verser des pleurs
Plongeant dans l'avenir un regard prophétique
Siméon te présente un glaive de douleurs.

O Reine des martyrs, jusqu'au soir de ta vie
Ce glaive douloureux transpercera ton coeur.

632 I love you mixing with the other women
Who toward the holy temple have directed thier steps
I love you presenting the Saviour of our souls
To the blesses Old Man who took him in his arms,

633 CJ 20. VIII. 14

634 CJ 21. VIII. 3

635 ibid.

636 At first while smiling I hear his song
But soon his accents make me shed tears
Plonging into the future a prophetic look
Simeon presents to you a sword of sorrows.

O Queen of Martyrs, up to the evening of your life
the sorrowful sword will pierce your heart.
In these first two verses from stanza twelve, nothing can efface the sorrow of the Cross and many are the saints who have felt this compassion for their Savior long after his glorification. Her pierced heart makes Mary the Queen of Martyrs. Step by step, Therese follows this martyrdom beginning with Herod's reign of terror.

Déjà tu dois quitter le sol de ta patrie
Pour éviter d'un roi la jalouse fureur\textsuperscript{637}

This is the fourth time that Therese writes about the Flight into Egypt.\textsuperscript{638} This repetition could be explained on one hand by the permanent threat of expulsion that hovered over Religious Orders at that time.\textsuperscript{639} But to flee with Jesus was not a true exile and this possible persecution fueled Therese's desire for martyrdom. With liveliness, Therese represents the scene.

Jésus sommeille en paix sous les plis de ton voile
Joseph vient te prier de partir à l'instant\textsuperscript{640}.

Between this contrast of tranquility and disturbance, Therese emphasizes the obedience of Mary which neither delays nor questions how.

Et ton obéissance aussitôt se dévoile
Tu pars sans nul retard et sans raisonnement.\textsuperscript{641}

From her earliest years, Therese was impressed with this kind of obedience: "... a tranquil, a joyful, a prompt acquiescence/ To the highest call of my Holy Will,/ With no hesitaion...with no reasoning."\textsuperscript{642} The impression lasted until the end of her

\textsuperscript{637} Already you must quit the soil of you country in order to avoid the jealous furor of a king.

\textsuperscript{638} cf. RP 2, 2r; PN 24, 5; RP 6

\textsuperscript{639} CSG, 68; Poésies, Tome II, 303, note on stanza 12

\textsuperscript{640} Jesus sleeps in peace under the folds of your veil
Joseph comes to beg you to leave instantly.

\textsuperscript{641} And your obedience immediately unveils itself
You leave without any delay and without reasoning.

\textsuperscript{642} CG II, 1166; Ms A 31v; 34v
life. "It always gives God a very little pain when we rationalize a very little about what Mother Prioress has said; and it gives Him much pain when we rationalize much, even in our heart."\(^643\) On the day of her death, Mother Prioress indicated that she might suffer for yet another few more months. Asked if she could accept this, she faltered only for a moment in her agony. "But checking herself immediately she said with a tone of sublime resignation, falling back on her pillows: "I really will it!"\(^644\)

Stanza twelve is a result of Simeon's prophecy. The sorrows Mary experiences begin with the last verse, unquestioned obedience, continuing with the Flight into Egypt and leading up to the Boy Jesus lost in Jerusalem. Both episodes pierce the heart of Mary. Therese joins them together and yet explains their essential difference. The Flight into Egypt only seems to pierce the heart of Mary; losing the Boy Jesus in Jerusalem really does.

The Gospel says nothing about the Holy Family in Egypt and Therese responds to the silence unlike her pious recreation "The Flight into Egypt",\(^645\) inspired by Fr. Faber.\(^646\) Even though the Family is exiled, Mary has lost nothing of her joy.

Sur la terre d'Egypte, il me semble, ô Marie
Que dans la pauvreté ton cœur reste joyeux,\(^647\)

For, as Therese reasons, Mary remains in her true homeland.

\(^643\)DE, 778

\(^644\)CJ 30. IX

\(^645\)RP 6

\(^646\)Francois de Ste. Marie, 139, n. 41

\(^647\)In the land of Egypt, it seems to me, O Mary
That in the poverty your heart remains joyful,
Car Jésus n'est-il pas la plus belle Patrie
Que t'importe l'exil, tu possèdes les Cieux?...

This thought, expressed in a few words, expresses Therese's own view of life. This earth is exile; our true home is heaven. The first word she could read was heaven. Earth seemed to be a place of exile and I could only dream of heaven. She felt drawn into real prayer when she accompanied her father on his fishing outings. At the sea, seeing the sun glint on the waters and marking out the way of a sail boat, Therese was determined never to swerve from Jesus, "traveling in peace toward the Homeland of Heaven." To possess heaven means to possess Jesus. No earthly exile can change that. The Imitation, which Therese knew by heart, is echoed here perhaps: "esse cum Iesu dulcis paradisus".

Therese abruptly moves to Jerusalem to make the contrast between Egypt and true exile more striking. She writes nothing about the twelve years of the Holy Family's life in Nazareth. In Jerusalem, Mary experiences a true piercing of her heart, even a submersion, into what is real sorrow, pain, and sadness, in what is real exile: she loses Jesus:

Mais à Jérusalem, une amère tristesse
Comme un vaste océan vient inonder ton coeur

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648 For is not Jesus the most beautiful Homeland
What does exile matter, you possess the Heavens?...

649 Ms A 13r

650 Ms A 14v

651 Ms A 22r

652 Combes, 107, n. 84

653 But in Jerusalem, a bitter sadness
like a vast ocean will inundate your soul
A few days after she completes this poem, Therese will have revealed to her Prioress, Mother Marie Gonzague, "the thick darkness" which "penetrates and envelops her soul". Therese, too, has lost her Jesus.

Jésus, pendant trois jours, se cache à ta tendresse
Alors c'est bien exil dans toute sa rigueur!...

Therese notes every facet of this mystery like a jeweler turning a diamond over and over again and she devotes a considerable portion of her poem, three stanzas, to its appraisal.

**Stanzas Fourteen, Fifteen, and Sixteen**

Therese makes an austere play on words "se cacher" and "chercher" (14, 4, 7; 15, 8) in these stanzas. The meditation deepens until it fathoms with profound patience what yielding to abandonment means (16, 5-8). This echoes a similar attitude admirably expressed in another poem, written at the same time as the present one under discussion, "Une Rose Effeuillée". The autobiographical value of these verses is underlined by a verse Therese scratched out on the rough draft "La parole divine, o Mère! est bien pour moi". Therese feels herself drawn to this felt "mystery of the Temple". She, too, feels that Jesus has hidden his tenderness from her.

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654 Ms C 5v

655 Ms C 6v

656 Jesus, during three days, hides himself from your tenderness
Thus it is very exile in all its rigor!

657 Poésies, Tome II, 303

658 PN 51

659 Poésies, Tome II, 294 (15,6)

660 PN 54, 13:7

121
Mary's rigorous and harsh, yet authentic, exile lasts but three days. Yet, even the joy of finding Jesus is suffused with the mystery of his actions.

Enfin tu l'aperçois et la joie te transporte,
Tu dis au bel Enfant qui charme les docteurs:
"O mon Fils, pourquoi donc agis-tu de la sorte?
Voilà ton père et moi qui cherchions en pleurs." 661

Therese does not depart from the characteristics of her spiritual life, nor from the Gospel record of the difficult question in response to the mother's anguish.

Et l'Enfant Dieu répond (oh quel profond mystère!)
A la Mère chérie qui tend vers lui ses bras:
"Pourquoi me cherchiez-vous!...Aux oeuvres de mon Père
Il faut que je m'empioie; ne le savez-vous pas!" 662

Therese does not pretend to understand these "hidden words" either. For Therese, these words are proof that Mary "lived by faith just like ourselves." 663

She leaves this conversation as it is, as does the Gospel, and moves on in stanza fifteen to the Holy Family's life at Nazareth, and the docility of Jesus under his parents.

L'Evangile m'apprend que croissant en sagesse
A Joseph, à Marie, Jésus reste soumis 664

Having re-established the patriarchal hierarchy within the Holy Family, she considers that this obedience illuminates the mystery of the Temple. In the Temple, Jesus is not merely independent of, nor insubordinate to, nor autonomous from, nor

661 At last you spot him and the joy transports you,
You say to the handsome Child who charms the doctors:
"O my Son, so why do you do this sort of thing?
Behold your father and me who were looking in tears."

662 And the Child-God answers (oh what a deep mystery!)
To his dear Mother who stretches out her arms to him:
"Why were you looking for me!...To the works of my Father
It is necessary that I busy myself; do you not know it!"

663 CJ 21. VIII. 3

664 The Gospel teaches me that growing in wisdom
To Joseph, to Mary, Jesus remains submitted
difficult with, nor indifferent to his parents because the character of his submission to them at Nazareth prevents this misunderstanding. That Jesus so readily obeys, endears him all the more to Therese. Her own obedience to Superiors was legendary, and even in matters of small importance, "I have made it a point to obey everybody in a spirit of faith as though God Himself were manifesting His Will to me."  

Et mon coeur me révèle avec quelle tendresse
Il obéit toujours à ses parents chéris.  

Moreover, in the lines "The Gospel teaches" (15,1) and "my heart reveals" (15,3), Therese rapidly yet profoundly renders the Carmelites's life of prayer.  

Why did Jesus put his parents, especially Mary, through the anguish of losing him? To anyone not familiar with the stage in Therese's life in which this poem was written, her interpretation seems odd, even obscure. But, to anyone who knows of Therese's own suffering in body and soul, it makes perfect sense.  

Maintenant je comprends le mystère du temple,
Les paroles cachées de mon Aimable Roi.  

This scene, dramatic and enigmatic, illumines the grace Jesus gave to his mother.  

Mère, ton doux Enfant veut que tu sois l'exemple
De l'âme qui Le cherche en la nuit de la foi.  

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665CSG, 154

666And my heart revels to me with what tenderness
He always obeyed his dear parents.

667Poésies, Tome II, 304 (15:1,3)


669Now I understand the mystery of the Temple,
The hidden words of my Lovable King.

670Mother, your sweet Child wills that you be the example of a soul that looks for Him in the night of faith.
Jesus wants Mary to experience the night of faith. In June of 1897, Therese describes in veiled terms the night of faith which began in April of 1896. For more than a year Therese profits from this trial, never giving into despair, even though a wall hides heaven,\textsuperscript{671} she comes to understand, in her fraternal charity, the trial of unbelievers. Yet the rampart of Therese whose eyes are fixed on Mary is the great silence of her contemplative life, a marian silence so much admired.\textsuperscript{672} Now more than ever before, Therese imitates her mother; once again the rapport between mother and child is reconfirmed.

In stanza sixteen, she comes as close as she will to any disclosure of her physical, moral, and spiritual suffering. In fact, the near absence of this in the present poem makes it all the more moving.\textsuperscript{673} Therese, her condition much like a building falling down, is edified by her discovery. "For an instant, Therese interrupts her meditation on the gospel in order to sculpt, as in an infinitely precious marble, a stanza, admirable in every way, where she successfully condenses, in thought and form most rare, all the substance of her faith and the secret of her fidelity."\textsuperscript{674} To 15:7-8, she gives a logical and solemn conclusion.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Puisque le Roi des Cieux a voulu que sa Mère}
\textit{Soit plongée dans la nuit, dans l'angoisse du coeur;}
\textit{Marie, c'est donc un bien de souffrir sur la terre?} \textsuperscript{675}
\end{quote}

Her personal experience helps her to discover in the life of Mary the same law which regulated her Son's life: it is necessary that she suffer so as to enter into her glory.

\textsuperscript{671}Ms C 7v
\textsuperscript{672}CSG, 30
\textsuperscript{673}cf. Poésies, Tome I, 240
\textsuperscript{674}Combes, 110
\textsuperscript{675}Then the king of the Heavens willed that his Mother be plongé into the night, into the agony of heart; Mary, so is it a good thing to suffer on earth?
Jesus wants this for his mother, because, mysteriously, "it is well to suffer here on earth", (16,3). Mary is not content to submit to this condition, "mortal and suffering" (2,8) equal to ours; rather she fully chooses this solidarity with us, "if not affirmed explicitly, understood in the entire poem".676

She phrases the third verse as a question and in the fourth answers herself. "Her response, it is true to say, makes precise in a mystical fashion this austere doctrine, while including, within a verse of such admirable density and equilibrium, the essential condition that transforms all suffering into sweetness."677

Oui, souffrir en aimant, c'est le plus pur bonheur!... 678

This is not just a flight of imagination for Therese, nor is it a verbal exaggeration. This strong, personal, delicate, even marian attitude, Therese maintained throughout her life. After Celine chose one of Leonie's dolls, Therese chose all. Upon reflection, Therese realized that one chooses how one will respond to the Lord's advances. The incident summarized her whole life; "My God, "I choose all!' I don't want to be a saint by halves, I'm not afraid to suffer for You, I fear only one thing; to keep my own will; so take it, for "I choose all' that You will!"679 And again: "It's what He does that I love."680

Tout ce qu'Il m'a donné Jésus peut le reprendre681

676Poésies, Tome I, 239
677Combes, 111
678Yes, to suffer while loving, it is the purest good fortune!...
679Ms A 10v
680CJ 27. V. 4
681All that He gave me Jesus can take back again
Jesus "unspeakable sweetness" did indeed "change all the consolations of this earth into bitterness for her."682

Therese, stripped of wants, naked in her need, asks their common Mother to relay her requests.

*Dis-lui de ne jamais se gêner avec moi....*683

Therese asks this of a Mother with whom she shares the "mystery of the Temple" (15,5), if not in intensity, at least in duration. She does not ask that her trial be shortened. "This trial was to last not a few days or a few weeks; it was not to be extinguished until the hour set by God Himself and this hour has not yet come."684

With rare heroism, with her secret expressed in beauty of thought and splendor of form, she concludes with an inspiration, which is "one of the most beautiful ever written by a human pen"685, with a paroxysm of hope and faith.

*Il peut bien se cacher, je consens à l'attendre
Jusqu'au jour sans couchant ou s'èteindra ma foi...*686

All that is necessary to extinguish the faith of Therese is not the harassment of doubt but the happiness of "Day". This finally is the benefit of the trial of the Temple. Therese remains unconquered in this trial. One day when she was particularly under attack, she quoted this stanza.687 Moreover, on this day she

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682 Ms A 36v quoting *Imitation of Christ* III, 26:3

683 Tell Him not to trouble himself with me.....

684 Ms C 6r

685 Combes, 112

686 He can well hide himself, I consent to wait
Up to the day without sunset where my faith will be extinguished.

687 CJ 11. VII. 1; CSG, 60-61

126
asked her sister to end her autobiography with the story of the converted sinner.\textsuperscript{688}

\textbf{Stanzas Seventeen and Eighteen}

Having plumbed these depths, Therese re-emerges to Nazareth, contrasting Mary's "fullness of grace" with the poverty of the place.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Je sais qu'à Nazareth, Mère pleine de graces}
\textit{Tu vis très pauvrement, ne voulant rien de plus}\textsuperscript{688}
\end{quote}

But her real interest is not this difference between spiritual perfection and material poverty, but rather, that nothing extraordinary "embellished" the life of the Queen of the Elect.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Point de ravissements, de miracles, d'extases}
\textit{N'emblissent ta vie, ô Reine des Elus!...}\textsuperscript{690}
\end{quote}

Therese underlines her thought here. Mary's life, like hers, was devoid of sensible phenomena. Yet, Therese is not so much concerned with Mary's interior life, who for her is always "full of grace", but by the great army of little souls who could not follow after a Mother who was far away from them. "I am sure her life was very simple".\textsuperscript{691}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Le nombre des petits est bien grand sur la terre}
\textit{Ils peuvent sans trembler vers toi lever les yeux}\textsuperscript{692}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{688}\textsuperscript{CJ 11. VII. 6}
\textsuperscript{689}I know that at Nazareth, Mother full of graces
You live very poor, wanting nothing more
\textsuperscript{690}Never do raptures, miracles nor ecstacies
Embellish your life, O Queen of the Elect.
\textsuperscript{691}\textsuperscript{CJ 21. VIII. 3}
\textsuperscript{692}The number of little ones is great upon the earth
They can without trembling raise their eyes to you
\end{flushright}
Surely, Therese ranks herself among them but this is not her point. She turns toward her mother who chooses the common way to save at least some of Her Son's brothers.

C'est par la voie commune, incomparable Mère
Qu'il te plaît de marcher pour les guider aux Cieux.693

The yes, "the Blessed Virgin knows what it is to suffer."694 She is the replica, in her maternal rank, of the Suffering 695 Therese emphasizes "what attracts me to you" (2,4).

What Therese wants is to live constantly with Mary and in this way to follow her each day. She introduces this in the eighteenth stanza.

En attendant le Ciel, ô ma Mère chérie
Je veux vivre avec toi, te suivre chaque jour.696

Passing from the Gospel to Mary herself, Therese discovers her heart as an inexhaustible object of outstanding quality.

Mère en te contemplant, je me plonge ravie
Découvrant dans ton cœur des abîmes d'amour.697

As ever, there is a paradox here: it would seem that this abyss of love, like her supreme grandeur (1,3), would separate Mother and child. Yet it does not. Together they communicate in the very language of love, that is they share tears and laughter.

693 It is by the common way, incomparable mother
    That it please you to walk for guiding them to heaven.
694 CJ 20. VIII. 11
695 cf. Poésies, Tome I, 239; Is 53:3; LT 108; RP 2, 3r
696 While waiting for Heaven, oh my dear Mother
    I want to live with you, to follow you each day
697 Mother while contemplating you, I prolong my delight
    Discovering in your heart the depths of love.
Mary teaches by example and purifies Therese's sorrows of their sorrowful element.

Thus, Therese learns in the marian school of love; it is an exchange of loving gazes. Therese "contemplates" her Mother; Mary beholds her child. Hence, the vicissitudes of life are less threatening. In fact, Therese revels in such blessings, a sustaining fact up until the end of her life. Finally, with "pure and holy joys," she hints at the wedding feast of Cana. These joys represent all the best that humans may rightfully "taste under the eye of God."

**Stanzas Nineteen, Twenty, Twenty-one and Twenty-two**

Therese returns to the Gospel and explicitates the wedding feast of Cana which begins stanza nineteen.

"...they have no more wine" inebriated Therese with a complete and utter confidence in God. "She was always telling us that..."

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688 Your maternal look banishes all my fears
       It teaches me to weep, it teaches me to rejoice.

689 Instead of scorning the pure and holy joys
       You want to share them, you deign to bless them.

700 CJ 21-26. V. 11; 13. VII. 17; 17. VII. 7; 29. VII. 14; LT 254

701 LT 159

702 Seeing the worry of the spouses of Cana
       which they can not hide, for they lack wine
       To the Saviour you tell him in your sollicitude
       Hoping for the help of his divine power.
we can never desire too much nor ask too much when we are asking of God."\textsuperscript{703} Yet, the apparent refusal of Jesus seems to try Mary's trust.

\textit{Jésus semble d'abord repousser ta prière}

"Qu'importe," répond-Il,"femme, à vous et à moi?"\textsuperscript{704}

But after the trial, what a reward; Therese knows that the hearts of Mother and Son beat as one. Jesus' response seems gruff, even harsh; yet, later he does as his Mother asked.

\textit{Mais au fond de son coeur, Il te nomme sa Mère}

\textit{Et son premier miracle, Il l'opère pour toi}...\textsuperscript{705}

The very roughness of the Son polishes the Mother's perspective. In fact, Therese enlarges on this theme by cutting away from the wedding feast to the hillside of Matthew 12.

\begin{quote}
Un jour que les pécheurs écoutent la doctrine
De Celui qui voudrait au Ciel les recevoir
Je te trouve avec eux, Marie, sur la colline
Quelqu'un dit à Jésus que tu voudrais le voir,\textsuperscript{706}
\end{quote}

In this scene "on the hillside", Mary appears only indirectly, seems to accomplish nothing, and says not a word. Yet, the words of her Son, Savior of sinners, strike a deep chord within her who knows no sin. The same sound echoes in the heart of Therese. "This year...the grace to understand...to love neighbor as Jesus loves him."\textsuperscript{707} She "penetrates the mysterious depths of charity",\textsuperscript{708} the abyss of

\textsuperscript{703}CSG, 54

\textsuperscript{704}Jesus seems at first to repulse her prayer
   "What does it matter," He answered," Woman, to you and to me?"

\textsuperscript{705}But at the bottom of his heart, He named her his Mother
   and his first miracle, He work for you....

\textsuperscript{706}On a day that sinners listen to the teaching
   Of Him would like to receive them into Heaven
   I find you with them, Mary, on the hillside
   Someone says to Jesus that you would like to see him,

\textsuperscript{707}Ms C 11v, 12v
love" (18,4), the very "secrets of" Mary's "maternal heart" (22,6). Therese doesn't glide over this episode, but, like the mystery of the temple, (14,15,16) thoughtfully considers its implications and develops this new reason of rapport between Mother and Child.

