

Classroom Prayer Service for Secondary  
in preparation for the veneration of  
*St Thérèse of Lisieux and Saints Lewie and Zelie*

Prayer Service preparation and required resources

- PowerPoint Slides or Worship Aid so that students may follow and respond
- Prayer Focus which includes:
  - cloth the colour of the liturgical season or white for the saints
  - crucifix (a cross with the body of Christ)
  - lectionary or bible- it is best practise that the reading is proclaimed from the liturgical book or from the bible which is also on/ near the prayer focus and is which is used to read from (a copy of the reading could discreetly be placed in the bible for ease of reading)
  - picture of St Thérèse / and her parents Saint Lewie and Saint Zelie
  - candle
  - vase with flowers/ floral arrangement – roses are most suitable on this occasion given their connection to the saint
- individual flowers/ roses/ rose petals/ picture of a rose for each student that will be scattered/ placed around the prayer focus as the response
- If the prayer service is conducted in the church, placing anything on the altar **is not appropriate**. However, a focus with a picture of the saint/s, flowers and candle may be placed to the **side or below the steps of the Sanctuary, but not on it**. The lectionary/bible should be placed on the ambo.



## *We Gather*

**Leader:** Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, known as ‘Thérèse of the Child of Jesus’ and ‘The Little Flower’ was born in France and became a Carmelite nun at the age of 15. Her fervent love for God was the most important thing in her life. Realising at a young age that she was called to love Jesus, Thérèse demonstrated this love as she went about doing the most ordinary things throughout her day. St Thérèse “the little child” as she called herself, gives us the example of how an ordinary person of great faith, making small acts of love for God and the people around her in her own ‘Little Way’ led to holiness and sainthood.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **All:** Amen.

### Opening Prayer

**All:** All: God our Father,  
you have promised your kingdom to  
to those who are willing to become like little children.  
Help us to follow the way of St Thérèse with confidence  
so that by her prayers  
we may come to know your eternal glory.  
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## *We Listen*

### A Reading from the Gospel according to Mathew (18:1-5)

*At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.*

### Reflection Lower Secondary

**Leader:** In the Gospels, we hear the disciples a number of times arguing among themselves about who is the greatest. In this passage, Jesus challenges the disciples because he says that they must become like children. He didn’t mean to become like children literally, rather, to become small like children by showing humility, to be innocent, to have an open heart that is always willing to forgive and to trust and love unconditionally. The child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven precisely because they show these qualities so often. Little children don’t place the conditions that the disciples had and that we may bring to how we love God and live our lives. St Thérèse understood that to love God she had to be as a little child, living with a childlike heart and with the trust and humility that Jesus asks of us.

## Reflection Upper Secondary and Staff

**Leader:** In this Gospel, Jesus challenges the disciples by telling them they must change and become like children. His teaching is not in the literal and physical or immature sense. Rather, Jesus is referring to us demonstrating child-like qualities such as the innocence and joy they show in their non-judgemental, unconditional love and trust for others and carefree attitude to the future. Jesus is teaching us that to love God and enter the Kingdom we require that same child-like trust in him, to accept our humanness with humility, knowing that he has already promised us the Kingdom of Heaven which is waiting for us. St Thérèse's passionate belief in God's love for her remained like that of a child's; with joy, acceptance and unwavering trust.

### *We Respond*

**Leader:** (Optional Ritual) We now each place a flower/ petals around our sacred space. The flowers/petals remind us of Thérèse's "Little way" becoming like a small child and offering small things for God. You are also invited to offer your intention to St Therese at this time.

### Prayers of Intercession

**Leader:** Lord, we have listened to your word which reminds us that to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven we should show humility and be like little children. In the same way as your child St Thérèse, we now show our faith in you to grant our prayers:

We pray for the Church, that as members of the Body of Christ we may remain strong and faithful to the Gospel in challenging times.

Lord hear us

**All:** Lord hear our prayer.

We pray for all children in the world, that they may enjoy the freedoms of joy, love, and peace and the right to food, shelter and safety.

Lord hear us

**All:** Lord hear our prayer.

We pray for all families, that through the example of Saint Zélie and Saint Louis, the faithful and loving parents of St Thérèse, they are guided by the values of love and faithfulness.

Lord hear us

**All:** Lord hear our prayer.

We pray for our community, that as we welcome the relics of St Thérèse and her parents Saints Zélie and Louis, we may find ways to show our love for God in the ordinariness of our lives.

Lord hear us

**All:** Lord hear our prayer

Closing Prayer

**All:** Pray for us St Thérèse, that like you, we may have great and innocent confidence in the loving promises of our God. Pray that we may live in union with God's plan for us, and one day see the Face of God whom you loved so deeply. Saint Therese, you were faithful to God even unto the moment of your death. Pray for us that we may be faithful to our loving God. As we go forth, may our lives bring peace and love to the world through faithful endurance in love for God our Saviour.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



