

St. Thérèse of Lisieux

WHO: Born *Marie Françoise Thérèse* Martin in Alençon, France, on January 2, 1873, she was the youngest of nine children. At the age of 15, Thérèse entered the Carmelite convent at Lisieux, becoming a religious Sister two years later.

WHAT: Thérèse wanted very much to leave her convent in France and be sent on mission, specifically to Vietnam. Her poor health prevented her from making that journey, but not from being a missionary.

Determined not only to love God herself, but also to lead others to know and love Him, Thérèse offered her prayers and her own sufferings for missionaries around the world. She was canonized a saint of the Catholic Church in 1925; her Feast Day is October 1. In 1927, she was declared co-patron with St. Francis Xavier of all missionaries and the Missions, thus emphasizing the important role we all share as missionaries through prayer and sacrifice.

WOW! St. Thérèse did “go” to the Missions – at least through the mail. She wrote to missionary priests serving in Asia and Africa during her lifetime. In those letters, she told of her great love for Jesus, and of feeling a part of the missionary work of those priests, especially through her prayers.



Activity

Contact your local Mission Office Director (find that name and information at the “Contact Us” link at www.OneFamilyInMission.org), and ask for the name and address of a missionary from your diocese. Write that priest, religious or lay missionary, and ask about their service. Pray daily for their work of making Jesus known among your brothers and sisters in mission countries. Offer financial help to the Missions, as St. Thérèse also did. She wrote in her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*: “Papa rewarded me by giving me a pretty little coin. I placed it in a box, and it was from this box that I drew my offerings on the big feasts when there were special collections for the Propagation of the Faith.”