On the hillside, Jesus, called "Master of the Doctors" in a first draft,\(^{709}\) dispenses his "doctrine" (20,1) to sinners - a nomenclature none of the Gospels give. On another hillside he dispenses "his life" (21,2) also to sinners. There Jesus "gives all" (22,2), even his Mother as "Refuge of Sinners" (22,7). "You love us, Mary as Jesus loves us" (22,1). This is a central theme of the poem, the depths of which Therese fathoms in the rest of the stanza quoted above and in stanzas twenty-one and twenty-two.

As ever, Therese is present, seeing, hearing, wondering. Jesus is surrounded by sinners. When his Mother asks for Him, He does not get up and leave them. Here again, as at "the mystery of the temple", His obedience to his Mother at Nazareth must be recalled; there, as here, the character of his submission prevents misunderstanding. It is much like Cana both in the mother's simple request and the Son's searing response. Jesus shows Himself here not as Teacher and Wonder-Worker, but as Savior.

\[\text{Alor, ton Divin Fils devant la foule entière} \]
\[\text{De son amour pour nous montre l'immensité}^{710}\]

This love seems to sacrifice His mother.

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\(^{708}\) Ms C 18v

\(^{709}\) Poésies, Tome II, 294 (15,7)

\(^{710}\) Thus, your Divine Son before the whole crowd
    Shows the immensity of his love for us
Il dit: "Quel est mon frère et ma soeur et ma Mère
"Si ce n'est celui-là qui fait ma volonté?".

For some years, Therese has been captivated by this question. "Yes, the one who loves Jesus is his whole family." In that 23 July 1891 letter to Celine, Therese also records the words of the synoptics. "He who does the will of my Father, he is my mother, my brother, and my sister." Likewise, in letters dated 6 July 1893 and 17 November 1894, she quotes Mt. 12:50. She even wrote them on two pictures in her breviary, emphasizing the word "Mother" sometime between 1896-1897. But, here she does not. Attention to the text reveals that Jesus is speaking: "my will". By this, Therese emphasizes the divinity of Jesus, bonding Himself to that band of sinners gathered around Him, whom he transforms by His words and works. The sinners, now disciples, are linked to Jesus not by physical descent nor by physical nearness, but by doing His will. As at Cana, this apparent harshness calls Mary to open her heart even more.

Mary does not jealously guard her unique condition as "Mother" of Jesus. Jesus' searing response causes no sadness within her.

O Vierge Immaculée, des mères la plus tendre
En écoutant Jésus, tu ne t'attristes pas.

711 He says: "Who is my brother and sister and mother
If not that one who does my will?"

712 LT 130
713 LT 142
714 LT 172
715 LT 130 note 5
716 O Immaculate Virgin, the most tender of mothers
While listening to Jesus, you do not sadden yourself.
Mary doesn't force a smile in the face of a seeming public embarrassment, perhaps even a brutal rebuff. She is not stripped of her rank and privileges, but rather, they are now extended to sinners.

Mais tu te réjouis qu'il nous fasse comprendre
Que notre âme devient sa famille ici-bas?17

Thus the link that bonds Mother and Son ought to be universal. This recalls the fourth and fifth stanzas on the Incarnation. All that brotherhood, sisterhood or motherhood requires is to do the will of Jesus. For the faithful soul the reward is beyond measure.

Oui tu te réjouis qu'il nous donne sa vie,
Les trésors infinis de sa divinité!...?18

Now, indeed, the "treasures of the mother" (5,4) belong to all her children. For a long time Therese was sure of her intuition (15,3).?19 Therese is also "mother" because she does the will of the Son. "Because of this" she possesses His life and His divinity. "His goods are mine."?20 Now the rapport of mother and child is no longer shrouded in tears, but enveloped in love and in doing God's will.

Comment ne pas t'aimer, ô ma Mère chérie,
En voyant tant d'amour et tant d'humilité?21

Does not Mary perfectly follow Her Son who, though he was rich, made himself poor for sake, in order to enrich our poverty?22

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717 But you yourself rejoice that He would make us understand That our soul becomes his family here below

718 Yes, you yourself rejoice that He gives us his life, The infinite treasures of his divinity!...

719 cf Ms B

720 LT 258

721 How not to love you, oh my dear Mother, While seeing such love and such humility?

722 cf. II Cor. 8:9

133
It is precisely this kind of self-sacrificing, humble love of Mary on our behalf that captivates the loving gaze and this long meditation of Therese. Mary does not hesitate to leave her son so that sinners may draw near. Perhaps the "bitter sadness" of Jerusalem has prepared her for this separation. Perhaps her "solicitude" (19,3) has prepared her for being in the background.

Tu nous aimes, Marie, comme Jésus nous aime
Et tu consens pour nous à t'éloigner Lui.  

Perhaps, instead "such love and such humility" has prepared her for this distance in the Public Life of Jesus. The end of the stanza seems to indicate that this "solicitude" continues for the community of the redeemed after the Ascension. In the love of Son and Mother for sinners, Therese discovers "an exact definition of love and an adequate explanation of her own life."  

Aimer c'est tout donner et se donner soi-même.

For this, Therese turns neither to philosophy nor theology, but to her own experience, the Gospels, and her little way. She knows the truth of her verse from the time of her First Communion. Her poem Vivre d'amour, composed before the Blessed Sacrament, "comprises the sum of the Saint's aspirations." She underlines, literally, the example of Jesus and Mary. Mary generously, and without limits, proves it.

Tu voulus le prouver en restant notre appui.

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You love us, Mary, as Jesus loves us
And for us you consent to distance yourself from Him.

Combes, 118

Ms A 35r

PN 17

CSG, 86

You want to prove it while remaining our guide
Precisely because of this measureless love of the Mother for Her Son, can the
Crucified and Risen One entrust to her, the Refuge of sinners, his brothers and
sisters, until the end of the world.

Le Sauveur connaissait ton immense tendresse
Il savait les secrets de ton coeur maternal,
Refuge des pécheurs, c'est à toi qu'Il nous laisse
Quand Il quitte la Croix pour nous attendre au Ciel. 729

Stanza Twenty-Three

As ever, Therese sees, hears, wonders at the mystery now present to her, of
Calvary. In a hieratic vision where the sobriety of expression only serves to sharpen
and intensify Mary's grief, "the martyrdom of the heart is not less fruitful than the
pouring out of one's blood." 730 In that same 26 December 1896 letter to her first
missionary brother, Fr. Belliere, Therese links that kind of martyrdom to the
mystery under consideration: "To save our souls, He left His Mother; He saw the
Immaculate Virgin standing at the foot of the Cross, her heart transpierced by a
sword of sorrow." 731

Marie, tu m'apparais au sommet du Calvaire
Debout près de la Croix, comme un prêtre à l'autel 732

Without resolving the technicalities, in carefully chosen words, Therese likens Mary
to a priest at the altar, and by extension, it may be said, the Sacrifice of the Cross
to the Sacrifice of the altar.

Offrant pour apaiser la justice du Père

729 The Saviour knew of your immense tenderness
He knew the secrets of your maternal heart,
The Refuge of sinners, it is to you that He leaves us
When He quit the Cross in order to wait for us in Heaven.

730 LT 213

731 ibid.

732 Mary, you teach me at the summit of Calvary
Standing near the Cross, like a priest at the altar
Mother and Son suffer together, the primordial image for Christians "who used to join together in order to give each other more courage in the hour of trial."\textsuperscript{734}

As this poem developed, Therese became more and more concise. She placed the allusion to Isaiah 7:14 here at Calvary, instead of the Annunciation, in stanzas three and four. By alluding to this prophecy of "sweet Emmanuel", \textsuperscript{735}by echoing the sweetness of the "Lamb's" residing in her soul after Holy Communion in stanzas five and eight, she makes all the more heart-searing the aspect of the Victim and the appeasement of the Father's Justice. This justice is the object of Therese's "joy and confidence" because God not only "punishes the guilty", but "recognizes right intentions" and "rewards virtue."\textsuperscript{736} This justice "which frightens so many souls" is not vindictiveness, but the victory of God's compassion. "How can we doubt that God will open the doors of His kingdom to His children who loved Him even to sacrificing all for Him?"\textsuperscript{737}

The "sweet", "Beloved Jesus" hangs upon the Cross. The contrast renders the sorrowful Mother all the more desolate.

Un prophète l'a dit, o Mère désolée,
"Il n'est pas de douleur semblable à ta douleur!" \textsuperscript{738}

\textsuperscript{733}Offering, in order to appease the justice of the Father, Your well-beloved Jesus, the sweet Emmanuel...

\textsuperscript{734}LT 167; LT 213
\textsuperscript{735}cf. LT 108
\textsuperscript{736}LT 226
\textsuperscript{737}ibid; Ms A 6r; 7r
\textsuperscript{738}A prophet said it, oh sorrowful Mother, "Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow!"
Therese departs from the Gospel, but not the Scripture. In fact, this phrase from Lamentation 1:12 is doubly sacred, because the Liturgy itself used it in the Office for Friday of Passion Week.\textsuperscript{739} The abyss of sorrow reminds her of the Presentation's prophecy, and the truth of her title, "Queen of Martyrs" (12:1), is effected at Calvary. Likewise, Mary discovers the bitterness and desolation of her exile (Stanza 12). This exile, this Calvary, is the moment of her all-embracing motherhood, where she sheds her heart's blood as Her Son's Body shed His.

\textit{O Reine des Martyrs, en restant exilée}
\textit{Tu prodiges pour nous tout le sang de ton cœur!} \textsuperscript{740}

Mary obtains the palm of victory for all who suffer and witness, for all who are martyrs. "Since she loves us and since she knows our weakness, what have we to fear"\textsuperscript{741} from God's justice? She continues this 9 May 1897 letter, contemporaneous with the present poem, to her second missionary brother, Fr. Roulland: "If there remains in their soul, at the moment of appearing before God, some trace of human weakness, the Blessed Virgin obtains for them the grace of making an act of perfect love, and then she gives them the palm and crown that they so greatly merited."\textsuperscript{742}

\textbf{Stanzas Twenty-four and Twenty-five}

At the beginning of stanza twenty-four, concision again rules Therese. She does not recount the conversation of committal in the words of John 19:25-27. Rather, she starkly contrasts the Son of God with the "son of Zebedee".

\textsuperscript{739}Poésies, Tome II, 307 (23:6)

\textsuperscript{740}O Queen of Martyrs, while remaining exiled
You pour out for us all the blood of your heart!

\textsuperscript{741}LT 226

\textsuperscript{742}ibid.

137
Le maison de Saint Jean devient ton seul asile
Le fils de Zébédée doit remplacer Jésus...  

It ought to be noted that "son of Zebedee" is a correction of Mother Agnes which Therese accepted. However, Therese wanted to continue St. Bernard's contrasts: John/Jesus; servant/Lord; disciple/Master; son of Zebedee/Son of God, in order to conclude bitterly: "what an exchange". Yet, this bitterness for Mary is a sweetness for John and, by extension, for all the children of Carmel.

Here the veil falls over Mary's existence. Hence, Therese stops her marian meditation. For example, she says nothing of the descent from the Cross, "Ah! I don't know how she stood it", asking her sister, Mother Agnes, if she could stand it if Therese were brought to her in such a state. No, Therese stops for three reasons. First, it is obvious that the Gospel says nothing more about Mary.

C'est le dernier détail que donne l'Evangile
De la Reine des Cieux il me parle plus.

Secondly, Therese no longer thinks of Mary as the "humble and sweet valley" of the Annunciation (3,7), nor as the "mother full of grace" at Nazareth (17,1), nor as the "Queen of Martyrs" at Calvary (12,1), but as the "Queen of Heaven" (23,7) - just as she began her poem. Thirdly, someone else, more qualified, takes the place of Therese, child of Mary. That Someone is none other than the Son of Mary. Taken up into her homeland from this land of exile, her "Heaven" Himself (13,4) sings her praises to all those in heaven.

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743 The house of Saint John becomes your only retreat
The son of Zebede must replace Jesus...

744 Poésies, Tome II, 308, (24:2)

745 CJ 25. VII. 6

746 It is the last detail that the Gospel gives of the Queen of the Heavens; it no longer speaks to me.

138
Mais son profond silence, ô ma Mère chérie
Ne révèle-t-il pas que Le Verbe Eternel
Veut Lui-même chanter les secrets de ta vie
Pour charmer tes enfants, tous les Élus du Ciel?

Therese hopes to be among those "children" to hear for herself the "charming" words of the "Eternal Word" concerning Mary whom she sought to love in her own words.

With nothing more to say, Therese presses for the fulfillment of her desires in stanza twenty-five.

Bientôt je l’entendrai cette douce harmonie
Bientôt dans le beau Ciel, je vais aller te voir.

The repetition of "bientôt" is significant and gives a beautiful balance to this stanza of hope in the midst of her worst suffering. Mother Agnes found this couplet delightful. For, in their common life, Mary and Therese shared sorrow and suffering, pain and tears. Now she desired to share in that sweet harmony of heaven. In fact, only a few months separate her from the consummation of her ardent desire for which she so generously prepared.

The end of her poem does not end her own night of faith, but for a moment it seems to offer some relief, as she will tell Mother Agnes on June 9: "Has your trial of faith passed?" "No, but it seems to be suspended; the ugly serpents are no longer hissing in my ears."

In this last stanza, for the first time in her poem, Therese

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747 But its profound silence, o my dear mother
does it not reveal that the Eternal Word
Himself wants to sing the secrets of your life
In order to charm your children, all the Elect of Heaven?

748 Soon I will hear this sweet harmony
Soon in the beautiful Heaven, I will go to see you.

749 cf. Ms B 2r: "Oui, bientôt, bientôt,... je vous le promets."

750 Poésies, Tome II, 308, note on stz. 25

751 CJ 9. VI. 2

139
recalls a personal grace - the healing smile of the Virgin - and asks Mary to smile upon her once again.

Toi qui vins me sourire au matin de ma vie
Viens me sourire encore...Mère...voici le soir!...

The statue that smiled at Therese on 13 May 1883 was brought into the infirmary on 8 July 1897 from where it stood in an antechamber at Therese's cell, and before which she prayed with glowing fervor. The statue was brought from Les Buissonnets when Celine entered on 14 September 1894. To the amazement of the nuns, Therese easily picked up this statue; before it she encouraged the confidences of the novices. Now in her extreme suffering, this statue again brings her consolation. Her own sister, Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart, gives an account of the July day.

On that day, Therese repeated these verses (25:3-4) of her poem as the statue was placed near her. Her features changed in an instant and her eyes filled with tears. Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart wondered what was wrong, and approached Therese to find out why. But she said nothing to her sister. Only later did she indicate that her silence stopped her welling sobs: "Never has she appeared more beautiful to me." It is then tears of consolation? "Yes." "And you are however in the night of faith?" "I am." Sr. Mary concludes her reminiscence of this scene by recalling in detail the "true vision" of 13 May 1883. One hour before her death on 30

752 You who came to smile on me in the morning of my life
Come to smile on me again...Mother...behold the evening

753 Ms A 30r
754 Ms C 36r; CSG, 121
755 CSG p. 121
756 Ms C 25v/26r
757 cf. DE, 455

140
September 1897, she will fix her gaze on this statue of the Smiling Virgin for a long time.\footnote{DE, 383}

Thus, Therese makes this request without the least hesitation. As she shared in her suffering, so she will share in Mary's glory. Therese expresses this elevating grace to an intimate degree. For now the rapport between Mother and Child is that of a singing child bouncing on her mother's knees.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Je ne crains plus l'éclat de ta gloire suprême}
\textit{Avec Toi j'ai souffert et je veux maintenant}
\textit{Chanter sur tes genoux, Marie, pourquoi je t'aime}
\textit{Et redire à jamais que je suis ton enfant!...}\footnote{I no longer fear the dazzle of your supreme glory With you I have suffered and I want now To sing on your knees, Mary, why I love you And to say again forever that I am your child!...... (signed) The little Therese...}
\end{quote}

(signed) La petite Thérèse

Therese has come full circle. She knows why she loves Mary, despite the paradoxes of her greatness and Therese's littleness. It began because the Queen of Heaven first shortened the distance. Mary, thus, reflects the insight of the Gospel: it is the Trinity who first loved us (Jn. 15:16). Mary and Therese are of the same spirit. Mary loves us as Jesus loves us. This humble love is enveloped in silence and invites silence. In Mary this love is more sure than just knowledge; she does not fear what she does not understand, for example, Joseph's ignorance of the Incarnation (8), the rough treatment at Bethlehem (9-10), her amazement at Jesus' "hidden words" in Jerusalem (14-15), and "on the hillside" (20-21). In every situation Mary yields to silence because, in her faith, vexed by trials, she emerges victorious by gradually coming to understand their meaning and value. "Profound Silence" (24,5) which bathed her earthly existence, speaks more eloquently than any word, until
"the Word" (24, 6) Himself will reveal the "secrets of her life" (24, 7). Hence, what really matters is not merely two or three reasons for Therese's love for Mary, nor simply her reaction to this or that Gospel scene, but that Jesus Himself finds it difficult to distinguish between His Mother and her child, Therese. Both of them "did well to keep these things hidden in their hearts."\(^7\)\(^6\) By the example of Mary, Therese is assured that her "night of faith" is compatible with the fulness of her love. She has learned of Mary's example from the Gospel where the Word of God reveals it to her heart, and thus, in turn, illumines her interior trials. In a way, "little Therese"\(^7\)\(^6\)\(^1\) has joined the elect to chant the praises of Mary, begun by the Word made Flesh "ex Maria Virgine", by writing down all she "thinks" about her "dear Mother": Why I love you, O Mary.

\(^{7\text{6}0}\)CJ 8. VII. 10

\(^{7\text{6}1}\)Poesies, Tome II, 309 Therese signed the poem this way a few days before her death.
Chapter Three attempts to synthesize the gradual development of the appropriation of the role of Mary within the life of Therese. The stages of this development and appropriation have a decidedly evangelical cast. This synthesis relies on the insights of Cardinal Martini, Father Navone, S.J., Father Buby, S.M., and Father Dulles, S.J. I hope to demonstrated that Therese "this masterpiece of grace and nature,"762 this epitome of the universal call to holiness in the Church proclaimed at Vatican II763, gradually became a "living word" of God and, thus, "a ravishing miniature of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

Via Pulchritudinis

Paul VI invited the participants of the International Marian Congress to approach the theology of Mary through the via pulchritudinis, in addition to the well-trodden path of abstraction and theological reasoning.764 Elements of the via pulchritudinis can be discovered in the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas and Cardinal Newman. For St. Thomas Aquinas the three elements of beauty have a likeness to the properties of the Son: 1) its wholeness reflects His "one in being with the Father;" 2) its just proportion reflects Him as the expressed image of the Father; 3) its clarity reflects the Word, "Light from Light".765 For Cardinal Newman,

763Lumen Gentium, Ch. V
765cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, ST Ia 39, 8c
beauty, the divine attribute above all others, was "defaced" and "deformed... by the unutterable condescension of His Incarnation." 766

Moreover, one judges the beauty of a work of art, or a person's achievement in the field of dramatic living, by the disinterested judgment of connaturality. It is disinterested because it does not depend on one's mood or its usefulness; it is connatural because perceiver and perceived resonate, a subjective judgment that can claim universal assent. 767 Furthermore, the judgment of faith is a judgment by connaturality. For Aquinas, a distinctive feature of a "rational nature" is to intuit and to savor goodness. The "eye of love" draws human beings to Goodness. 768 For Newman, the Church does not prove the beauty of its doctrine but shows it. 769 Hence, in telling the story of Christ, the Gospels, one does not expect that everyone will agree with one's judgment but that they ought. 770 Likewise, the beauty of His story must be pointed out if its hearers are to achieve an affective insight. 771

Hence, the splendor et claritas of the unseen God is pointed out or revealed in the human story of Christ. This story is a translucent symbol. Symbols are "signs imbuded with a plenitude or depth of meaning that surpasses the capacities of


767 cf N, 210


770 N, 211

771 cf N, 212
behavior."\textsuperscript{778} Hence, an authentic image or icon of oneself, others and \textit{world} implies an authentic image of God. Conversion, \textit{then}, is the process by which the life of Jesus, the \textit{story} told by his life, so transforms our minds and wills that our life-stories become icons of the same God as his.\textsuperscript{778} The life story of the Crucified-Risen Jesus, the visible Image of the invisible God, is the primordial sacrament of God's gift of his love, experienced by the Christian as underlying and informing all human life stories.\textsuperscript{780} Thus the Gospels themselves are icons evoking a feeling for, or a sense of, Christ's presence; His Resurrection is the key to the Christian interpretation of the divine and human co-authoring of the Jesus story, the story of the Church and the universal story of the world.\textsuperscript{781}

In apprehending and appropriating the story told by the four gospels, we apprehend and appropriate our own life-story.\textsuperscript{782} "Thus faith and redemption are two aspects of the same coin. Faith is not just an act of the intellect but a transformation of the whole person in response to God's initiatives, conveyed through the religious community and its traditions."\textsuperscript{783}

The deeper insights of revelatory knowledge are imparted, not in the first instance through propositional discourse, but through participation in the life and worship of the Church. To become religious, says Lindbeck, \textit{is} to interiorize a set of skills by practice and training. One learns how to \textit{feel}, act and think in conformity with a religious tradition that \textit{is}, in its inner structure, far richer and more subtle than can be explicitly articulated\textsuperscript{784}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{778}Dulles, 21.
  \item \textsuperscript{779}cf N, 221-222
  \item \textsuperscript{780}N, 226
  \item \textsuperscript{781}cf N, 229, 233
  \item \textsuperscript{782}N, 148
  \item \textsuperscript{783}Dulles, 21.
  \item \textsuperscript{784}Dulles, 18.
\end{itemize}
conceptual thinking and propositional speech." As a symbol and work of art, the Incarnation sheds "Light" and makes present the totality of Meaning and Being within the contingent world. The Incarnation "lure us," as it were, "to situate ourselves mentally within the universe of meaning and value which it opens up to us."

