



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! Of all the weeks of the year, this week-the last of September and beginning of October-is a special one for it's loaded with great saints. From Vincent DePaul to Jerome of Bethlehem, from

the Arch and Guardian Angels to Francis of Assisi, all these saints are remembered this week. And right in the midst of it all on October 1, we find one of the most popular saints of our day, namely Therese of Lisieux. Born just 4 years after our parish Church began, in 1874, Therese lives and speaks in our day, attracting countless souls to her Little Way. And that Way is nothing less than the Gospel, itself: doing everything with great love. And what a beautiful/powerful word that is for us today.

Therese grew up in very anxious times and she battled the demon of anxiety in her own life. Her mother died when she was a child and that loss did a real number on her and her dad. Yet, through all the anxieties, Therese grew strong and confident. And today, she stands as a strong, prophetic witness, a Doctor of the Church, teaching us how to live, how to love and how to advance on the way of peace. I share now an article entitled "*Serving God in Possible Things: A Saint's Advice on Dealing with Anxiety*". It's written by a man named Tony Rossi. I hope it is as much help to you as it is to me.

People today are filled with a lot of anxiety about a lot of different things, one of which is all the troubles going on in the world. Of course, people in the past were no different so we can find some wisdom on how to deal with this anxiety from the saints.

The following is an excerpt from a book called "***The Love That Keeps Us Sane: Living the Little Way of St. Therese of Lisieux***" by Marc Foley, O.C.D. Specifically, it's about St. Therese advising her sister Celine not to fret over things that were out of her control.

In 1880, France passed laws against religious orders. Celine was very upset that many religious communities were submitting to these laws. One day she said to Therese, "My entire being rises up in rebellion when I witness such a spirit of cowardice. I would be cut into a thousand pieces rather than belong to any of these communities or assist them in any way." Therese responded, "We should not be concerned about such matters at all. It is true that I would be of your opinion and act perhaps in the same way had I any responsibility in the matter. But I have no obligation whatsoever. Moreover, our only duty is to become united to God. Even if we were members of those communities which are being publicly criticized for their defections, we would be greatly at fault in becoming disquieted." Therese's advice to Celine is basic for maintaining sanity. It asks her to differentiate what she can do from what she can't. What could a cloistered nun in nineteenth-century France do about the political situation except pray and be faithful to her vocation? Put positively, how does God want Celine to be responsible regarding the political situation of France? Ruminating about what we would do if our life were different does nothing except churn us up inside and tempt us to neglect what we are called to. St. Teresa of Avila wrote that **"sometimes the devil gives us great desires so that we will avoid setting ourselves to the task at hand, serving our Lord in possible things, and instead be content with having desired the impossible."**

Being able to focus on the task at hand when the whole world is falling around us not only can keep us sane, but also may be a sign of deep holiness. The two are often interrelated.

Peace,

Fr. Rogers