St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897)

Born Marie Françoise-Thérèse Martin, St. Thérèse of Lisieux was a French nun popularly known as “The Little Flower of Jesus.” Her feast day is on October 1.

Thérèse felt an early call to religious life. After overcoming many obstacles, she joined two of her older sisters in the Carmelite community of Lisieux, Normandy, at the early age of 15.

Thérèse developed a simple spirituality based on childlike trust and confidence in God. The spirituality of her “little way” was not about doing extraordinary things, but rather about doing simple things well and with extraordinary love. Her hands-on, challenging, and focused spirituality made Thérèse shine and is the reason why Pope John Paul II declared her a Doctor of the Church.

After nine years as a Carmelite, she died at the early age of 24. However, she believed that her life for God was really just beginning and promised to spend her heaven doing good on earth. Her “shower of roses” began and has become a torrent in the Church ever since.

She is best known today because of her spiritual memoir The Story of a Soul, which she wrote upon the orders of two prioresses of her monastery after they witnessed the many miracles worked at her intercession. Together with St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thérèse of Lisieux is one of the most popular saints in the history of the church. Pope Pius X called her “the greatest saint of modern times.”