This "Light" does not dissolve but discloses what a human life could and should be. Therefore, human life stories are icons of the Divine Life-story. In the Slavo-Byzantine tradition a sacred image, an icon, is not a copy of a heavenly reality but a focus of the real presence, a sacramental disclosing of a world filled with the Spirit of God, and an opening to the world and story of the worshipper. Futhermore, "a privilieged locus for the apprehension of this subject matter [the saving self-communication of God through the symbolic events and words of Scripture, especially in Jesus Christ as the 'mediator and fullness of all revelation'] is the worship of the Church, in which the biblical and traditional symbols are proclaimed and 're-presented' in ways that call for active participation (at least in mind and heart) on the part of the congregation."

This apprehension implies a conversion. "Christian symbols call for an openness; they both demand and make possible a radical change in the hearers attitude and

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773 cf N, 216

774 Dulles, 19, quoting his Models of Revelation (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 136.


776 cf N, 218

777 Dulles, 19.
Hence, the four versions of the Gospel Story serve the Church as four manuals for the attainment of Christian maturity.\footnote{This theory will be examined below under Cardinal Martini’s analysis of the four gospels. In short, the truths of the Gospel story evoke Christian conversion both as event and process.}{785} This theory will be examined below under Cardinal Martini’s analysis of the four gospels. In short, the truths of the Gospel story evoke Christian conversion both as event and process.\footnote{A Theory of Gospel Formation}{786}

A Theory of Gospel Formation

Carlo Martini’s hypothesis concerns the Gospels. If there existed in the early Church an understanding of the Christian pilgrimage, marked by succeeding stages, then one could speak of the four Gospels as manuals to introduce these stages. Thus, as a working hypothesis, Mark, Matthew, Luke and John, would correspond to these diverse stages. Accordingly, the four succeeding stages of the pilgrimage toward Christian maturation are: 1) Mark as the catechumenal initiation; 2) Matthew as the introduction to ecclesial life; 3) Luke as the beginning of evangelization; 4) John as contemplative maturity.\footnote{Yet, it must be kept in mind that, although the Gospels are distinct, they are not separate and are read together in every moment.}{787}

Moreover, although Carlo Martini sees the four Gospels as a response to a particular historical crisis in the Church, the four stages also correspond to the ongoing process of conversion within each Christian’s individual life. Martini’s hypothesis is derived from and limited to three articles; his first article\footnote{his first article seems tentative and shows the gradually emerging hypothesis about Christian formation in terms of initiation; his second article is no longer tentative and the stages do not}{788} seems tentative and shows the gradually emerging hypothesis about Christian formation in terms of initiation; his second article\footnote{Ar. B, 2.}{789} is no longer tentative and the stages do not

\footnotesize{\begin{center}
\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{N, 153}{785}
\item \footnote{N, 186}{786}
\item \footnote{Ar C., 86-87}{787}
\item \footnote{Ar. B, 2.}{788}
\item \footnote{Ar A}{789}
\item \footnote{Ar. B}{790}
\end{itemize}
\end{center}}
reflect Christian experience about initiation; his third article gives his heart-set and mind-set, his characteristic spirit about the Christians' pilgrimage and their maturation. An amalgamation and synthesis of his articles serve to contextualize the role of Mary both in the Gospels and in the life of St. Therese.

Mary, The Faithful Disciple

What is exciting about the New Testament is that Mary of Nazareth is the first disciple of Jesus who enables us to experience the process of becoming a disciple at any stage of the call in which we find ourselves. In this way, the Scriptures present Mary as a disciple in an ever-growing and maturing sense. Indeed, "she is worthy of imitation because she was the first and most perfect of Christ's disciples." Other disciples of Christ can, therefore, identify with specific aspects of Mary's discipleship, who is not on a pedestal but rather who is a believing woman, a disciple of Jesus, summoning us to a creative following of Jesus as she did.

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781 Ar. C
782 Buby, 127
783 Buby, 24
784 Buby, 8, quoting Paul VI "Devotion to the Virgin Mary"
785 cf. Buby, 10.
Mary is the prototype for the believer-disciple on how to follow Jesus.\textsuperscript{796} In the New Testament \textit{mathetes}, with few exceptions is the term used solely of those who recognize Jesus as their master.\textsuperscript{797} This call from Jesus himself is independent of their moral or intellectual gifts.\textsuperscript{798} The call to discipleship is the call to a personal relationship and attachment to Jesus himself which requires conversion; for to follow Jesus is to conform to his behavior, to listen to his teachings, to imitate his life.\textsuperscript{799} Jesus' disciples have the same destiny and dignity as his: to carry the cross, to drink the cup, to receive the kingdom.\textsuperscript{800} Thus, discipleship is revealed as the way of following the plan of God through following Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{801} This discipleship becomes the prism through which to view all the other truths about Mary.\textsuperscript{802} Cast in this light, the words of St. Augustine describing Mary as the paradigm of the believer-disciple, that first she conceived Christ in faith before she conceived Him in the flesh, shine with new

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{796} Buby, 9
\item \textsuperscript{797} Buby, 15
\item \textsuperscript{798} Buby, 15
\item \textsuperscript{799} Cf. Buby, 16
\item \textsuperscript{800} Cf. Buby, 17
\item \textsuperscript{801} Buby, 17
\item \textsuperscript{802} Buby, 13, quoting Bearsely, \textit{Theological Studies}, (1980), 469
\end{itemize}
Her limitations as a person who followed Jesus of Nazareth can help believers to identify themselves as disciples in the experience of their life commitments. Mary shows us the way to true Christian life. By means of the perspective given by this paradigm of the believer-disciple, Mary's divine motherhood, her role in the Church, and the significance of her virginity can be understood coherently as the celebration of one total life experience which is the mystery of Mary in the plan of salvation, propter nos et nostram salutem. Although Buby claims other images could be used, he used those of an artist; each evangelist develops portraits of the people he describes through his words about them and from the context in which he places both the words and deeds of Jesus and those who surround or follow him. Thus, Mary of Nazareth, within the chronological scheme of New Testament writing, emerges as a dream-like image in Paul, a silhouette in Mark, a pencil sketch in Matthew, an oil portrait in Luke, a sculpture in John, and in Revelation, not just a picture but reality.

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803 Luigi Gambero, Mary in St. Augustine, unpublished classnotes, IMRI, July, 1988
804 Buby, 10
805 ibid.
806 Buby, 17, quoting Bearsley, Theological Studies, (1980), 472
807 Buby, 9

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However, only the four Gospels will be used here to frame the investigation of the role of Mary on the life of St. Therese. Mark gives but a trace of Mary's discipleship, suggesting, like a silhouette, only the contours of her face and person.\textsuperscript{808} In Mark 3:19-35, Jesus' response means there is a relationship with him more real and important than the physical, especially when the latter impedes the inbreaking of the Kingdom of God; in Jesus' new family of the Spirit, relationship to him is not established by blood but by one's surrender to God's will revealed in Jesus; it is faith, not flesh, that gives entry into God's Kingdom; it is faith, obedient faith, that brings one into the new family and makes one brother and sister and mother to Jesus.\textsuperscript{808}

Matthew's literary masterpiece can be described as a pencil sketch when it comes to those sections where Mary is mentioned.\textsuperscript{810} As in Mark, Matthew wants to stress that those who do the will of the heavenly Father, those who have left their homes and families for the sake of Jesus are his real mother and brothers;\textsuperscript{811} they are united to Jesus, who never taught nor asked something of His disciples without first

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\textsuperscript{808} Buby, 9

\textsuperscript{809} cf. Buby, 18-19, quoting George Montague, Mark, 50.

\textsuperscript{810} Buby, 50

\textsuperscript{811} cf. Buby, 20, quoting John Meier, New Testament Message, 140
doing or accomplishing it Himself, by baptism and by His teachings as the family of God, the Church.\textsuperscript{812}

Luke, however, has softened the harsher image of Mark, personalized the more structured, almost architectural blue-print, message of Matthew about Mary, and given more of a portrait in oils. If by understanding that truly hearing the word of God included doing that word and that those who both heard and did the word were Jesus' family, then at the Annunciation, Mary's discipleship begins; it grows as she learns the cost of following Jesus; it is challenged as He becomes hated and persecuted; it is perfected as He dies upon the cross.\textsuperscript{813}

In John, we have a three-dimensional sculpture of Mary who, present at Cana among the other disciples, sees the Lord's Glory and stands at the foot of the Cross, a scene presented in a context of discipleship. This presentation of Mary in the Gospels will frame this thesis's second part as it seeks to discover and uncover the role of Mary in the life of St. Therese.

\textsuperscript{812}cf. Buby, 20-21

\textsuperscript{813}cf. Buby, 22, quoting LaVerdiere, \textit{New Testament Message}, 114; Buby, 24
The Words and Works of St. Therese

Throughout her own story, St. Therese makes constant references to the Gospels. These references suggest the stages of conversion and the process of discipleship outlined above. She used Mk. 3:13, the passage where Jesus calls his disciples, as the point of departure to reflect on the mystery of her vocation, of her whole life, of the privileges she had received. Because she saw herself as weak and little like a child, she claims: "He lowered Himself to me and instructed me secretly in the things of love." If the clever and the wise would come to her (cf. Mt. 11:25), she would tell them of secrets revealed only to those who are poor in spirit, of revelation found only in the Gospels. She also knew and understood for a long time that the Kingdom of God is within (Lk. 17:20). She ends her life story by quoting John 17, the priestly prayer of Jesus. These four references culled from her autobiographical manuscripts serve to underscore the following: "But it is especially the Gospels (her own italics) which sustain me in my hours of

814 Ms A 2r
815 Ms A 49r
816 Ms A 71r
817 Ms A 83v
818 Ms C 34 r,v
prayer, for in them I find what is necessary for my poor little soul. I am constantly finding in them new lights, hidden and mysterious meanings."\textsuperscript{819} Her story represents the power of the Word in the wordless.

In writing her story, St. Therese has only this desire: to sing the mercies of the Lord,\textsuperscript{820} to give her thoughts on the graces God deigned to grant her, \textsuperscript{821} to publish the totally gratuitous gifts of Jesus.\textsuperscript{822} Therese wrote her autobiography through obedience and most of her other writings were done at the request of someone else. This obedience and obliging the request of others is an important point. For, the root of obedience is udire, to listen. Faith itself comes through listening, through hearing (cf. Rm 10:17) and "happy are those who hear the word of God and live it out" (Lk. 11:28). Moreover, her own deafness was shattered by the sledge hammer of suffering; her soul matured in the crucible of exterior and interior trials. This converges with Carlo Martini's thought on how the

\textsuperscript{819} Ms A 83v
\textsuperscript{820} Ms A 2r
\textsuperscript{821} Ms A 3r
\textsuperscript{822} Ms A 3v
Gospels came to be written: in response to a trial, a crisis either from without or from within the early Church.\textsuperscript{a23}

In the midst of the greatest trials, Therese desired to follow the example of St. Cecilia who sang in the midst of her martyrdom, not surprising to St. Therese because: "The Gospels rested on her heart and in her heart reposed the Spouse of Virgins!" (her own italics).\textsuperscript{a24} Through the Gospels she learned her little way of spiritual childhood, that is, utter confidence in Divine condescension, profound humility, total self-surrender, complete thanksgiving amid trials. All of this dawned upon her like the sun upon the day: "The Ray did not act all at once but sweetly and gently it raised the little flower and strengthened her in such a way that...she was blossoming on the fertile mountain of Carmel."\textsuperscript{a25} As in the Gospels, so with Therese, conversion and the suffering true discipleship entails, happened gradually.\textsuperscript{a26}

Each Gospel witnesses to a new stage of initiation into the Paschal Mystery.

Therese's Marcan stage corresponds to all the events leading up to her Christmas

\textsuperscript{a23}Ar A p. 2
\textsuperscript{a24}Ms A 61v
\textsuperscript{a25}Ms A 30v
\textsuperscript{a26}cf. Ar A, 9

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conversion. Her Matthean stage corresponds to that "family record" (Mt. 1:1), to all those within her natural and religious family from whom she learned about Jesus and His Church. Her Lucan stage corresponds to her letter to her sister, Marie of the Sacred Heart, to whom she first began to preach her little way. Her Johannine stage corresponds to that manuscript given to Mother Gonzague in which she comments on the great commandments of love. Likewise, each of these stages has its marian dimension: "For a sermon on the Blessed Virgin to please me and to do me any good, I must see her real life... as imitable... saying that she lived by faith just like ourselves, giving proofs of this from the Gospel..." 827 Treading the via puchritudinis of symbol and story, a tripartite division of Cardinal Martini's hypothesis, Father Buby's analysis and Therese's life follows, seeking to synthesis the role of Mary in the life of the Saint.

THE MARCAN STAGE

Martini's Hypothesis: Mark, the Gospel of the Catechumenos

827 CJ 21.VIII.3
Mark is the Gospel of the Catechumenos. Mark, retained as the oldest, is particularly adapted for the first catechumenal instruction in preparation for Baptism. This instruction is not centered on the words, but on the mystery of the person Jesus Christ, who is in Himself the essence of the Christian message. The Catechumenal stages throw into relief, through the Gospel of Mark, the power of Jesus the wonder worker and the new revelation of God that is actualized in his life and in his death. Since Mark is considered to address a pagan who is not irreligious, the pagan is presented with a problem: How does one go from pagan ideas of God to the God of Jesus Christ? The pagan of the Greco-Roman world had a deep religious sense of life. He did not suffer from the question of God's existence but dwelt in a pantheon. He had to discover the difference between his sense of God and the God of Jesus Christ. Mark leads the pagan

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828 Ar. A, 3
829 Ar. C, 88
830 Ar. A, 3
831 Ar. C, 88
832 Ar. A, 7

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from a state of confusion about the Christian message to: "Do you or do you not wish to accept Christ, as he is, in your life?"\textsuperscript{833}

The Question that Leads to Conversion

Mark poses the question that leads to conversion.\textsuperscript{834} But what is the meaning of this enigmatic way of life?\textsuperscript{835} Is it something some do or say? But what is it and what does it mean? "The secret of the Kingdom of God is given to you but to those who are outside everything comes is parables." (Mk 4:11) The itinerary of Mark's Gospel is to go from outside the kingdom to the reception of that kingdom. This applies not only to the newly baptized, but also to those who never got to the point of their Baptism.\textsuperscript{836} Mark is a marvelous initiation to this opening of the eyes for recognizing the authentic demands of the baptism which one desires to receive, or that one has received, but not yet personally appropriated.\textsuperscript{837} In this way, Christian formation is meant not only for the Catechumenos but also for other

\textsuperscript{833}Ar. B, 2
\textsuperscript{834}Ar. B, 2
\textsuperscript{835}Ar B, 2
\textsuperscript{836}Ar A, 3
\textsuperscript{837}Ar B, 3

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Christians who personally have to go the way of a real perception of Christ's mystery, of receiving the kingdom as a real gift which transforms their lives.\textsuperscript{838}

Since Mark is the stage of conversion, it is the transformation of the subject and his world. The subject is no longer centered on himself nor fixated on a series of false values even of a religious type; rather he is clearly in a position to conform to the revelation of God.\textsuperscript{839} The catechumen must abandon the popularly accepted stereotypes of divine power and human success, the image of God made to the measure of his self-interest and suited to his personal ease and comfort.\textsuperscript{840} "Wicked designs come from the deep recesses of the heart: acts of fornication, theft, murder, adulterous conduct, greed, maliciousness, deceit, sensuality, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, an obtuse spirit. All these come from within and render a man impure." (Mk 7:21-22) Hence, it is a psychological and moral consideration of what comes from the pagan's heart; it is a principle of inferiority.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{838}Ar A, 3
\item \textsuperscript{839}Ar C, 88
\end{itemize}
This process of Christian conversion takes place through the encounter of our Lord Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{841} Hope of liberation comes from Baptism. The self-transcendence of the catechumen, once he has recognized himself as a sinner, rejects the sins catalogued above which render him incapable of authentically loving others as Jesus did. The prayer of the blind beggar, Bartimaeus: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." (Mk 10:48) ..." Master, let me see," again captures the spirit of this gospel's basic functioning. The catechumenos senses the need for deliverance available in Jesus Christ. It is Jesus Christ who gives a new way of seeing our basic self-others-world-God relationship.\textsuperscript{842}

But there is something unique in this encounter with Jesus Christ. The pagan is invited to pass from the world of many religious options to comprehend the unique character of the offer made to him in the God of Jesus Christ crucified.\textsuperscript{843} This is the irony of the Good News. Jesus' way of living and dying reveals the true face of the true God. The \textit{Via Crucis} leads away from the incomplete and self-reliant stance of the pagan. The pagan is called to die to this incomplete, unfinished self,

\textsuperscript{841}Ar B, 3.

\textsuperscript{842}Navone, \textit{op cit.}, 559, n. 2.

\textsuperscript{843}Ar B, 3.
and to find himself in the world of Other and others. The pagan is to show God's universal, unlimited, unrestricted love to others in service to them. This means that Mark leads the candidate from a god that could be manipulated as an idol for the achievement of his own ambitions to a radically new image of God who comes and involves himself in our lives, to the God who has dominion over our lives, to a God who can even abandon us as he abandoned Jesus on the Cross. Again, the God of Jesus Christ reveals himself as the God who acts in a powerful way in Jesus Christ, who was able to heal all the miseries of men: but also the God who abandoned Jesus Christ: "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?" (Mk 15:34) The mystery of Jesus' death is the mysterious plan of the mysterious God, a God who is totally above us. The disciples do not comprehend this and the irony is that the Roman centurion, as he sees Jesus hanging on the Cross, understands the true meaning: "Truly, this is the Son of God." (Mk 15:39). Mark points this out as a way to humble the disciples: "Don't think you know so much about God because you are his disciples." God, free and transcendent, gives his gifts to whosoever he pleases.

This is the God the pagan trusts because the Risen Christ has brought the Good

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844 Ar B, 3
845 Ar A, 6.
News: "God who seems to abandon man is in fact with him."\textsuperscript{846} In short, the sovereign, transcendent, free God of Jesus Christ is not to be manipulated; He is to be adored. Therefore, Mark gives a shock to a man who thinks he is religious, but who does not really know the God of Jesus Christ.

The point of Mark's Gospel is to put a man or a woman who is still "outside" in front of the mystery of Christ, his death and resurrection, as an invitation to conversion. Mark is not a catechism, a compendium of facts about Christianity. Rather, it is a manual for the director of the catechumens to aid him in his task of preparing them for Baptism. They are asked to reflect on the moral and psychological aspects conversion entails in the changing of heart. They are helped by the prayers and exorcisms that precede Baptism. Having heard the Kerygma, having been cut to the quick by it, they passively witness to its healing grace and radical demands.\textsuperscript{847}

\textsuperscript{846} Ar A, 6.

\textsuperscript{847} Ar A, 6
Buby's analysis

Mark's Mary emerges as a silhouette, as the first disciple who breaks down the walls which separate us from Jesus or from our fellow pilgrim disciples. The Marcan texts that reveal this are: Discipleship 2:13-17, 8:3-35, 9:30-32, 10:32-45; Mary: 3:3-35, 6:1-1a. Using the redactional method, Mary is the first disciple within Mark's theme. Recent scholarship in Mark points discipleship in this Gospel as a paradox and a costly challenge; however, all fall short. Does such a notion include Mary?

