



# Praying with Thérèse

Prayer Sheet: No 4

## Preparation:

As you quieten yourself for prayer, let go of the worries and regrets that weigh you down and enter into the “now” of God’s presence.

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## Reading:

*A little incident of childish selfishness takes on a deep significance for Thérèse in her later life.*

One day, Leonie, thinking she was too big to be playing any longer with dolls, came to us with a basket filled with dresses and pretty pieces for making others; her doll was resting on top. “Here, my little sisters, *choose*; I’m giving you all this.” Céline stretched out her hand and took a little ball of wool that pleased her. After a moment’s reflection, I stretched out mine saying: “I choose all!” and I took the basket without further ceremony. Those who witnessed the scene saw nothing wrong and even Céline herself didn’t dream of complaining (besides, she had all sorts of toys, her godfather gave her lots of presents, and Louise found ways of getting her everything she desired).

This little incident of my childhood is a summary of my whole life; later on when perfection was set before me, I understood that to become *a saint* one had to suffer much, seek out always the most perfect thing to do, and forget self. I understood, too there were many degrees of perfection and each soul was free to respond to the advances of Our Lord, to do little or much for Him, in a word, to *choose* among the sacrifices He was asking. Then, as in the days of my childhood, I cried out: “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!

*(Story of A Soul, p.27)*

## Scriptural Echo:

... when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God.’ “

*Heb 10: 5-7*

## Questions:

- What does Thérèse understand when she looks back on the little incident from childhood?
- What “advances” is the Lord making towards me at this moment in my life?
- What might he be asking of me / us in a world changed by the pandemic?

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*“The Way of Prayer” is a work of the Discalced Carmelite Order of the Australia-Oceania region.*

<https://carmelite.com/the-way-of-prayer/>

## **Concluding Prayers:**

### **(Prayer with a focus on St. Thérèse)**

God, Our Father,  
you revealed to the young Thérèse your strong yet maternal care.  
In this time of uncertainty and fear inspire us with deep trust  
that you are looking after all the flowers in your garden.  
Inspire us likewise to care for those we live with.  
Through Christ your Son.  
Amen.

### **(A Prayer for our family / community)**

God Almighty Father, we ask you to bless us.  
Following the example of the Martin Family  
may we never give up when life is difficult  
and have your strength and healing when health is poor.  
May the Eucharist be the summit of our lives,  
prayer our daily strength;  
and the Trinity the source of our love.  
We ask this with faith and confidence  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen!

### **Saints Louis, Zélie and Thérèse, pray for us**

*[Louis and Zélie Martin were the parents of St. Thérèse and were canonised in 2015]*

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## **Quote for the day:**

**MY GOD 'I CHOOSE ALL' ...I'M NOT AFRAID TO SUFFER  
FOR YOU... 'I CHOOSE ALL' THAT YOU WILL.**

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In praying the above you might like to access "A Way to Pray" (<https://carmelite.com/the-way-of-prayer/>)  
to find help.

## **Acknowledgements:**

*Extracts from The Story of a Soul: © Washington Province of Discalced Carmelites, Inc, 1975,  
Third edition published 1996.*

*Scripture verses are taken from New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition Copyright  
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