

# Saint Therese of the Child Jesus

1873 - 1897

HELL

In the famous *Story of a Soul*, Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face refers to having had a dream in which two devils were fleeing in front of her gazes. “I remember one dream that I must have had around this age (4 years) and that it was profoundly impressed in my imagination.

One night I dreamed that I went out alone to go for a walk in the garden; arriving at the first of the stairs which must be climbed in order to get there, I stopped gripped by fear. In front of me, near the pergola, was found a barrel of lime, and on this barrel two small horrendous devils were dancing with a surprising agility, regardless of having some flatirons on their feet. All of a sudden they cast their flaming eyes upon me, but at the same time, they seemed much more frightened of me, they jumped down from the barrel, and went to hide themselves in the wardrobe closet, which was in front. Seeing them so cowardly, I wanted to know what they would have done, so I approached the window. The poor little devils ran on the tables and did not know how to flee from my view. Every once in a while they approached the window, looking with an agitated air if I was still there and seeing me still they began running around again in despair.

Surely this dream has nothing extraordinary in it; however I believe that the Good God had permitted that I would remember it to show me that a soul in the state of grace has nothing to fear from devils which are only cowards, ready to run away from the glances of a little girl...”

In another passage, the Saint recounts a reflection of hers on the reality of the Inferno: “One evening, not knowing how to say to Jesus how much I loved Him and how much I desired that He was loved and glorified everywhere, I pondered with sorrow that from Hell they would never be able to receive a single act of love, so then I said to the Good God that to please Him I would have well consented to see myself immersed there, so that He would be loved eternally even in that place of blasphemy....

I knew that this could not glorify Him, because He desired only our felicity, but when one loves one feels the need to say a thousand follies.

I spoke in this way not because I did not desire Heaven, but at the time Heaven for me was only Love and like Saint Paul I felt that nothing could separate me from the divine object which had enraptured me!...”



Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, discalced Carmelite, was born in Alencon on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 1873 and died at Lisieux the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 1897. In the last days of her life she reassured her fellow sisters that her death would not have impeded her to continue to work for the salvation of souls. Her mission, born on Carmel, of collaborating with Christ for the good of her brethren, had begun in this way.