In Mk 3:30, Jesus' family reputation is at stake, Mary is included, among the family members who seek Jesus. Yet, Mark's attention centers exclusively on Jesus, identified later in the Gospel as "the son of Mary". (Mk 6:3) Again does Mary misunderstand her Son's mission? To answer, the context of discipleship and family must be maintained. For Mark, the purpose of 3:31-35 is to highlight the larger theme of call and discipleship; listening to Jesus, doing the will of the Father. The

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848 Buby, S. M., Mary, the Faithful Disciple, (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 49. [Buby]

849 Buby, 32
true family of Jesus, "this eschatological family (brother, sister, and mother) consists of those who do God's will."\textsuperscript{850}

Further, the second pericope of Mark (6:1-6a) presents the family of Jesus and calls us once more to put our full trust in him, unlike the response of his own neighbors, not attaching ourselves to the concerns of the family, but to the will of the Father.\textsuperscript{851} What is important is to emphasize Mark's notion of discipleship: "doing the will of the Father" and Mary's place within it.

Thus, Mark's image of Mary is a limited one. She is present in the first scene as a concerned parent who doesn't fathom who her Son is nor what he is about. Jesus, on the other hand, is calling his followers to true discipleship (Mk 3:31-35) which is not based on blood relationship. Mary is present in the scene, but on the outside of the circle of listeners who surround Jesus. Her patient waiting and inquiry represent our own struggles in following Jesus. Struggling with our doubts, disciples come to a deeper faith and stronger commitment to Jesus. Such is the call of discipleship both for Mary and for all who follow Jesus.\textsuperscript{852}


\textsuperscript{851} Buby, 44

\textsuperscript{852} Buby, 49
Therese's life

In the Marcan stage, Therese had to discover the difference between her sense of God and the God of Jesus Christ. The events surrounding her Christmas conversion bear out that she made this discovery. Therese's sense of God came from her father; for, "of the symbols with which we spontaneously, but unthematically and uncritically, express our life story, a privileged place is occupied by parental imagery."\(^{3,11853}\) The grace of her Christmas conversion enabled Therese to distinguish between her papa and "Papa, God;" it is interesting to note that even in her abandonment at the end of her life, beset by physical and spiritual suffering, as did Jesus in His Passion (Mk. 15:34), so did Therese hold firm to this conviction of "Papa, God,"\(^{3,11854}\) an image completely purified and thoroughly appropriated.

This conversion had a marian dimension. Out of the pressures on her own psychic and physical limitations, the silhouette of Mary, the image used for Mark, emerges in the life of Therese. That is to say, she needed to distinguish between her own mother, the maternal influence of her sisters, Pauline and Marie, and her sense of the Mother of God. Mme. Martin died in 1877 when Therese was four and a half

\(^{3,11853}\)N, 49

\(^{3,11854}\)CJ 5. VI. 4

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years old. It affected her deeply, and when her uncle began to speak of her the Easter evening of March 25, 1883, Therese fell into a strange sickness; it was only after the fervent prayers of her sisters that Therese was cured on Pentecost, May 13, 1883: "The Blessed Virgin appeared beautiful to me...but what penetrated to the very depths of my soul was the ravishing smile of the Blessed Virgin."\(^{855}\) Yet, the memory of "The Smile" was a trial for Therese, not resolved until four years later, on November 4, 1887, at Notre Dame des Victoires.\(^ {856}\)

It is important to note that her understanding of her cure at Notre Dame des Victoires comes after her Christmas conversion of 1886. It seems that the logic of grace is operating here, for, "neither the Trinity nor the whole plan of salvation can be selfishly manipulated. Fervent souls are willing to do almost anything for God except the one thing he wants: total trust; anything but surrender into his loving hands. 'You must become as little children' (Mk 9:33-37) whose one virtue is that they know they are unimportant."\(^ {857}\) Within the context of that statement could Therese's statement to Mary "I am your child" in the sanctuary of Notre Dame des

\(^{855}\)Ms A 30r

\(^{856}\)Ms A 30v

Victoires, be the bud that blossomed into the way of Spiritual Childhood, of total
trust in God?

"Much of what John of the Cross has to say on mystical suffering has to do with
this: the uncovering of this basic anguish -feeling unimportant- that we may
surrender to God in poverty."\textsuperscript{85} Could this not explain, the psychological
aspects notwithstanding, the second stage of Therese's existence (1877–1886), "the
most painful of the three" as she was deprived of significant others like Mme. Martin
and Pauline who made her feel important? Is it not Mark's Gospel that represents this
challenge of poverty?\textsuperscript{85} If "All Marian mysteries have this quality: they surpass
the mere understanding, but can very well be grasped by the believing
spirit,"\textsuperscript{86} then it is easy to understand why Therese cannot express fully the
grace of the Virgin's smile and her subsequent feelings about her new "Mamma."

"The Smile", as Therese refers to her miraculous cure, and the struggle she
endured for four years in order to understand it, is much like Mark's limited image
of Mary. Mark presents Mary as a parent who doesn't seem to comprehend fully who

\textsuperscript{85}\textsuperscript{85} ibid., 85

\textsuperscript{85}\textsuperscript{85} Buby, 49

\textsuperscript{86}\textsuperscript{86} Adrienne von Speyr, \textit{Handmaid of the Lord}, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press,
Her Son is and what He does. Seeming to be on the outside listening in (Mk. 3:31-35), Mary's patient waiting and inquiry represent the disciple's struggle to overcome doubts, to deepen faith, and to strengthen a commitment in following Jesus. As was Mary, the faithful disciple, so was Therese.

Matthew includes nearly ninety percent of Mark's gospel in his own work. From Mark's silhouette of Mary and her discipleship, emerges Matthew's pencil sketch of her and it. With a stronger commitment to Jesus, Therese's call to discipleship, like that of Mary's in Matthew's Gospel is to an ever stronger commitment to Jesus in the Church.

THE MATTHEAN STAGE

Martini's Hypothesis: Matthew, the Gospel of the Catechist

The second manual is the Gospel of Matthew as the Gospel of the Catechist. It is an intellectual reflection of a formative catechesis that understands initiation within the reality of communitarian life. Matthew is well-ordered and well-divided so that the catechist can initiate the baptized into ecclesial

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861Buby, 49
862Ar. B, 4.
863Ar C, 88
Matthew is called the Ecclesial Gospel because he begins with the diverse moments of the mystery of the kingdom as it is seen in the community of the Church. The Kingdom of God, how it is entered and expanded is treated in the five great discourses: Mt 5, 6, 7; 10; 13; 18; 25. The order of the five discourses, and also all the miracle stories contained in Mark, are in a certain systematic order for the catechist to use for the person under instruction.

This leads the baptized to ask: "What does it mean to live a Christian life in a Christian Community?" The baptized ought to be taught that the significant thing is to live by the Son of God in the visible Church. The moral precepts and ethical instruction which are not in Mark are meant to help the newly baptized to live according to the exigencies of the Gospel in the Church. Therefore, Matthew, the Gospel of the Catechist, contains the thematic order of all those

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Ar B, 4
Ar B, 4
Ar C, 88
Ar A, 4.
Ar A, 4.
Ar C, 88.
Ar A, 4.
sayings and deeds of the Lord that serve to complete the instruction of the
Baptized.871

Eschatological Awareness and Promise of Presence

Two typical and key tests of this instruction are Mt. 28:26 "I will be with you always" and Mt. 25:31-46: "As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me." Matthew is especially concerned with the presence of Christ in the Church and in the brother.872 It is a teaching to find the God of Jesus Christ in the actual community in which I live.873 Thus, in what way is He with us every day, even on this specific day, as we encounter Him in the least of our brothers?874 Therefore, it is a matter of recognition. The newly baptized ought to learn to recognize the Lord not only as He Whom God has invited to Conversion in the Marcan stage, but as He Whom he meets in the community.875 In this way, the experience of community is a true experience of God, of pardon, of serving the least

871 Ar C, 88.
872 Ar A, 4.
873 Ar A, 4.
874 Ar B, 4.
875 Ar B, 4.
and of mutual acceptance. These two texts illustrate to the Baptized, therefore, as does the whole of Matthew, what it means to affirm that Jesus is with us today in our experience of the Church.

The point of Matthew's Gospel is to show the way in which conversion is lived out as adhering to Jesus in the Community as the way of salvation and as the Presence. The sacraments of the Matthean stage are Baptism and Reconciliation; for, the prayers proper to this stage are those of one who seeks Baptism: "The eunuch asked Philip if there is any thing to prevent me from being baptized? Philip said to him "if you believe with all your heart you will be saved." (Acts 8:37); and those of Reconciliation: "Have mercy on me, God, a sinner." (Lk 18:13) The Ministry of Matthew is teaching all aspects of Christian belief and life, encouraging one to act as part of the Body by performing acts of

\[\text{876 Ar C, 88.} \]
\[\text{877 Ar B, 4.} \]
\[\text{878 Ar A, 8.} \]
\[\text{879 Ar A, 8; C. Martini notes that this is a variant, omitted from critical editions; yet, it is very old.} \]
\[\text{880 Ar A, 8.} \]
charity.\textsuperscript{881} In sum, Matthew is a practical initiation of life together in the Church.\textsuperscript{882}

**Buby's analysis**

Matthew takes Mark's silhouette of Mary, the disciple, and transforms it. That is to say, Matthew offers a two-dimensional pencil sketch, highlighting Mary's unique role as Virgin-Mother.\textsuperscript{883} Mary appears: in the opening genealogy (Mt 1:1-17); in the annunciation to Joseph (Mt 1:18-25) with a reference to the fulfilment text of Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14); with her child (Mt 2:11, 13-14, 20-21); with the disciples as the family of Jesus (Mt 12:46-50); and lastly a reference to the rejection of Jesus in his own country. (Mt 13:53-58). Taken together with the discipleship text, (Mt 4:18-22, 5:13-16, 8:19,22; 9:9-13; 10:34-41; 16:24-28; 19:23-30), they represent a shift for his audience, a new Christian existence, demanding "a new interpretation of old traditions, a new way of looking at Christ and his Church, at the Old Testament and salvation history, at discipleship and morality."\textsuperscript{884}

\textsuperscript{881}Ar A, 8.

\textsuperscript{882}Ar B, 4.

\textsuperscript{883}Buby, 51.

Matthew renders a new messianic interpretation of some texts of the Hebrew Scriptures; namely Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:22-32; Micah 5:1; Sam. 5:3; Mt. 2:5b-6; Hosea 11:1; Mt 2:15b; Jr. 31:15; Mt. 2:17-18; Is. 4:3; Jdgs 16:17; Mt. 2:236. Remarkably, Therese will make use of many of these prophecies. It is Jesus, who fulfills this revelation from the Law and the Prophets. Through the annunciation to Joseph, 1) the who, "Emmanuel" and 2) the how "son of David" come to be known. Although Jesus is named legally the Son of Joseph, a Davidid, the genealogy reveals that just as the irregular marital unions of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba are intentionally included, so is that of Mary: each is a vehicle for God's messianic plan. Thus, Joseph's Davidic lineage represents continuity with the past; but Mary's virginal conception represents discontinuity with the past. Matthew emphasizes to the disciples of Emmanuel the immediate execution of divine commands of which both Mary and Joseph are exemplary models.

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*Buby, 52-53

*V. Blat, "La espiritualidad mariana de Teresa de Lisieux," *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, 33 (Madrid, 1983) 50 (Blat)

*Buby, 54.

*Buby, 55-56.
magi who find the child with his mother could well be a Matthean "scribal use of the Old Testament traditions to illumine the meaning of Christ's birth."

Matthew does not go much beyond Mark in referring to Mary during the public Ministry of Jesus. Yet, Matthew removes most of the misunderstanding and ambiguity which surrounded Mary and the disciples in Mark. Jesus' human family is seen not in a contrast but as a catalyst, a foundation for the true Israel to which He calls and for which He forms all his disciples. Moreover, this call to discipleship is totally gratuitous and our response should be like that of the first disciples: immediate and total. Mary is among these disciples and therefore her physical motherhood is transformed into a deeper religious attitude for the rest of her life.

Therese's life

In her Matthean stage, Therese had to discover her place within her own family, "the domestic church," her religious family of Carmel, and the family of God, the Church universal. Within each of these ecclesial contexts, Therese learned what it meant to live the life of the baptized in community. Therese likened the experience

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889 J. Meier ibid., 17
890 cf. Buby, 61, 63
891 cf. Buby, 63-64
of learning from each of these communities to birds that teach their young to sing:
"So do children learn the science of virtues, the sublime song of Divine Love from souls responsible for forming them."\textsuperscript{892} In each of those communities, she discerned the presence of Jesus and learned to attend to the needs of "the least".

This Matthean stage has its marian dimension. Matthew takes Mark's silhouette of Mary and transforms it into a two-dimensional pencil sketch, highlighting Mary's unique role as the Virgin Mother. Mary has her part to play in fulfilling the Law and the Prophets; yet this attains a deeper significance as her discipleship represents the total gratuity of Jesus' call and the paramount importance of an immediate and total response.

The Virgin-Mother, Mary, wholly dedicated and obedient to God, as Matthew characterizes discipleship, carries in her person Emmanuel,\textsuperscript{893} the Messiah who brings salvation to all people. Her physical situation of being his mother is transformed into a deeper religious attitude the rest of her life.\textsuperscript{894} She understands the call of Jesus as doing the will of the Father. Mt. 12:45-50. Therese

\textsuperscript{892} Ms A 53r
\textsuperscript{893} Buby, 63
\textsuperscript{894} Buby, 64
is such a lover of these verses that they appear over and over in her writings.\textsuperscript{895} To be a disciple of Jesus means to be little (Mt. 18:3-4). Therese considers that it is the humility of Mary that attracts the divine King.\textsuperscript{896} Such was Mary's love of littleness that she hesitates to surrender to its sign, her virginity, to the sublime dignity of divine Maternity.\textsuperscript{897} Yet at her consent the Word of God passes from the womb of the Father to the womb of Mary,\textsuperscript{898} Jesus' second heaven. The Virgin Mother, the perfect disciple, fulfilled her call and as such is called to share this discipleship with others in the Christian community.\textsuperscript{899} Thus, just as the Mother nourished, defended and loved her Child, so does she watch over the first steps of Therese in religious life.

Therese inherited a great deal of tradition, from the intimate circle of her family, (Mt 1:1 "a family record"), from her religious family at Carmel (Mt 13:11 "to you [the disciples] it is given to understand), and from the whole Church (Mt. 28:19 "teach all nations"). Each of these contributed to her formation not only as a disciple

\textsuperscript{895} Blat, 36; CG I, 644, 701, 798; PN 54, 20-21
\textsuperscript{896} RP1: 20
\textsuperscript{897} LT 130 23. VII.91; PN 54
\textsuperscript{898} Blat, 30
\textsuperscript{899} Buby, 65

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but also in marian piety. Yet, Therese's marian piety formed within her family circle and by Carmel itself, *totus marianus est*, contained a challenge for the disciple:

"When a disciple experiences a conflict of loyalties to Jesus or to his own family, he must choose to follow Jesus."\(^{900}\) Within the context of her family, both natural and religious, Therese chose to follow Jesus. To follow Jesus means to move between enthusiasm and fear, faith and doubt, understanding and misunderstanding, suffering and hope, failure and mission.

Therese does experience these tensions but remains secure "under the Veil of the Virgin". Under the veil of the Virgin, Therese became a "true child of our Lady," by remaining hidden, silent, and interior by preference. By such means she learned to be the kind of disciple Matthew describes: wholly dedicated and obedient to God. Such was the disciple, Mary; such was the disciple, Therese.

Therese had her pencil sketch of Mary, a type of Matthew's disciple. Just as her first poem prompted a painting, executed by Sr. Mary of the Angels,\(^{901}\) so Therese no longer seems satisfied with mere studies. Rather, she takes up Luke's palette and does an oil painting of Mary on the canvas of her own life. Just as a

\(^{900}\)William Thompson, *The Bible Today*, Vol. 19, 18

\(^{901}\)DE, 463; cf *Poésies*, Tome II, 48
portrait artist takes time to get to know his or her subject, so Therese will carefully observe her model of the Little Way, so as to render a truthful likeness. With an even stronger commitment to Jesus, Therese's call to discipleship, like that of Mary's in Luke's Gospel, is to bring the Good News to all people.

THE LUCAN STAGE

Martini's Hypothesis: Luke, the Gospel of the Theologian

The Third Gospel of the Theologian or the Witness. The Lucan opus, divided into two parts, Luke and Acts, prolongs the story of evangelization done by Jesus with the story of witness, in order to prepare the baptized to proclaim to others the word of God. Hence, the connotation of witness amplifies that of theologian. This witness stage, therefore, shows the insertion of the evangelistic action in the providential design of God for the salvation of all people. It introduces an understanding of the mystery of the reign in its relationship with history.

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802 cf M-J Nicholas, O.P., "La Vierge Marie dans l'Evangile et dans l'Eglise d'apres Sainte Therese de Lisieux," Revue Thomiste 52: 519 [Nicolas]; Blat, 81

803 Ar B, 4

804 Ar B, 4

805 Ar C, 89

806 Ar C, 89

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Theophilus, to whom Luke/Acts is addressed, who has had his catechumenal experiences, who knew the presence of the Lord in the Church, begins to realize the impact of the Church on the world.\textsuperscript{907} He begins to ask: What is this about, the Church living in our time and history? What is the meaning of what is happening in our world and history? What does it mean to proclaim the Gospel in this world which is so unaware of it, so full of different ideas and traditions?\textsuperscript{908} Luke answers him by investigating what has happened from the beginning, collating various testimonies in order to confirm Theophilus in the instruction he had already received (Lk 1:1-4).

**Luke, A Mediation of Meaning**

Thus, Luke begins a systematic reflection on the Christian phenomena, considered not only in its sources, internal coherence, its continuity with the past, in its meaning for the present and the future, not only in terms of its Jewish roots, but also civil and religious traditions under heaven. (Acts 2:5)\textsuperscript{909} Luke is concerned with the Church's relationship to the Jewish people and its tradition: is

\begin{itemize}
  \item 907Ar B, 4.
  \item 908Ar A, 5.
  \item 909Ar C, 89
\end{itemize}
it different or is it a continuation?\textsuperscript{910} Here, the Church must defend and explain itself to Judaism and come to grips with the forces that reject it and at the same time ask for its collaboration.\textsuperscript{911} Moreover, the Christian asks: What are we in front of the pagan traditions of Athens, the gods of Ephesus and Rome, the powers of the world?\textsuperscript{912} What is the meaning of this non-Christian world for the Christian community: What is the meaning of the Christian community for the world of Greek culture and Roman law?\textsuperscript{913} Within these diverse worlds: Jewish, Hellenistic, Roman, pagan, the Church discovers its political impact: the meaning the Gospel has and must have for the story of all humankind.\textsuperscript{914} Hence, as Lonergan's Method points out, this theology "mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix."\textsuperscript{915} This theology works the mediation between the world in which we live and the meaning of the Gospel.

\textsuperscript{910}Ar A, 5
\textsuperscript{911}Ar B, 4.
\textsuperscript{912}Ar. A, 5
\textsuperscript{913}Ar B, 5
\textsuperscript{914}Ar B, 5
\textsuperscript{915}Lonergan, op. cit., xi.

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The new awareness of the relationship of salvation history to world history motivated initial reflection on the problem.\textsuperscript{916} This can be seen in Acts where a framework is provided in which Jesus is proclaimed Lord and that God was with Him. The proclamation includes those who are far off (Acts 2:39) because his words go to the ends of the earth (Acts 2:38). Peter's discourse, addressed to these ends in Acts 2:14-36, is not simply an accurate understanding of paschal events but also their role in salvation history looking back from Pentecost to Jesus to David. This discourse is concluded by a key word in the text (Acts 2:36) asphatos, assuredly. Taken in the moral sense it is Peter's unshakeable certainty to proclaim in this discourse on Pentecost that God has constituted as Lord and Christ, Jesus who has been crucified. It is this conviction by which the primitive community with their evangelical activity revealed God's plan of salvation for all (Acts 4:12). In this way, Luke wants to prove that in the center of the Greek and Roman cultures, the ecclesial realization of the evangelical ideal, particularly that of the Gentile Christians of the Pauline communities with their preaching and life, is in authentic

\textsuperscript{916}Ar B, 5
conformity with the plan of God and is a legitimate development of promises posed by Jesus and the Twelve.\textsuperscript{917}

Luke is a lamp that throws light into the world; yet, what is the kind of light it throws into the world? The point of his Gospel is to give an enlightened understanding of the mystery of the kingdom of God as present in the history of the world. The ministry of Luke is that of witnessing. (Eph. 4:11) It is a reflection of Christian life, meaning and sources, in short, a theology. The sacrament of this stage is Confirmation and its prayer would be like those found in Ephesians and Colossians.\textsuperscript{918} Moreover, Luke reflects seriously on the foundational solidarity of the Church's hope.\textsuperscript{919} Luke/Acts seeks to explain and to elucidate in reflexive and nuanced language and, with humility, the reasons for one's way of life and the meaning and value which it can have for the existence of every human being.\textsuperscript{920}

\textsuperscript{917}Ar C, 89

\textsuperscript{918}Ar A, 9.

\textsuperscript{919}Ar B, 5.

\textsuperscript{920}Ar C, 89
Buby's Analysis

Luke portrays Mary in an ecclesial context as the most complete and perfect disciple.\textsuperscript{921} Luke's two-fold work, the Gospel named after him and Acts, have the most to say about Mary. For his sources, Luke borrows over a third of Mark, uses the sayings of Jesus and material known only to him, and creates his own; even though older scholars have suggested that Luke composed his Infancy Narratives after conferring with Mary,\textsuperscript{922} the mother of Jesus, there is no evidence in the texts themselves that this is the case.\textsuperscript{923} Mary appears in the first two chapters specifically 1:26-28, 1:39-56, 2:1-20, 2:21-40, in 3:23; 4:16-30; 8:19-21; 11:27-28; Acts 1:14 and echoed in the discipleship texts 1:26-38; 2:19; 51; 11:1; Acts 1:14.

With such rich sources, Luke paints not a symbol but a real, historical person.

The Angel announces to Mary not only her election as Mother of God, but also as a disciple: The Holy Spirit overshadows his little one (anawim), extending to her, and thus to all peoples, his compassion.\textsuperscript{924} Such a message of goodness is to be shared; hence, Mary hastens to Elizabeth.

\textsuperscript{921} Buby, 67
\textsuperscript{922} Nicolas, 513
\textsuperscript{923} Buby, 69
\textsuperscript{924} Buby, 71

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In the Visitation scene proper, Mary's child is there recognized as the Kyrios (Lord) and Mary as the "Mother of the Lord", a believer, a model of faith. Luke is picking up the lowly handmaid motif of 1:30 and making her a disciple from the beginning of his accounts (Lk 8:19-21; Acts 1:14). Her response to Elizabeth's greeting is to magnify the Lord who has remembered his covenant. With the Lord's birth announced to shepherds whom the Evangelist chooses to emphasize because God's predilection is for the lowly of human society, Mary as the first christian believer attempts to plumb the meaning of God's action among his people, trying to understand the meaning of these events.

Mary, therefore, will experience the call of discipleship not only in every stage of her son's life but even in the life of his church (Acts 1:14), witnessing to what it means to be a member. Moreover, through Simeon's prophecy, searching for Jesus in the Temple (similar to Mk 3:20-35), searching for him in his public ministry (Lk 8:19-21; Mk 3:31-35; Mt 12:46-50), and it echoes in Lk 11:27-28, Mary has to grow again and again into

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926 Buby, 74
927 Buby, 76
928 Buby, 78
929 Buby, 77, 78
930 Buby,
931 Buby, 79
932 Buby, 81
933 Buby, 82
understanding the events and sayings of her son.\textsuperscript{934} The blessedness of his disciples does not come through family ties but from freely choosing both to hear God's word continuously and accomplish it always.\textsuperscript{935} "Blessed" Mary heard, believed, obeyed, kept and pondered the word; her appearance in Acts 1:14 "reminds the reader that she has not changed her mind."\textsuperscript{936} Thus, in Mary there is a model of the Church in its discipleship.

A disciple in Luke is close to Jesus through prayer. In fact, prayer figures in nineteen times in Luke's twenty-four chapters.\textsuperscript{937} Mary, woman of the Torah, and prayerful disciple of Jesus, articulates the promises of the Lord to his people, reflects on her role in the salvation events (Lk 2:19, 51) and prays within and for a community (Acts 1:14).\textsuperscript{938} Hence, Mary, bridging the Infancy Narratives and the ministry of Jesus, linking His birth and the birth of His Church, models faith, believing at the Crib, the Cross and the Upper Room of Pentecost; she ponders these events in her life, fathoming His mysteries within her and around her.\textsuperscript{939} As Luke's masterpiece of discipleship, Mary responds in daily prayer (to her Son and Lord) and perseveres in daily actions.\textsuperscript{940}

**Therese's Life**

In her Lucan stage, Therese began to sense the impact her life was to have on others: what does it mean to proclaim the Gospel in this world which is so unaware

\textsuperscript{934}Buby, 81

\textsuperscript{935}Buby, 82

\textsuperscript{936}Mary in the New Testament, 172, 177

\textsuperscript{937}Buby, 86

\textsuperscript{938}Buby, 87

\textsuperscript{939}Buby, 88, 90, 91

\textsuperscript{940}Buby, 91
of it, so full of different ideas and traditions? As Luke strives to give an enlightened understanding of the mystery of the kingdom of God as present in the history of the world, so Therese strives to give a mature response to the ways of the world with her own little way. As Luke/Acts seeks to explain and to elucidate, in reflexive and nuanced language, and with humility, the reasons for the disciple's way of life, and the meaning and value it can have for the existence of every human being, so Therese marks out for her sister, Marie, in Manuscript B, the path of the little way: divine condescension, spiritual childhood, abandonment, suffering, hidden virtues.

This little way has its marian dimension. In the oil portrait of Luke, Mary is a woman of the Torah, a prayerful disciple of Jesus who articulates the promises of the Lord to his people, reflects on her role in salvation events, and prays within and for a community. In fact so much does the little way resemble the life of the Mother of God that one is tempted to think Therese interpreted that life and way according to her own life and way; yet, its traits derive only from the Gospels. Therese chooses to explain herself to the world by means of the little way. "In wedding her littleness to the Spirit of Love, she wed all lowliness to the Spirit of Love." Such is said of Luke's faithful disciple, Mary; such can be said of the disciple, Therese.

Holiness, then, along the Little Way, has its sign posts: divine condescension, spiritual childhood, abandonment, suffering, hidden virtues. The perfection of this way in the divine plan is life in Mary. Reading Therese's description of Mary's life, we cannot help noticing how well that life corresponds with her own, and how well the Little Way of spiritual childhood resembles the life of the Mother of God. This is so true that we are tempted to ask ourselves whether the Saint did not interpret Mary's life according to her own life and her Way of Childhood, until we realize that the traits she describes are taken from the Gospels.

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941 Caryll Houselander, *The Reed of God*, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1944), 67

942 F. Jamart, 278.
Having just discovered the depths of mercy, she now understood better the meaning of her whole life.

Through the many different sufferings that she recounts she states that love never abandoned her. Not when her mother died nor when her sisters left home; not during her illness, her emotional difficulties or her scruples; not during her father's agony; not when she met with thorns in her early days in Carmel, never in any circumstances, had God forsaken her".\(^{943}\)

He remembers his promises of mercy.

Luke presented Mary in the Annunciation as responding with a whole-hearted yes to "Merciful Love": divine condescension. In Mary's Visitation, love for her neighbor integrates Mary's relationships: hidden virtues. At the birth of Jesus, a life completely dedicated to God bears the fruit "of the Holy One": spiritual childhood. At the Presentation the sword of sorrow and aloneness is hers: suffering. Finding Jesus in the temple meant God is ever near even when we think we have lost him: abandonment.

Within the context of Luke's concept of discipleship, then, Mary is the perfect, prayerful model. She prays in a community, reflecting on the deed and word of God, articulating within her Jewish tradition, God's mercy. Likewise, does Therese: she sings of one reality, i.e. "the mercies of the Lord"; her pages, her life, voice her magnificat.

In the last months of her life, Therese reduced all her thoughts concerning Mary to one central point, reflected in her poem "Pourquoi je t'aime, O Marie": it is rich, if all the former aspects of her marian devotion, piety and imitation are considered. If Mark, Matthew, and Luke revealed succeeding stages of discipleship and Mary's place within the context of that discipleship, then Mark's silhouette of Mary's discipleship becomes Matthew's pencil sketch; Matthew's studies become Luke's oil portrait. Yet, all is not finished. Like the Gospel of John, Therese was to

\(^{943}\)Gaucher, 144
chisel her sculpture of Mary. It is John's Gospel that reduces the other three Gospels to one central point: "the Father gives the Son"; and, secondarily, yet intimately associated with the first: "the Son gives the Mother." In the last months of her life, Therese does the same and versefied all she thought about "the Woman", - "the Mother of Jesus."

THE JOHANNINE STAGE

Martini's Hypothesis: John, the Gospel of the Presbyter (the Mature)

The fourth stage is the Gospel of the presbyter, the elder. It does not mean "priest" but rather it means a condition of maturity (a gnostic in the sense that Clement of Alexandria used the word.) The Christian, after having lived through the complexity of all the aforementioned stages of personal and communal growth, corresponding to Mark, Matthew, and Luke, raises a conclusive and summarizing question about the basic meaning of all these lived experiences. What is the essential point of all the confessions of faith, precepts of the Church, and the Sacraments? What is the unifying element that underlies all this complexity in Christian living?

Contemplative Response

It is contemplation that reduces all things to one central point: rich, if former aspects are presupposed. Within the multiple confessions, John gives the contemplative response: the Father gives the Son and in this we have the gist of the

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944Ar B, 5
945Ar B, 5
946Ar B, 5
947Ar A, 5
948Ar A, 5.
Christian experience lived thus far.\footnote{Ar B, 5} This characterizes those who have lived the first three stages.\footnote{Ar B, 6.} These respond to the gift in which the Father has given the Son with an attitude of faith.\footnote{Ar A, 6.} Whoever responds to the gift of the Father in faith begins to love as Jesus Christ loved us.\footnote{Ar A, 6.} But at the final stage love has become so dense, so full of meaning that it can be given to the Christian as the only commandment.\footnote{Ar A, 6.} A spiral development of this single theme characterizes John.\footnote{Ar B, 5} 

Therefore, the point of the fourth stage is that of contemplative simplification and unification. One understands through the essential contemplation of Love. The Prayer of this stage is exemplified in the Priestly Prayer of Jesus (Jn. 17) "Father, You have given your Son, I have glorified your name." The Sacrament of this stage is the Eucharist and its ministry is presidency and the service of unity.\footnote{Ar A, 6.} This stage underlies the fundamental values of faith, hope and love.\footnote{Ar C, 90.} It is a contemplation of the transparency of the mystery of the historic Christ toward the Father and toward the Church animated by the Spirit.\footnote{Ar C, 90.} It is a mystical experience in as much as it is an experience of integration, of grasping unity in complexity, within the experience of the community of faith.\footnote{Ar B, 6}
Buby's Analysis

John's Gospel presents a three dimensional statue of Mary, like Michelangelo's Pieta, which is modeled on the Fourth Gospel. In this Gospel, Mary is explicitly referred to at the wedding feast of Cana (2:1-12), and at the foot of the Cross (19:25-27). There are some implicit references to the virginal conception (1:13; 6:42; 7:41-43; 8:41) and to the brothers of Jesus (2:12; 7:1-10). The Book of Signs, which includes Mary at Cana, is merely a means to believe in the person of Jesus. The Book of Glory points out the royal road of the Cross, where Mary is also found. At the wedding feast of Cana, the dialogue contains words which are theologically important for the evangelist. If we leave out the dialogue, Mary emerges as a believer in Jesus her Son, who at the same time is a wonder worker. If we leave in the dialogue, then she is the catalyst who enables Jesus to reveal the truest meaning of his life to his disciples - the glorification at the "hour" determined by the Father.

The implicit marian/discipleship texts which are exegeted and interpreted lead to the other explicit marian/discipleship text, the "Woman" and the "Beloved Disciple" at the foot of the Cross. Thus, the Book of Glory deals with the intimate relationship of Jesus with his own (Jn 13:1). The fact that Mary appears in the most climactic scene in the drama of the passion and death of Jesus demonstrates

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960 Buby, 94
961 Buby, 94
962 Buby, 94
963 Buby, 95
964 Buby, 100-102

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that she is considered a disciple of Jesus at that most solemn moment.\footnote{Buby, 102}God
consecrates us through giving us Mary as Mother, and we are consecrated by
receiving that gift, a gift which means, as it did for the Beloved Disciple, the person
of Mary and a concrete community.\footnote{Buby, 104}Thus, the Cana scene mirrors the Calvary
scene; what was promised is fulfilled; what was foreshadowed and anticipated is
brought to accomplishment and conclusion.\footnote{Buby, 105}

According to \textit{Mary in the New Testament}, to introduce Mary in the Book of Glory
at the Foot of the Cross, is to bring her into the context of discipleship.\footnote{Buby, 104}In the
other Gospels, the women stand at a distance from the cross, but in John, the
"woman" is near the Cross: hence, the true disciple is near the cross each
day.\footnote{Buby, 105}In the Book of Glory, Jesus speaks to "his own" about "the depth of his
love" (Jn 13:1) for them in terms of friendship (Jn 15:14-15). The condition of
friendship with Him is to live out the love commandments. (Jn 13:34-35) It is Mary
both at Cana and at Calvary who understands what it means to love Jesus in this
intimate manner, both as his mother and as his disciple.\footnote{Buby, 106}

At Cana, in telling the servants: "Do whatever He tells you." (Jn 2:5) she
understood the disciple's role of humble service (Jn 13:15,17). At Calvary, Mary
witnesses to her love and commitment to Jesus, her Son. Together the "Woman" and
the "Beloved Disciple" represent the new community of the Redeemed, born from the
pierced side of Christ, washed in that water flowing from his side (Baptism),
consecrated by the Blood flowing with it (Eucharist), and reaching its highest
degree of discipleship in the love, care, and commitment they lavish on
others.\textsuperscript{971} Discipleship began as a new creation at Cana through the sign of water
made into wine, while at Calvary sign becomes event in the commitment of love given
by the Spirit of Jesus to his mother and the Beloved Disciple.\textsuperscript{972}

**The Life**

In her Johannine stage, Therese understands the Gospel and the conversion it
entails by the connatural judgment of love. In the Johannine stage of maturity, the
subject's conversion is the transformation of the soul's very depths into love. This
love is so dense, so full of meaning, that it is given as the only commandment to the
disciple of Jesus. Therese herself writes in Manuscript C, at the very end of her
life, "God has given me the grace to understand what charity is... I had never
fathomed the meaning of these words of Jesus - \textit{the second commandment is LIKE the
first}...(moreover)... \textit{a new commandment}... \textit{THAT AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, YOU
ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER}."\textsuperscript{973} For her, it was a mystical experience in as much
as it was an experience of the community of faith. Therese would lift the world, like
Archimedes, with a lever and a fulcrum: the fulcrum, Jesus Alone; the lever, prayer
which burns with the fire of love. The contemplative response of John to the lived
Christian experience can be summed up as: "The Father has given us the Son."
This stage also has its marian dimension; for, the Son has given us his Mother. In
his three-dimensional sculpture of Mary, John chisels Mary both as Mother and
disciple who, at Cana and at Calvary, understands what it means to love Jesus, to
live his commandment of love. In her "statue" of Mary, \textit{Pourquoi je t'aime, o Marie,}

\textsuperscript{971}Buby, 108
\textsuperscript{972}Buby, 109
\textsuperscript{973}Ms C 11v
Therese uses only the Gospels, for her an all sufficient book; in the Gospels, she wonders at all Mary did and taught; in her poem, this miniature of the Blessed Virgin Mary, explains why she loves Mary.

If one accepts all that has come before, it is enough to say that Mary believed, loved and lived like us.\(^{974}\) Indeed, such is the rapport between Mother and child that Jesus Himself finds it difficult to distinguish between the two. Both Mother and child know that "to suffer while loving, is the purest fortune,"\(^{975}\) that "to love is to give all and to give oneself."\(^{976}\) Mary and Therese are like two tuning forks in sympathetic resonance, set to the frequency of Divine Love manifested in the Word made flesh. As Mary, the faithful disciple, loves, so does Therese.

Therese can only be nourished on the Truth.\(^{977}\) It is necessary for her that she see things as they really are.\(^{978}\) Hence, concerning the Virgin Mary, her only interest is her real life, not her supposed life.\(^{979}\) Instinctively, she turns to the Gospels, her overriding source of inspiration, her all sufficient book.\(^{980}\)

Thus, her method of marian meditation is simple: "The Gospel teaches me... and my heart reveals to me."\(^{981}\) From the Gospels, she wonders at all Mary did and taught.\(^{982}\) I must do something before I die. I have always wanted to express in

\(^{974}\) CJ 21. VIII. 3; PN 54:17

\(^{975}\) PN 54:16

\(^{976}\) PN 54:22

\(^{977}\) CJ 5. VIII. 4

\(^{978}\) CJ 21. VII. 4

\(^{979}\) CJ 21. VII. 3

\(^{980}\) CJ 15. V. 3; LT 226

\(^{981}\) PN 54, 15

\(^{982}\) cf. Acts 1:1
a poem to the Blessed Virgin all that I think of her" said Therese, already gravely ill, to her sister Celine. Likewise, her sister Marie asked Therese to write a poem about Mary and to tell her all she thought about her.

In response, Therese said that her poem, completed during the month of May, 1897, expressed all she thought and what she would preach about the Blessed Virgin if she were a priest. Marie is also responsible for manuscripts A and B and also "the Blessed Virgin's smile"; therefore it seems fitting that she urged Therese to consummate her own desire to write all she thought about Mary in the poem "Pourquoi je t'aime O Marie".

Therese and the Gospels

Therese was Mary's child before she knew herself to be such. Her task was to let this mystery unfold in her life. Such unfolding has been the thesis of this paper. That is to say, each stage of development within the life of Therese was marked by an ever deepening conversion in Christ, that each stage of her discipleship had its marian dimension, and that both stages had a decidely evangelical cast.

Therese depended only on the Gospels for her knowledge of Mary when she spoke and wrote to others about her. The Gospels established the principles of internal coherence and judgments concerning her thoughts on the Virgin. Yet, this approach itself was marked by development. In Manuscript A, begun in 1895 and completed in 1896, Therese writes, within the context of her Christmas conversion, 1886, that the Imitation nourished her "for as yet I had not discovered the treasures

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983 PA 268
984 DE, 649 varia/MSC; DE, 439
985 Last Conversations, 101
986 PN 54
hidden in the Gospels.\footnote{Ms A 47r} At the end of that same manuscript, within the context of her profession and Offering to Merciful Love, she writes: "...it is the Gospels (her own italics) which sustain me during my hours of prayer, for in them I find what is necessary for my poor little soul."\footnote{Ms A 83v} In her last conversations with her sister, Mother Agnes of Jesus, she repeats the same theme: "As for me, with the exception of the Gospels, I no longer find anything in books. The Gospels are enough. I listen with delight to these words of Jesus which tell me all I must do: 'Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart'..."\footnote{CJ 15. V. 3} She said much the same again in May, 1897, the month in which she wrote her final poem, Pourquoi je t'aime, o Marie. She underscores her point in explaining this poem in an August, 1897, conversation with her sister, Mother Agnes de Jesus, by "...giving proofs from the Gospel..."\footnote{CJ 6. IV. 2}

Therese supposes the Gospels to be what they really are - the Living Word of God, a permanent actuality, more adapted, in a sense, to our daily lives than to the transcendent actuality\footnote{CJ 21. VIII. 3} of heavenly realities. Therese's meditation on them is so vital, so real, that the Gospels are written on her quotidian experience and illuminate it. In the Gospels, Therese discovers the reasons why she loves Mary. Therese senses that the love of the Gospel and the love of Mary are one in the sense that two tuning forks of the same frequency are in sympathetic resonance. Therese
knows the Gospels by heart and they enlighten her mind. The Gospels, in short, consume Therese.

Therese's statement "giving proofs from the Gospel" establishes, as it were, the principles of internal coherence and judgments concerning her thought on the Blessed Virgin. Therefore, it seemed necessary to understand 1) the Gospels, 2) Therese, and 3) both of their appropriations of the role of Mary. These were explored by using 1) an ecclesial-transformative theology of symbol and story, 2) a theory of Gospel formation and 3) an analysis of marian/discipleship texts. Therese never wrote a formal theological treatise on the Blessed Virgin and what she did have to say had to be culled from her own writings and sayings.

These writings and sayings both reveal Therese's delight in hearing and telling stories and express her theology. The ecclesial-transformative theology of symbol and story follows along the via pulchritudinis. With its symbolic mode of expression, it is fittingly defined as the best possible expression of an unknown content. A symbol, rooted in the psychic depths of the human personality, is in need of a critical mediation. Yet, because the critical intellect can never comprehend the mystery of God, there is a need to return to the symbolic: "Symbolic thought is not the single minded pursuit of one particular image. Symbols are commonly contaminated clusters of complimentary and even seemingly contradictory images."
Hence, the Gospels function both 1) symbolically, in that they convey more meaning than can be possibly comprehended by the human mind and 2) critically, in that they reveal to faith the meaning of authentic love and the true vision of God. As outlined in the Gospels, "Conversion [is understood as] the flooding of our hearts with the knowledge that the One whom we have been intending, at first vaguely, confusedly, and implicitly, and later perhaps, explicitly, in all our yearning and desiring and longing finds us precious in his eyes." The telling and hearing of the Gospel story is the work of the Holy Spirit, the gift of God's love, who grounds Christian conversion. Christian conversion enables us both to hear and to tell the story of Jesus and His Church. In appropriating the story told by the four gospels, Therese appropriated her own life-story, and, thus, became herself a living word of God.

This kind of conversion marks each stage of development within the life of Therese. Each stage had its marian dimension. Therese senses this in the stories she hears and reveals this in the stories she herself tells. Yet, the marian dimension of such stories is at first as vague, confused, and implicit as their theresian sources. It is only by a gradual development that all Therese's marian insights are distilled in her final poem which contains everything she would preach on the Blessed Virgin. The methodology of this thesis sought to gather these scattered thoughts, sayings and deeds under the veil of the Virgin and unfold their development.

997N, 176; quoted from Sebastian Moore, *The Fire and the Rose are One*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1980), 44.

998JC 21. VIII. 3
CONCLUSION

The Originality of Therese

Originality here is understood not so much as creating something new, as much as a return to the sources. In this context, the words of Jesus could be applied to Therese: "Every scribe who is learned in the reign of God is like the head of a household who can bring from his storeroom both the new and the old. (Mt 13:)" As it has already been pointed out, Therese returned to the Gospels for the source of her mariology. It was there that she discovered that Mary is "more Mother than Queen". Therese herself revealed in Mary's maternal tenderness. Although this is a very important aspect of Therese's insight into Mary, I think another aspect of this motherhood has been forgotten, or, at least, underdeveloped. That aspect is paralleled in all three of the Synoptics and implicit in John: "Whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother to me" (Mk 3:35); "Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is brother and sister and mother to me." (Mt 12:50); "My mother and brothers are those who hear the word of God and act upon it." (Lk 8:21); "If you live according to my teaching, you are truly my disciples; then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (Jn 8:31b-32). By divine election, Mary had a unique role in the plan of salvation but this was not a passive role; Mary actively, consciously, and willingly participated in this plan. Therese intuited this kind of active, conscious, willing participation from her meditation on the Gospels; and, in her writings and sayings, she passed on the fruit of her contemplation, namely, that Mary is a "perfect disciple of Jesus, who offers us a paradigm for our own discipleship." What follows are references to both 1) a historical study on titles given to Mary, "our Mother" and 2) two commentaries on Therese's marian

99Buby, 13
insights by two leading authorities. They establish that Mary is indeed more mother than queen; yet, at the same time, they demonstrate that "doing the will of God" as an aspect of Mary's motherhood has been forgotten, or at least underdeveloped, by the students of Therese.

**The Titles Given to Mary our Mother**

In an unpublished monograph,Fr. Theodore Koehler, SM, mentions St. Therese of Lisieux at the beginning of his thesis. He states that Therese referred to Mary as more mother than queen; she protested against a presentation that would show Mary distant; rather, she wanted one that would make her accessible. Therese was not alone in her desire. Her contemporary, Leo XIII, from whom Therese sought an exception for her entrance into Carmel at the age of fifteen in 1887, in his encyclicals on the rosary, emphasized the spiritual maternity of Mary. In the year of her death, 1897, the year of her poem on Mary, the year of her saying "more mother than queen", the Jesuit, Jean-Baptiste Terrien, in a remarkable study, referred to Mary's spiritual maternity. It is worth quoting from Fr. Koehler's monograph at length concerning the ordinary magisterium of Leo XIII and the theological insights of J-B Terrien.

In *Supremi Apostolatus* (1.9.1883) of Leo XIII, Our Lady of the Rosary is above all the Mother of God, Our Sovereign, Our Queen, whose help is well attested by the titles: *Auxiliatricem, Opiferam, Salutricem, bellorum Potentem, Victricem, Paciferam.* But the faithful love to find their refuge "in her maternal

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This goodness has been given to Mary because God wanted for His Son a very loving Mother: "maternos plane indit sensus, aliquid nihil spirantes nisi amorem et veniam;" it is such a mother Jesus, dying, confided to our race, in the person of John; and Mary, following upon this, has taken charge of all her maternal functions (materna officia). At the outset of the encyclical Magnae Dei Matris (7.9.1892), the Pope prays to Mary to help us without ceasing, like a mother (in modum matris); he asks that he show himself with the will of a son entirely dedicated to her. If Christ is our brother, we have "the right to call God our Father;" and likewise, "we have the very loving right to have and to call Mary our mother." In her, charity is ineffable; she is "mother for us, not humanly, but by Christ;" she is a mother full of mercy more than any other mother; we are her "very dear children;" let us pray to her in the name of these "maternal bonds which so closely unite her to Jesus and to us;" we are "under the protection of the best of mothers (in tutela optimae matris)." Thus the Pope is full of hope in this "powerful and benevolent mother" (potente et benigna matre). In Laetitiae sanctae (8.9.1893), there appears one time the title "mother of God and mother of men." Jucunda semper (8.9.1894) recalls that Mary, at Calvary, "offered her Son to divine justice with an immense charity for us: in order to receive us as sons." In Adjutricem populi (5.9.1895), Leo XIII, in giving his reasons for
confidence in Mary, began with the last words of Jesus to his mother: Ecce filius tuus: "in John, Christ designated symbolically the person of mankind;" Mary is "the mother of those whom Christ has deigned to call father and brother" (Psuedo-Anselm of Canterbury. Or. 47); Mary began her mission in the Cenacle, being "truly the mother of the Church"; in heaven, she is the mother present and favorable to us (nobis adesse et favere mater) who administers the graces of the mystery of redemption with which she cooperated; also the faithful confide themselves to her like sons (filiorum more). By the rosary we will commemorate the mysteries by which Mary became "both mother of God and our mother (simul mater Dei, simul mater nostra)." The rosary makes us appreciate the grandeur of these two dignities, the fruits of these two ministries; it incites us to show ourselves worthy of such a mother (tanta mater). It is necessary to pray the rosary for the unity of the Church, a union which has been made part of this function of spiritual maternity of Mary; those who belong to Christ, Mary could only bring them to birth within the same faith, the same love;" she must again in some way bring to birth in Christ those who are separated from its unity; she awaits from us the help of the rosary." In conclusion, the Pope uses a transformed sense of " Monstra te esse matrem:" we address this supplication to her who is in turn "the Mother of God and ours". Proclaiming his devotion to the rosary in Fidentem piumque animum (20.9.1896), he calls Mary "mother of men...full of mercy, full of grace." In Augustissimae Virginis (12.9.1897), the "Ecce mater tua" is for the Pope himself an invitation to receive Mary, seeing that Christ takes her as his representative on

1010 Id. Adjutricem populi, DM 426, 427

1011 Id. DM 435

1012 Ibid.

1013 Id. Fidentem piumque, DM 441
earth. He desires that his teaching may make Mary loved so that each of the faithful may take Mary "as his own (in sua; Jn 19:27)." However, the title which Leo XIII inscribed into the Litany of Loretto is that of "Queen of the Most Holy Rosary." His insistence of basing the spiritual maternity of Mary on the text of John will be followed by his successors. It seems that for Leo XIII it is about a maternity of adoption: at Calvary, Mary has become our mother in adopting us as children; but that is the will of God.

If Leo XIII represents the ordinary magisterium of the Church at the time of St. Therese, then J-B Terrien represents those theologians who sought to articulate that Mary is the Mother of God and the mother of the human race. Fr. Koehler writes that J-B Terrien was well prepared for his study, *La Mère de Dieu et la Mère des hommes d’après les Pères et la Théologie*, (1899-1902), which is a study of the maternity of grace, another term for spiritual maternity, by a remarkable study, "Grace and Glory," published in 1897. That same year, Therese wrote her final poem on Mary. That same year, she was to die. In his study, J-B Terrien bases himself on the doctrine of the Mystical Body "....the whole Christ, to use the language of St. Augustine, is Jesus Christ and his mystical body...Thus Mary, in order to be fully the mother of the Word Incarnate, in order to have a maternity which corresponds to the person of her Son, must concur in the birth of his members as well as in the birth of its Head. The Mystical Person of Jesus Christ is in the blossoming of the divine plan and the complement to his physical person. Thus also, in a similar measure, the spiritual maternity of Mary crowns and completes her maternity of nature. Consequently, just as the full comprehension of the Son claims knowledge of the rapport which binds Him to His Church, so knowledge of the divine

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1014 Id. Augustissimae Virginis, DM 450
1015 Id. Diuturni temporis, (5.9.1898), DM 460

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maternity will be absolutely incomplete, if [Mary's] spiritual maternity would be left in the shadows."\(^{1016}\)

The point of quoting Leo XIII and J-B Terrien from the monograph of Fr. Koehler was to show that Therese's marian insight "more mother than queen" was in line with contemporary, ordinary magisterium and theological thinking. Both based themselves on Jn. 19:25-27. Although Therese does not deny nor neglect this fundamental insight into Mary's maternity, she does give it a certain refraction in light of her evangelical meditations. However, before exploring this refraction, it is worth turning to two of her leading commentators.

**Two Leading Authorities**

Francois de Sainte-Marie, OCD, ranks as one of the great scholars of the life and works of St. Therese because he edited the facsimiles of the *Manuscrits Autobiographiques*. In his article\(^{1017}\) for the Congres Marial de Lisieux, he explores the marian devotion of St. Therese of the Child Jesus: "more mother than queen." His introduction is a rapid survey of the role of Mary in the life of Therese.\(^{1018}\) In the first part, he explores the poem, *Pourquoi je t'aime, o Marie*, by emphasizing its importance, by describing its structure, and by contextualizing it within the physical agony and spiritual desolation of Therese.\(^{1019}\) He continues with Therese's meditation on Mary's role in the Gospels, which results in the love of a child for her mother, understanding their sharing in suffering and in a life very

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\(^{1018}\) FSM, 129-134

\(^{1019}\) FSM, 134-138

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simple and ordinary.\textsuperscript{1020} He highlights the marian atmosphere of the last months of Therese.\textsuperscript{1021} He concludes that one has no fear of judgement, since the Virgin knows our weakness and prays for us.\textsuperscript{1022}

Francois de Sainte-Marie mentions in his article another leading authority, Msgr. Combes, who was charged by Mother Agnes of Jesus to examine systematically the writings of Therese in 1947: "Monseigneur Andre Combes has underlined very happily the importance of the Canticle, "Pourquoi je t'aime, o Marie" in a chapter in his work: \textit{Sainte Therese de l'Enfant Jesus: Contemplation et Apostolat}.\textsuperscript{1023} However, Msgr. Combes takes a different view. In \textit{Marie pour Sainte Therese de Lisieux}, Combes repudiates the praise of Francois de Sainte-Marie because he claimed to have followed to the last detail the movement of Therese's thought all along the two hundred alexandrines.\textsuperscript{1024} He takes to task the article of Francois de Sainte-Marie because, in the Carmelite's eyes, there are only two axes in the poem, the sharing of suffering and a life ordinary and simple.\textsuperscript{1025} Combes then proceeds with a line analysis of Therese's great poem on Mary. Combes concludes "that it is the conviction of Therese, and it is her profound joy, that [Jesus Himself] finds it difficult to distinguish between Mother and child...By the example of Mary, Therese is assured that her actual trial attenuates nothing, not her faithfulness, not her perfection, not her hopes. The night of faith is perfectly

\textsuperscript{1020}\textsuperscript{1020} FSM, 138-145
\textsuperscript{1021}\textsuperscript{1021} FSM, 145-147, n. 47
\textsuperscript{1022}\textsuperscript{1022} FSM, 148
\textsuperscript{1023}\textsuperscript{1023} Andre' Combes, \textit{Sainte Therese de l'Enfant Jesus: Contemplation et Apostolat}, (Paris, 1950) 251-170; he cites 102 of the 200 verses
\textsuperscript{1024}\textsuperscript{1024} Combes, \textit{op. cit.}, 83
\textsuperscript{1025}\textsuperscript{1025} ibid.
compatible with the fullness of Love."  

Yet, to my mind neither author developed "doing the will of God" as an aspect of Mary's motherhood, nor do they say much about Mary's discipleship. It seems to me that it is the marian qualities of discipleship that Therese specifically appropriated as she pondered the Gospels and Mary's role in them.

Doing the Will of God

Although Therese did not herself parallel Mk 3:35, Mt 12:50, Lk 8:21, Jn 8:31b-32, such a practice is not foreign to her way of thinking: "Above all, she took spiritual nourishment from the Holy Scriptures and principally from the Gospels...she copied passages from the Gospel in order to coordinate and better comprehend the facts recorded by each of the Evangelists."  

Indeed, so great was her love of Holy Scripture, that she declared to her sister, Mother Agnes of Jesus: "It's only in heaven that we will see the whole truth about everything. It is impossible on earth. Thus regarding Holy Scripture, isn't it sad to see so many different translations! Had I been a priest, I would have learned Hebrew and Greek, and wouldn't have been satisfied with Latin. In this way, I would have known the real text dictated by the Holy Spirit."  

In the above passages, Therese pondered the faithful disciple, Mary, who did the will of God.

For years, Therese had been captivated by the question these passages pose. In her letters she refers to doing the will of my Father; in her

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1026 Combes, op. cit., 124

1027 NPPA/G quoted La Bible avec Thérèse de Lisieux, (Paris: Cerf/DDB, 1979), 183.

1028 CJ 4. VIII. 5

1028 LT 130; 142; 172; LT 130, n. 5

205
poem\textsuperscript{1030} she refers to "my will", that is to say, the will of Jesus. It is not physical descent that links sinners to Jesus; rather, it is doing the will of Jesus, (here Therese emphasizes His Divinity) who transforms sinners by His words and works. What happens here, as well, is that the rank and privileges of the Mother of Jesus are now extended to sinners who become His disciples, His mother and brothers and sisters, by doing His will. Hence, Therese can rightly claim: "His goods are mine."\textsuperscript{1031} It is precisely this kind of self-sacrificing love on the behalf of sinners that captivates the loving gaze and meditation of Therese. Mary does not hesitate to leave her Son in these passages, so that sinners may draw near to become His disciples. "Such love and such humility"\textsuperscript{1032} enables Mary to "love us as Jesus loves us"\textsuperscript{1033} and to be prepared for the distance to which she consented in the Public Life of Her Son.\textsuperscript{1034} In the love of Son and Mother for sinners, Therese discovered an adequate explanation of her own discipleship and an exact definition of love: "To love is to give all and to give oneself."\textsuperscript{1035}

Mary as the perfect disciple of Jesus offered Therese a paradigm for her own discipleship. A paradigm is a central thematic idea, "rich and powerful enough to provide a vantage point from which to view all the other great truths about Mary."\textsuperscript{1036} Therese reflected deeply on the evangelical texts which refer to Mary. With such a paradigm of discipleship derived from the Gospels, Therese

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1030} PN 54:20,8
  \item \textsuperscript{1031} LT 258
  \item \textsuperscript{1032} PN 54:21,8
  \item \textsuperscript{1033} PN 54:22,1
  \item \textsuperscript{1034} PN 54:22,2
  \item \textsuperscript{1035} PN 52:22,3
  \item \textsuperscript{1036} Buby, 13 quoting Bearsley, \textit{Theological Studies}, 1980, 469
\end{itemize}
understood all of Mary's titles and attributes given to her throughout the history of the Church. Hence, Mary as *immaculata*, *virgo*, *mater*, *assumpta* is the splendor and glory of humanity because her different roles and attitudes are but a kaleidoscope of doing the will of God as his faithful disciple. In Mary, the paradigm of discipleship attains its highest quality, "the art of God." A silhouette in Mark, a pencil-sketch in Matthew, an oil portrait in Luke, a three-dimensional statue in John, Mary the faithful disciple, radiates and manifests God's *charis*. "In Mary, trinitarian love becomes visible and is experienced; likewise, she expresses the very essence of the Church as archetype and model, the true configuration of *anima ecclesiastica*, the highest realization of human holiness."1037 The last written words of St. Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face summarize the role of Mary in her life. On the birthday of Mary, 8 September 1897, Therese wrote with a trembling hand on the back of an image of Our Lady of Victories, where she had pasted the little flower plucked from the garden wall of Les Buissonnets by M. Martin, the following words: "O Marie, si j'étais la Reine du Ciel et que vous soyez Thérèse, je voudrais etre Therese afin que vous soyez la Reine du Ciel."1038

1037 Johan Roten, *op. cit.*, 6

1038 cf. FSM, 147
APPENDIX

A SELECTED CHRONOLOGY

In the story of my soul, up to the entrance into Carmel, I distinguish three separate periods. The first is not the least fruitful in memories in spite of its short duration. It extends from the dawn of my reason till our dear Mother's departure from heaven.\footnote{1039}

ALENCON

God granted me the favor of opening my intelligence at an early age and of imprinting childhood recollections so deeply on my memory that it seems the things I am about to recount happened only yesterday. Jesus in His love willed, perhaps that I know the matchless mother He had given me, but whom His hand hastened to crown in heaven.\footnote{1040}

1872

December 15: Mme. Martin writes to her sister-in-law about her pregnancy. "If the good God does me the grace to be able to nurse it, it will be only a pleasure to raise it. I love children to folly. I was born to have them but soon it will be that time that it will be finished."\footnote{1041} Mme. Martin, born Zelie-Marie Guerin on 23 December, and almost forty-one, wrote this letter a week shy of her birthday.

1873

January 2: Birth of Marie-Francoise-Therese Martin, 36 Saint Blaise Street, Alencon. All nine of the Martin children were given "Marie" as their first name. "In agreement with my father, she [Zelie] wanted to give each one the name of Marie."\footnote{1042} "My little girl was born yesterday, Thursday, at half past eleven in the evening."\footnote{1043} January 4: Baptism in the Church of Notre-Dame; her god mother was Marie. There was a delay as they waited for the godfather.\footnote{1044}

\footnote{1039} This Chronology follows those established in CG II, 1440-1441 and in the translation by John Clarke, OCD, of The Story of A Soul, 279-285. It will include texts relevant to the role of Mary in the life of St. Therese.

\footnote{1040} Ms A 4r

\footnote{1041} CF 83 15. XII. 72

\footnote{1042} Mother of the Little Flower, 8. [MLF]

\footnote{1043} CF 84, 3. I. 73

\footnote{1044} MLF, Celine, 8.
January 16: "While I was carrying her, I remarked on a thing that has never happened before with the other children: when I was singing, she sang with me. I confide this to you, nobody would believe it."  

March 15 or 16: sent out to be nursed by Rose Taille, at Sémalle, Orne. 

July 1: Mme Martin wrote to her daughter Pauline that Therese "is always smiling...she appears very intelligent and has an expression as though she were predestined in some way." 

1874

April 2: Mme Martin writes to her brother Isidore Guerin, "Little Therese will arrive definitively on Thursday." 

June 25: "The little one never wants to leave me, she is continually with me...I am very glad that Therese is so fond of me but it is inconvenient sometimes." Mme. Martin writes to her daughters Marie and Pauline.

November 8: "My Therese...sings us little songs...is intelligent and makes her prayer like a little angel." Mme. writes to her sister-in-law, Mme. Guerin.

1875

At this age, Therese thinks: "I had often heard it said that Pauline would become a religious, and without thinking too much about what it meant I thought: 'I too will be a religious..." You were my ideal; I wanted to be like you, and it was your example that drew me to the spouse of Virgins at the age of two."

At age fifteen, Marie asked for a new statue of Mary instead of the "Virgin of the Smile." Her mother replied: "When I am no longer hear my daughter you do what you want but as long as I shall live this Blessed Virgin will not leave here." 

March 29: Voyage to LeMans: "what a joy to see myself on a trip alone with Mamma."
April 4: Sr. Marie Dosithée, Mme Martin's sister and Visitandine at LeMans wrote to her sister-in-law, Mme. Guerin: "Zélie brought me her little Therese...a girl of rare obedience."[^1054]

May 19: "Therese is sick...the First Communion of Leonie may be a day of mourning," Mme Martin writes to her sister-in-law.

May 23: Leonie makes her First Communion:
I remember very well her First Communion especially the moment she picked me up...by a sister all in white like me...We accompanied Mamma the next day or a few days after tot he home of Leonie's little companion [from her first communion.] I believe it was that day that our good little mother took us behind a wall to give us a drink of wine after the dinner (which we provided for Mme. Dagoreau), because she didn't want to offend the good woman and didn't want to deprive us of anything. Ah! how delicate a mother's heart really is, and how it shows its tenderness in a thousand little cares that no one thinks about![^1055]

November: Mme writes to Pauline: "[Therese] will not climb the stairs all alone but cries each step: 'Mamma, Mamma!' If I forget to say: 'Yes, my child,' she stops and won't go any further."[^1056]

1876
"From the age of three, I began to refuse nothing of what God asked of me."[^1057]

May 14: Mme. Martin write to Pauline: "[Therese] has a heart of gold...It is curious to see her run after me to make her confession...basically, this ceremony [of the month of May at Notre-Dame] doesn't please me very much; one hears there impossible hymns, they are cooings that don't mean anything, one would believe it to be a cafe-concert, it irritates me.^[1058]

May 21: Mme Martin wanted to give Therese a rose but Therese refused: "The roses belong to Marie...she is a child who becomes easily emotional. When she has been naughty, it is necessary that all the world know it..."[^1059]

July 16: Commenting on Therese's first photograph, Mme Martin writes to Pauline: "The poor little one was afraid of the photographer, she made her 'lip.'^[1060]

October 29: Mme. Martin writes to Pauline:
Little Therese asked me the other day if she would go to heaven, I told her "Yes" if she were good. She answered: "Yes but if I am not good, I'll go to hell. But I know what I will do. I will fly to you in heaven, and what will God be able to do to take me away? You will be holding me so tightly

[^1054]: CG II 1115.
[^1055]: Ms A 6v.
[^1056]: CF 146, XI.75.
[^1057]: DE 717, n. 141.
[^1058]: CF 159, 14.V.76; Ms A 7r.
[^1059]: CF 160, 21.V.76.
[^1060]: CF 164, 16.VII.76.
in your arms!" I could see in her eyes that she was really convinced that God could do nothing to her if she were in her mother's arms.\textsuperscript{1061}

October, November, December: Mme writes about her breast cancer discovered in 1865.\textsuperscript{1062} She is undecided about treatment,\textsuperscript{1063} yet remains calm,\textsuperscript{1064} even though the doctors can do nothing.\textsuperscript{1065}

November 8: Mme write to Pauline: "[Therese] is very lively...but her heart is sensitive."\textsuperscript{1066}

1877

On Sunday, as I was too little to go to services, Mamma stayed with me; I was very good, walking around on tiptoe during the Mass; but as soon as I saw the door open, there was an explosion of joy! I would throw myself in front of my pretty sister, "adorned like a chapel" and say: "Oh! little Celine, hurry, give me the blessed bread!" Sometimes she didn't have it because she arrived too late. What to do? I wasn't able to be without my Mass." A way was soon found. "You haven't any blessed bread? Then Make some!" No sooner said than done. Celine got a chair, opened the cupboard, took the bread, cut off a slice, and then very gravely recited a Hail Mary over it, and then she gave it to me. After making a sign of the Cross I would eat it with great devotion, finding it tasted the same as the blessed bread.\textsuperscript{1067}

February 13: Mme Martin writes to Pauline: One morning I wanted to kiss little Therese before going downstairs. She seemed to be in a deep sleep, and I didn't dare awaken her; but Marie said to me: "Mamma, she's only pretending to be asleep; I'm sure of it!" Then I leaned over to kiss her forehead, but she hid immediately under her blanket and said with the tone of a spoilt child: "I don't want anybody to see me!" I was very much displeased and let her feel it. Two minutes later I heard her crying and very soon, to my great surprise, I saw her at my side! She had left her bed all by herself and had come downstairs in her bare feet, hindered somewhat by her long nightdress. Her face was bathed in tears, and throwing herself at my knees, she said, "Mamma, I was naughty; forgive me!" Pardon was quickly granted. I took my angle in my arms, pressed her to my heart and covered her with kisses.\textsuperscript{1068}

\textsuperscript{1061} CF 170, 29.X.76; Ms A 5v.
\textsuperscript{1062} CF 13, 23.IV.65
\textsuperscript{1063} CF 168, 20.X.76; CF 169, X.76.
\textsuperscript{1064} CF 170, 2.XI.76; CF 173, 12.XI.76.
\textsuperscript{1065} CF 176, 17.XII.76.
\textsuperscript{1066} CF 172, 8.XI.76; Ms A 8v, 9r.
\textsuperscript{1067} Ms A 9v, 10r.
\textsuperscript{1068} CF 188, 13.II.77.
April 4: With Pauline guiding her hand, Therese writes her first letter to Louise Magdelaine.

May 9: Marie writes to Pauline:
... As for myself I think it looks like a chapel instead; my May-altar is so pretty its running competition to the one at Notre-Dame. Its really something to arrange a May-altar in this house. Mamma is too difficult, more difficult than the Blessed Virgin. It has to have hawthorne branches reaching to the ceiling, walls covered with greens, etc., etc. Therese is filled with admiration. Each morning she comes to make her prayer, leaping with joy.¹⁰⁶⁹

May 10: Mme Martin writes to Pauline:
May the beautiful month has begun...[Therese] has very rare answers for one her age:...Celine: "How is it that God can be present in the Host?;" Therese: "That's not surprising. God is all powerful;" Celine: "What does all powerful mean?;" Therese: "It means He can do anything He wants."¹⁰⁷⁰

June 18-23: Mme Martin, with her daughters Marie, Pauline, and Leonie go on pilgrimage to Lourdes. A succession of letters reveal the confidence of Mme Martin: "Really I am dependent now on the help of the Blessed Mother...I am eagerly looking forward to a pilgrimage to Loudres...If I am not cured, it will be because it is better for them that I die...I will try to sing the hymns just the same...Let us surrender everything to His goodness and mercy...It seems to me that the more sacrifices we make, the more the Blessed Virgin will be disposed to hear us."¹⁰⁷¹ Therese notes that Mme. Leriche, M. Martin's sister, who come to care for her and Celine, does not pray with them, "like Mamma."¹⁰⁷²

June 24: Mme Martin writes to her brother and sister-in-law: "I lit a beautiful candle for you at the grotto...Alas! I am not cured...nothing but accidents and miseries."¹⁰⁷³

July 8: "I pray to the Blessed Virgin to help me...my husband and Marie believe the Blessed Virgin will surely cure me."¹⁰⁷⁴

July 24: "I have asked the Blessed Virgin the grace to be able to get up from bed and I have been heard...What can be done? If the Blessed Virgin does not cure me, that means my time here is at an end, and the good God wishes me to rest elsewhere than upon this earth."¹⁰⁷⁵

July 28: Marie writes to her aunt, Mme Guerin. "Until two weeks ago she used to recite the five decades of her beads on her knees, before the Blessed Virgin, in
my room, which she loved so much. Seeing her so ill I wanted to have her sit down but it was useless to ask her."\textsuperscript{1076} On the same day, Celine communicated to this same aunt: "...she would like to have you arrange your trip for the week after the feast of the Assumption because if the Blessed Virgin were to cure her that day...let us hope...she will be touched by our prayers and our tears."\textsuperscript{1077}

August: "All the details of my mother's illness are still present to me and I recall especially the last weeks she spent on earth...the ceremony of Extreme Unction made a deep impression on me."\textsuperscript{1078}

August 9: Marie wrote to her aunt, Mme. Guerin: "We began a novena that is to close on the Assumption...whom would the Blessed Virgin protect if she would not protect Mamma, who is so good and so courageous?"\textsuperscript{1079}

August 28: "It was on Tuesday, 28 August 1877, on-half hour past midnight, that our admirable mother was taken from us. She was only forty-five years and eight months old."\textsuperscript{1080}

August 29: Mme Martin is buried. Therese chose Pauline as her second mother: "Fifteen year later, I was to stand before another coffin, Mother Genevieve [one of the foundresses of the Lisieux Carmel]. It was similar in size [to her mother's]. I imagined myself back once again in the days of my childhood and all those memories flooded into my mind...well as for me Pauline will be my mamma."\textsuperscript{1081}

\section*{LISIEUX-AT LES BUISSONNETS}

I entered the second period of my existence, the most painful of the three, especially since the entrance into Carmel of the one whom I chose as my second "Mamma." This period extends from the age of four and half to that of fourteen, the time when I found once again my childhood character, and entered more deeply into the serious side of life.\textsuperscript{1082}

Sept 10: M. Guerin describes Les Buissonnets in a letter to his brother-in-law M. Martin.\textsuperscript{1083}

November 15: Therese and her sisters arrive at Lisieux under the care of their mother's brother, Isidore Guerin. "It was with pleasure that I came to Lisieux."\textsuperscript{1084}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{1076} MLF, 102.
\bibitem{1077} CMG IV, 399-401; MLF, 102-103.
\bibitem{1078} MS A 12r; MLF, 109.
\bibitem{1079} cf. CG II, 1132.
\bibitem{1080} MLF, 110.
\bibitem{1081} MS A 13r.
\bibitem{1082} MS A 13r.
\bibitem{1083} CG I, 112-113, LD 10.IX.77.
\bibitem{1084} MS A 13v; CG II, 1221.
\end{thebibliography}
November 16: Marie wrote to M. Martin: "We are installed at Les Buissonnets;[1085] "...Our Father's very affectionate heart seemed to be enriched now with a truly maternal love. You and Marie, Mother, were you not the most tender and selfless of mothers?...[at Les Buissonnets] my life was truly happy...Elsewhere...I was an exile, I wept, I felt I no longer had a mother! There my heart expanded and I smiled once more at life."[1086]

1878

April: For the first time Therese understand a sermon on the Passion.1087
June 17 to July 2: M. Martin with his daughter Pauline and Marie take a trip to Paris. Therese is confided to her aunt and uncle Guerin: "I loved them very much...[her uncle] frightened me and I wasn't much at ease in his home." 1088
August 8: "I was six or seven years old when Papa brought us to Trouville. Never will I forget the impression the sea made on me; I couldn't take my eyes off it since its majesty, the roaring of the waves, everything spoke to my soul of God's grandeur and power."1089"I am happy to see the blossoming of Therese at the view of the big sea."1090

1879

"Each afternoon I took a walk with Papa...going to a different Church everyday...in this way we entered the Carmelite chapel for the first time."1091
Summer: Therese has a prophetic vision of her father's future sickness. "One day, however, God showed me in a truly extraordinary vision the living image of the trial He was pleased to prepare for us in advance."1092
End of the year or the beginning of 1880: Therese made her first confession. Father encouraged me to be devout to the Blessed Virgin and I promised myself to redouble my tenderness for her. I the passed my rosary through to have him bless it. It was evening and on the way home when we passed under a street light I looked at it from all sides. "What are you looking at Therese?" you asked. "I want to see what a blessed rosary looks like." This amused you. I remained a long time affected by the grace I received.1093
1880

Beginning of the year: Therese writes alone. 1094
May 13: Therese recalls Celine's First Communion: "I believe I received great
graces that day and I consider it one of the most beautiful in my life." 1095

1881

October 3: Therese enters the Benedictine Abbey at Lisieux as a day boarder:
"I have often heard it said that time spent at school is the best and happiest of one's
life. It wasn't that way for me. The five years I spent in school were the saddest
in my life." 1096

1882

October 2: Pauline enters Lisieux Carmel; Therese returns to the Abbey. "I
was about to lose my mother. I understood what life was... continual suffering and
separation." 1097
December: "Toward the end of the year I began to have a constant
headache." 1098

1883

March 25, Easter: While M. Martin, Marie and Leonie are at Paris, Therese
became ill at the Guerins. The illness resulted in nervous trembling and
hallucinations. "The sickness which overtook me certainly came from the
demon." 1099
April 6: Pauline receives the habit as Sr. Agnes of Jesus. Therese is well
enough to embrace her sister in the visiting room. "I was then able to kiss my dear
Mother, to sit on her knees and give her many caresses."
April 7: "The next day I had a relapse similar to the first." 1100
May 13, Pentecost: Therese is suddenly healed by "the ravishing smile of the
Blessed Virgin." 1101 One notes that what leads up to the miracle, the miracle
itself, and what follows it, occupies nearly a quarter Therese's story.
May: Therese speaks to Sr. Agnes and the other Carmelites and she begins to
agonize in her conscience about the subject of her sickness "I thought I had

1094 This letter is lost. CG I, 119.
1095 Ms A 25v.
1096 Ms A 22r.
1097 Ms A 25v -27r.
1098 Ms 27v.
1099 Ms A 27r-29v; CG I, 139-149; Chr. IG, 99.
1100 Ms A 26v.
1101 Ms A 30r-31r; CG I, 147-149.
lied" (until May 28, 1888) and the smile of the Virgin "The Blessed Virgin permitted this torment for my soul's good." (until November 4, 1887).

August: Therese's "first entrance into the world" occurred on vacation at Alencon and in the surrounding chateaux, with her father and sisters. "At the age of ten the heart allows itself to be dazzled easily and I consider it a great grace to have remained at Alencon. Perhaps Jesus wanted to show me the world before his visit in order that I may choose freely the way I was to follow."

August 22: Therese meets Father Almire Pichon, SJ, her future spiritual director at Alencon.

October 1: Therese returns to the Abbey in the second division. Concerning the fate of unbaptized infants, she remonstrated with Fr. Domin: "But they have not sinned. But not to see God, that is unhappiness! Ah well! the good God can do all, in his place I would show myself."

1884

February to March: The letters of Sr. Agnes of Jesus with expressions like "how the Blessed Virgin keeps always my little Therese under her virginal mantle" prepare Therese for her first communion. "You used to write me a nice letter each week and this filled my soul with deep thoughts and aided me in the practice of virtue...Pauline was replaced by Marie...It seemed to me her [Marie's] large and generous heart passed into my own."

May 5-8: Therese makes her preparatory retreat for her First Communion; Fr. Domin instructs the class. "I cannot express the sweet memory this retreat left with me."

May 8: Therese makes her First Communion at the Abbey. "It was no longer a look but a fusion."
In the afternoon, it was I who made the Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin. It was only right that I speak in the name of my companions to my Mother in heaven, I who had been deprived at such an early age of my earthly Mother. I put all my heart into speaking to her, into consecrating myself to her as a child throwing itself into the arms of its mother, asking her to watch over her. It seems to me the Blessed Virgin must have looked upon her little flower and smiled at her, for wasn't it she who cured her with a visible smile? Had she not placed in the heart of her little flower her Jesus, the Flower of the Fields and the Lily of the Valley? On the same day, Sr. Agnes of Jesus makes her profession at Carmel. "This time of my First Communion remains engraved on my heart as souvenir without clouds... my trials left me during the next year." After her First Communion: There is a "great desire to suffer... O Jesus, ineffable sweetness, change for me into bitterness all the consolations of earth." May 22, Ascension: Therese makes her second communion. "It is no longer I who live but Jesus living in me." June 14: Mgr. Hugonin, Bishop of Bayeux, confirms Therese at the Abbey. "I was prepared with great care to receive the visit of the Holy Spirit, and I did not understand why greater attention was not paid to the reception of this sacrament of Love." Celine will never forget the "vehemence" of her holy drunkenness of her little sister in those days. July: Therese has whooping cough on vacation at Saint-Ouen-le-Pin with the Guerins. Her aunt gives her "a glass of warm milk (straight from the cow!). I believe it is a good remedy." September 25: Therese is inscribed in the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary.

1885

April 26: Therese is inscribed in the Confraternity of the Holy Face of Tours.

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1113 Ms A 35 v.
1114 Ms A 32 v.
1115 Ms A 36 v.
1116 Ms A 36 r.
1117 Ms A 36 v.
1118 NPPO, 4.
1119 CG I, 178-179, LD 7.VII.84.
1120 DE, 483, n. a, 3.
1121 DE, 483, n. a, 4.
May 3-10: Like LaFontaine's fable [IV, 5] "The Donkey and the Pet Dog, Therese was "cured [for] life of attracting attention" while on vacation at Deauville.1123

May 17-21: "It was during my second [solemn] Communion that I was assailed by the terrible sickness of scruples... for me to express what I suffered for on and a half years would be impossible." Fr. Domin said: "God hates the soul in sin." Marie is her sole oracle.1126

July 29: Mme Guerin writes to her husband: "Mother was telling me yesterday that she never saw Therese so gay, with a face so frankly happy."1127

August 22 to October: "Papa's trip to Constantinople..."1128

End of September: On vacation at Villa Rose, Trouville, "I enjoyed myself very much because I was with my Celine."1129

October: Therese returns to the Abbey alone, without "inseparable Celine."1130

1886

February 2: Therese is received as an aspirant of the children of Mary.1131

February to March: "It wasn't long before I was sick... without... Celine... I left the Abbey... at... and continued my education... at the home of Mme. Papineau."1132

Beginning of July: "My sickness which they feared was serious was only an attack of nostalgia for Les Buissonets" while on a three day vacation at Trouville with the Guerins.

Around October 5: On a trip to Alençon of several days, with her father and sisters, "everything about it was sadness and bitterness for me. I cannot express

1122 Ms A 42 r.
1123 CG I, 184-191.
1124 Ms A 39 r.
1125 CG I, 193.
1126 Ms A 41 r.
1127 CG I, 195, LD 29.VII.85
1128 Ms A 41 v; CG I, 196, LT 25.VII.85.
1129 Ms A 41 r.
1130 Ms A 39 v.
1131 CG I, 203.
1132 Ms A 39 v.
1133 Ms A 42 v.

218
the tears I shed on Mamma's grave because I had forgotten the bouquet of cornflowers I had gathered especially for her."  

October 7: "It was during this trip that Leonie made her attempt to enter the Poor Clares. I was saddened by her extraordinary entrance..."  

October 15: "When Marie entered Carmel [of Lisieux as Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart] I was still very scrupulous."  

End of October: Therese is freed from scruples through the intercession of two brothers and two sisters who died as infants. "The answer was not long in coming, for soon peace came to inundate my soul..."  

December 1: Leonie returns to the family.  

December 25: After Midnight Mass, Therese receives the grace of conversion at Les Buissonnets. "On that night when He made Himself subject to weakness and suffering for love of me, He made me strong and courageous...to run as a giant [Ps 18:6]." On that night began the third period of my life, the most beautiful and the most filled with graces from heaven."  

1887  
For Therese and Celine, life at Les Buissonnets this year is the ideal of happiness. "Celine had become the confident of my thoughts, Jesus wanting us to advance together, formed bonds in our hearts stronger than blood."  

March 19: Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart takes the habit.  

Spring: "I went very humbly to ask for permission to be received into the Association [the Children of Mary] at the Abbey. The mistress didn't want to refuse but she placed as a condition that I come twice a week in the afternoon in order to prove my worthiness."  

May 1: Sr. Agnes of Jesus writes to M. Martin after his first attack of paralysis: "Of course the Blessed virgin will heal you...for Carmel has prayed so much for you."
May: Reading *Fin du monde present et mystères de la vie future* by Fr. Arminjon "was one of the greatest graces in my life... I knew almost all the chapters of my beloved Imitation by heart. This little book never parted company from me."\(^{1145}\)

May 29, Pentecost: "Through my tears, I confided [to her father] my desire to enter Carmel and soon his tears mingled with mine."\(^{1146}\)

May 31: Therese is received at the Abbey as a Child of Mary.\(^{1147}\)

June 20-26: Therese is on vacation with the Guerins at Trouville.\(^{1148}\)

July: "On Sunday, looking at a picture of Our Lord on the cross, I was struck by the blood flowing from one of the divine hands...to remain at the foot of the cross...to receive the divine dew...to pour it out upon souls...of great sinners...to snatch them from the eternal flames."\(^{1149}\)

July 13: Pranzini who murdered two women and a young girl in Paris, the night of March 19, 1887, is condemned to death. Therese prays and sacrifices for his conversion "...he would die impenitent. I wanted at all cost to prevent him from falling into hell."\(^{1150}\)

July 16: Leonie enters the visitation of Caen. "Leonie will be happy at the Visitacion."\(^{1151}\)

September 1: Therese read in *La Croix* of Pranzini's execution and of his conversion "...[he] took hold of the crucifix...and kissed the sacred wounds three times [Lk 15:7]."\(^{1152}\)

October 8-22: Under the influence of Sr. Agnes de Jesus, M. Guerin consents to Therese's entrance to Carmel at Christmas. "...with trembling I confided my resolution to Uncle [October 8]...a long time passed before I dared to speak to him again [two weeks]...a painful martyrdom lasting three days [October 19-22]...on the fourth day,...a Saturday, consecrated...to the Sweet Queen of heaven...he told me that I was the little flower God wanted to gather."\(^{1153}\)

October 31: Therese and her father visit Bp. Hugonin at Bayeux to solicit the same authorization. "...I wanted to be a religious since the dawn of my reason, and I wanted Carmel as soon as I knew about it. I find all the aspirations of my soul are fulfilled in the Order...and still everything was futile."\(^{1154}\)

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\(^{1145}\) Ms 47 v, r.

\(^{1146}\) Ms A 50 r; cf Ms A 44 v, 49 r, 50v.

\(^{1147}\) DE 483, n. a, 7.

\(^{1148}\) CG I, 230; Chr IG, 35.

\(^{1149}\) Ms A 45v.

\(^{1150}\) Ms A 45 v - 46 v.

\(^{1151}\) CG I, 234, LT 14.VII.87.

\(^{1152}\) Ms A 46 r.

\(^{1153}\) Ms A 51 r, v; CG I, 251, LD 21.X.87.

\(^{1154}\) Ms A 54 v.
November 4: On her way to Rome with her father and sister, Therese's family stops in Paris. At Notre-Dame des Victoires, The Blessed Virgin made me feel it was really herself who smiled on me and brought about my cure. I understood she was watching over me, that I was her child. I could no longer give her any other name but "Mamma," as this appeared ever so much more tender than mother. I begged her to protect me always and to bring to fruition as quickly as possible my dream of hiding beneath the shadow of her virginal mantle.\footnote{MS A 56 v - 57 r.}

November 7 -13: The pilgrims make stops in Switzerland, Milan, Venice and Loreto. "Loreto... I am not surprised at all the Blessed Virgin chose this spot... our greatest consolation was to receive Jesus Himself in His house."

November 13-24: The pilgrims continue on to Rome with excursions to Naples and Pompeii.

November 20: The pilgrims have an audience with Pope Leo XIII. He responds to Therese request to enter Carmel: "...You will enter if God wills it..."\footnote{MS A 63 r.}

November 24 - December 2: The pilgrims return home by way of Assisi, Florence, Pisa, Genoa, Nice Marseille, Lyons and Paris.\footnote{MS A 65 r - 67 r; CG I, 259-313.}

December 28: There is a favorable answer from Bp Hugonin to the Prioress of Lisieux Carmel to admit Therese.\footnote{CG I, 333.}

1888

January 1: The Bishop's response is transmitted to Therese but her entrance to Carmel is deferred for three months: "...At the wedding feast of Canna when the Blessed Virgin asked him to come to the help of the head of the house, didn't he answer that His hour had not yet come. I was unable to hold back my tears at such a long wait."\footnote{MS A 68 r.}

March: "One of the most beautiful months of my life... my mortifications consisted in breaking my will, always so ready to impose itself on others... this waiting left sweet memories with me."\footnote{DE, 779.}

April 9: Therese enters Carmel "...the same day the community was celebrating the feast of the Annunciation, transferred because of Lent."\footnote{MS A 68 v.}

\footnote{1155}{MS A 56 v - 57 r.}
\footnote{1156}{MS A 63 r.}
\footnote{1157}{MS A 65 r - 67 r; CG I, 259-313.}
\footnote{1158}{CG I, 333.}
\footnote{1159}{MS A 68 r.}
\footnote{1160}{DE, 779.}
\footnote{1161}{MS A 68 r.}
AT CARMEL

Postulancy: April 9, 1988 to January 10, 1889
Assignment: Linen-room

"My desires at last were accomplished; my soul experienced a peace...for seven and a half years...that has not abandon me in the midst of the greatest trials."

May 22: Therese notes "those beautiful festivities of the month of May, namely, the Profession of our dear Marie."

May 24-28: Fr. Pichon, SJ, preaches two instructions a day at Lisieux.

May 28: Therese makes a general confession to Father Pichon."He spoke the most consoling words I ever heard in my life: 'In the presence of God, The Blessed Virgin and all the saints, I declare that you have never committed a mortal sin...Thank God..."

June 23-27: M. Martin disappears without telling anyone to Le Havre; he writes for money and Celine and M. Guerin trace him. "You are aware dear Mother of our bitter sufferings during the month of June."

August 12: M. Martin suffers a new attack of paralysis at Les Buissonnets.

End of October: Therese is approved by the conventual chapter to receive the habit.

October 31: M. Martin has a serious relapse at Le Havre.

1889

January 5-10: Therese makes a retreat before the reception of the habit. "Jesus sleeps."

January 10: "Against all expectations, our dear father recovered from his second attack and the Bishop [Hugonin] set the ceremony [for the reception of the habit] for January tenth...his day of triumph...Anticipating the desires of His fiancee, He gave her snow [unexpected due to the unseasonably warm

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1162 Ms A 69 v.
1163 Ms A 71 r - v; CG I, 368.
1164 CG I, 374, LC 18.VI.87.
1165 Ms A 70 r.
1166 Ms A 72 r; CG I, 375, LD 26.VI.88.
1167 CMG IV, 187.
1168 CG I, 404-406.
1169 CG I, 407-409.
1170 CG I, 426-444; LT 74, 6.1.89.
On this date, Therese signed her name "Soeur Therese de l'Enfant Jesus de la Sainte Face, nov. carm. ind."\textsuperscript{1171}

**Novitiate: January 10, 1889 to September 24, 1890**

**Assignment: Refectory, sweeping of corridors**

February 12: M. Martin is hospitalized at "Bon Sauveur" of Caen where he will remain for three years. "...the most bitter and humiliating of all chalices...this inestimable treasure...Papa's three years of martyrdom appear to me as the most lovable, the most fruitful of my life."\textsuperscript{1172}

July: Therese receives a special grace from the Blessed Virgin in the hermitage of St. Mary Magdalene and is under its influence for a whole week. "...I was entirely hidden under the Blessed Virgin's veil..."\textsuperscript{1173}

December 24: With the lease up at Les Buissonets, Celine write to Therese: "Tomorrow Les Buissonets will no longer be ours."\textsuperscript{1174}

December 25: At Carmel, Therese plays the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in "The First Dream of the Child Jesus "With such piety and simplicity that the whole community was profoundly moved."\textsuperscript{1175}

December 31: "Celine, if you wish, let us convert souls; this year, we must form many priests who love Jesus! and handle Him with the same tenderness with which Mary handle Him in His cradle."\textsuperscript{1176}

1890

During the year Therese discovers the texts on the Suffering Servant in Isaiah\textsuperscript{1177} and reads the works of St. John of the Cross ("I had no other spiritual nourishment."\textsuperscript{1178}) and P. Surin's *Les Fondements de la vie spiritual.*

January: Therese profession is delayed: "I found it difficult to accept this sacrifice but soon light shone in my soul...to make Profession...was mixed with self-love."\textsuperscript{1179}

\textsuperscript{1171}Ms A 72 r - v.

\textsuperscript{1172}CG I, 445, LT 80. 10.I.89.

\textsuperscript{1173}Ms A 73 r - v.

\textsuperscript{1174}DE, 253, CJ 11.VII.2

\textsuperscript{1175}CG I, 513, LC 121 24.XII.89.

\textsuperscript{1176}CG I, 509, 516 n. d.

\textsuperscript{1177}CG 515, LT 101 31.XII.89.

\textsuperscript{1178}CG I, 539-543, LT 108, 18.VII.90.

\textsuperscript{1179}Ms A 83 r.

\textsuperscript{1180}Ms A 73 v.

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May 10: Therese write to Celine on the Blessed Virgin: "And the Blessed Virgin! Ah, Celine, hide yourself well in the shadow of her virginal mantle in order that she may virginize you."  

August 28-September 8: Therese's retreat for Profession "...was of great aridity...I had the happiness of receiving the Sovereign Pontiff's blessing (2. VII. 90)...while making the Way of the Cross (7. VII. 90)...I thought I didn't have a vocation...the Mistress reassured me...Mother Prioress...simply laughed."  

September 8: Therese makes Profession; at the end of the day she placed her "crown at the Blessed Virgin's feet...It was the little Blessed Virgin, one day old, who was presenting her little flower to the little Jesus."  

September 24: On the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, Therese received the veil "...the day veiled in tears...Papa was not there...Father Pichon was in Canada...the Bishop did not come...he was sick...and still peace."  

1891  

Around February 10: Therese is named to aid the sacristan.  

April-July: Therese offers prayers for the ex-Carmelite, Hyacinthe Loyson.  

October 7-15: Father Alexis Prou (1844-1914), a Franciscan Recollect from Caen, Superior of the house of St. Lazaire, preaches a retreat at Lisieux Carmel. "He launched me full sail upon the waves of confidence and love which so strongly attracted me but upon which I dared not advance."  

December 5: One of the foundresses of Carmel, Mother Genevieve, dies. Therese assists at a funeral for the first time. Therese recalls Mother Genevieve saying to her:  

You ask for a spiritual bouquet...serve God with peace and joy...the following Sunday...none at all...my admiration was greater...that type of sanctity...the truest and most holy...no importance to dreams...yet...a very consoling dream...[Mother Genevieve was making her last will and testament...]To you I give my heart...'three times."
December 28: "Carmel...has...influenza."\textsuperscript{1189} Therese becomes in charge of the sacristy and is able to receive communion everyday. "When I am preparing for Holy Communion, I picture my soul as a piece of land and I ask the Blessed Virgin to remove from it any rubish that would prevent it from being free..."\textsuperscript{1191}

1892

May 19: M. Martin returns to the family at Lisieux.

May 12: M. Martin visits Lisieux Carmel for the last time. "Papa...had only one word with which to express his thoughts 'in heaven.'"\textsuperscript{1192}

October 19: Among other things, Therese reveals her thoughts on the Blessed Virgin to Celine"...'But good Blessed Virgin, I find I am more blessed than you, for I have you for Mother, and you do not have a Blessed Virgin to love...."\textsuperscript{1193}

At the end of the year: "...it is especially the Gospels which sustain me during hours of prayer, for in them I find what is necessary for my poor little soul. I am constantly discovering in them new lights, hidden and mysterious meanings..."\textsuperscript{1194}

1893

February 2: Therese composes her first poem, "La Rosee Divine ou Le Lait Virginal de Marie."\textsuperscript{1195}

February 20: Mother Agnes of Jesus is elected prioress: "You are truly my mother...since the blessed day of your election I have flown in love..."\textsuperscript{1196} Mother Gonzague is named Mistress of Novices; Therese is associated with her in the formation of her companions. Therese leaves the sacristy and takes up painting. "To the great astonishment of my sisters I was told to paint."\textsuperscript{1197}

\textsuperscript{1189} Ms A 12 v.

\textsuperscript{1190} CG II, 657.

\textsuperscript{1191} Ms A 79 r - 80 r.

\textsuperscript{1192} CG II, 673-674, LT 138, 17.XI.92.

\textsuperscript{1193} CG II, 670-673, LT 137, 19.X.92; CJ 11.VII.4.

\textsuperscript{1194} Ms A 83 v.

\textsuperscript{1195} PN 1.

\textsuperscript{1196} CG II, 688-690, LT 140, 20.II.93.

\textsuperscript{1197} Ms A 80 v.

\textsuperscript{1198} Ms A 81 r.

225
April-May: Sr. Mary of the Angels takes the photograph of the whole community including Therese.  

June: Therese paints a fresco in the Oratory. It has a dozen angles around the Tabernacle; one of them, sleeping, bears the name "Therese."  

June 24: Leonie enters the Visitation convent of Caen for a second time.  

September: Therese could leave the novitiate but asks to remain there. She continues with the job of painting and becomes second portress.  

1894  

January 2: Therese turns twenty-one and is allowed to fast.  


Spring: Therese begins to suffer from her throat which is cauterized.  

February 20: Therese writes her second poem, "A Mere Marie Gonzague, pour ses soixante ans."  

April-May: Therese writes her fifth poem, "Mon chant d'aujourd'hui," which pleased its recipient, Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart, "very much."  

June 16: Sr. Marie of the Trinity enters the Lisieux carmel and is entrusted to Therese. "[Sr. Marie of the Trinity] has not been brought up like us... her education is the cause of her 'charming' manners but in her heart she is good."  

July 29: "My dear little sisters, Papa [who died at Chateau de la Musse (Eure)] is in heaven."  

August: Therese changes her cell.  

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1199 CG II, 1173.  

1200 CG II, 865.  


1202 CG II, 728, n. h.  

1203 CG II, 726.  

1204 RP 1; Pope Leo XIII declared Joan of Arc "venerable" on January 27, 1894.  

1205 CG II, 1187.  

1206 PN, 2.  

1207 CG II, 779, n. a.  

1208 CG II, 775, LT 167, 18.VII.94.  

1209 CG II, 780-781.  

1210 Ms A 82 r.  

1211 CG II, 1233.  

226
September 14: "But the most intimate of my desires, the greatest of them all, which I thought would never be realized, was my dear Celine's entrance into the same Carmel as ours... the difficulties seemed insurmountable..."

End of December: Therese receives the order to write her childhood memories from Mother Agnes of Jesus, never dreaming at that time that the manuscript would leave the family circle. Therese begins to compose the pious recreation "Joan of Arc accomplishes her mission" for Mother Agnes' feast day.

1895

January: Therese begins writing manuscript A "Springtime Story of a little white flower written by herself and dedicated to the Reverend Mother Agnes of Jesus."

It is to you, dear Mother, to you who are doubly my mother, that I come to confide my soul... Before taking up my pen, I knelt before the statue of Mary [Virgin of the Smile which is in the present shrine of St. Therese in Lisieux Carmel. The Martin Family held it in special veneration. in January, 1895, it was in the room outside her cell.] (the one which has given so many proofs of the maternal preferences of heaven's Queen for our family), and I begged her to guide my hand that it trace no line displeasing to her. Then opening the Holy Gospels...

January 21: Therese takes the role of Joan of Arc. She escapes being nearly burnt in a circle of fire. Afterwards, five photographs are taken.

February 5: Celine receives the Habit as Sr. Genevieve.

February 26: Therese spontaneously composes her poem "Vive d'Amour."

\[121^2\text{Ms A 82 r - v.}\]
\[121^3\text{CG II, 791.}\]
\[121^4\text{RP, 3.}\]
\[121^5\text{Ms A 2 r.}\]
\[121^6\text{Ms A 2 r.}\]
\[121^7\text{RP 3.}\]
\[121^8\text{PA 1003.}\]
\[121^9\text{VTL, 11-15.}\]
\[122^0\text{CG II, 802, LT 174, fin janvier.}\]
\[122^1\text{PN 17.}\]
April: Therese confides in Sr. Therese of St. Augustine: "I will die soon." The little white flower... only its stem has broken close to the roots... God... will soon break the bonds of His little flower."  

June 9: "This year, June 9, the Feast of the Holy Trinity, I received the grace to understand more than ever before how much Jesus desires to be loved... on my Jesus, let me be this happy victim; consume your holocaust with the fire of Divine love." Finally, I offer to You, O Blessed Trinity! the Love and merits of the Blessed Virgin, my dear Mother. It is to her I abandon my offering begging her to present it to You...."  

June 11: Therese makes this "Act of Oblation to Merciful Love" with Sr. Genevieve.  

June 14: When beginning the Stations of the Cross, Therese has an intense experience of the love of God, "...I was burning with love..."  

July 20: Leonie leaves the Visitation convent.  

August 15: Therese's cousin, Marie Guerin, enters the Lisieux Carmel, as Sr. Marie de l'Eucharistie.  

October 17: Mother Agnes designates Therese as the spiritual sister to Fr. Belliere, a seminarian and future missionary. "...it would be impossible to express my happiness..."  

1896  

January 20: Therese brings to Mother Agnes her copybook of memories (Manuscript A). "...the little flower... never cease blessing the dear Mother who offered her to Jesus."  

January: Therese presents her "Flight into Egypt."  

February 24: Sr. Genevieve makes profession. "...All is to us. All is for us for in Jesus we have all..."

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1222 PO 1945; CG II, 801.  
1223 Ms A 50 v.  
1224 Ms A 84 r.  
1225 Act of Oblation to merciful love.  
1226 CG II, 808.  
1227 CJ 7 VII. 2.  
1228 CG II, 790.  
1229 CG II, 790.  
1230 CG II, 821; Ms C 31 v.  
1231 Ms A 84 v.  
1232 RP 6.  
1233 CG II, 827-824.
March 17: Sr. Genevieve receives the veil; Marie Guerin, i.e., Sr. Marie of the Eucharist receives the Habit.\textsuperscript{1234}

March 21: After the difficult election, the Prioress, Mother Marie de Gonzague, confirms Therese in her role as auxiliary mistress in the novitiate as well as her duties in the sacristy, laundry, and of painting. 

April 2-3: From Holy Thursday night to Good Friday, Therese experiences her first hemoptysis.

April 5: On Easter Sunday or shortly there after, Therese enters into the Night of Faith, a trial which will last until her death. "...One would have to travel through this dark tunnel to understand its darkness."\textsuperscript{1237}

May 10: Therese dreams "...on May 10, the second SUNDAY of Mary's month, and perhaps the anniversary of the day when the Blessed Virgin deigned to smile upon her little flower..."

May 30: Mother Marie de Gonzague confides a second spiritual brother to Therese, Father Roulland, MEP.\textsuperscript{1239} This association revived in her a hidden vocation of priest and missionary.\textsuperscript{1240}

June 21: For the feast of Mother Marie de Gonzague, Therese composed the Triumph of Humility\textsuperscript{1241} after the published memoirs of Diana Vaughn, expressisse of Lucifer.

July 3: Fr. Roulland celebrates his First Mass at the Lisieux Carmel and interviews Therese.

July 16: Therese writes "A Notre-Dame des Victoires"\textsuperscript{1242} as Fr. Roulland embarks on his mission to Su-tchen in order to fan into flame his apostolic desires.\textsuperscript{1243}

\textsuperscript{1234}CG II, 840.

\textsuperscript{1235}Ms C 1 r.

\textsuperscript{1236}Ms C 5 r.

\textsuperscript{1237}Ms C 5 v.

\textsuperscript{1238}Ms B 2 v.

\textsuperscript{1239}Ms C 33 r.

\textsuperscript{1240}Ms B 2 v.

\textsuperscript{1241}RP 7.

\textsuperscript{1242}PN 35.

\textsuperscript{1243}CG II, 873.
August 2: Fr. Roulland leaves for China; Therese asks Mother Agnes about Saigon.  

August 15: Therese writes "Jesus Seul"  

July-August: Therese experiences a martyrdom of desires; she reads Isaiah and Paul and asks for "double love" Therese speaks to Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart about this subject.  

September 8-17: Therese makes a private retreat.  

September 8: Therese writes Manuscript B, part two, addressed to Jesus. She commemorated in solitude the sixth anniversary of her profession which had made her "a Carmelites, a Spouse and a Mother."  

September 13-16: Therese writes a dedication to Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart, Manuscript B, part one. Therese used her free time to explain in writing her "little doctrine," the pages culminate in the discovery of her personal vocation: "...in the heart of the Church, my Mother, I shall be Love..."  

September 17: Therese confirms and complements her doctrine in a letter to Sr. Marie of the Sacred Heart.  

October 8-15: To the preacher of the community's Retreat, Fr. Godefroid Madelaine, Therese confided her temptations against the faith. On his advice, she carried the Credo permanently on her heart: she had chosen to write it out in her own blood.  

November 21: Therese reads the life Theophane Venard and some of his letters. Therese copied in her scripture note book some four pages of extracts from the martyr's letters and the hymn of Fr. Chauvin in his honor on two pages. She borrowed from these sayings for her own farewell to her own sisters. This young priest was to be numbered among the great friends of Therese when she was sick and dying.  

December 24: Therese writes to Celine in the name of the Blessed Virgin, with the envelope addressed: "Message from the Blessed Virgin to my dear Child without a home in a foreign land."
This year Therese begins to understand "fraternal charity."¹²⁵⁴

March 4-12, 19: Therese made a personal novena to St. Francis Xavier in order to obtain "passing her heaven doing good on earth." She asked the same favor from St. Joseph.¹²⁵⁵

April (toward the end of Lent): Therese falls gravely ill.¹²⁵⁶

April 5: Mother Agnes of Jesus begins to record her last conversations.¹²⁵⁷

May: Therese is discharged of all her tasks and choir duty; she writes her marian testament, "Pourquoi je t'aime, o Marie."

May 3: For the first time Therese uses the image of "Jesus...the elevator lifting me without fatigue to the infinite regions of love."¹²⁵⁸

June 3: Mother Agnes asks Mother Marie Gonzague to order Therese to finish her Autobiography. Therese writes Manuscript C.

June 9: Therese expresses her "night of nothingness"¹²⁵⁹ and her unshakable faith "...I enter into Life..."¹²⁶⁰

July 8: Therese is brought down to the infirmary. The miraculous statue of the Virgin of the Smile is placed in the infirmary.¹²⁶¹ She has hemoptyses until August 5.¹²⁶²

July 16: Therese expresses to Sr. Martha her desire "to remain a little child."

July 17: "Saturday, 2am, she had coughed up blood...I feel that my mission is about to begin, my mission to make the Good God loved as I love Him."¹²⁶³

August 15-27: Therese endures great suffering and is tempted to suicide.¹²⁶⁴

¹²⁵⁴Ms C 28 r; DE, 393.
¹²⁵⁵CG II, 966.
¹²⁵⁶CG II, 968.
¹²⁵⁷CG II, 969.
¹²⁵⁸CG II, 988, LT 229, 23.V.97; Ms C 3 r.
¹²⁵⁹Ms C 6 v.
¹²⁶⁰CG II, 1014-1015, LT 9.VI.97.
¹²⁶¹DE, 455, 6.7.5, n. a.
¹²⁶²CG II, 970.
¹²⁶³CG II, 660, n. c; 694, n. c; 811-814; 828-835; RP 1; Ms C 3 r.
¹²⁶⁴DE, 269.
¹²⁶⁵CG, II, n. s.
September 8: Therese writes her last autograph: "O Mary, if I were the Queen of Heaven and you were little Therese, I would want to be Therese so that you could be the Queen of Heaven."\footnote{ACL}{1266}

September 30: After an agony of two day, toward 7:30 pm, Therese dies.\footnote{CG II, 1237.}{1267}

October 4: Therese is buried.\footnote{CG II, 1237.}{1268}
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