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**DAY 12**

You Will Become a Saint

If you truly live the Little Way — if you recognize the darkness of your littleness, keep trying to grow in holiness, and trust in the Lord’s promise of mercy — then you will become a saint. It’s that simple. And if you’re very little and your trust is great, then you may even become a great saint. What?

Before we get to that, here’s something that may be even more shocking: As St. Therese was dying, because she believed what she taught, because she believed that she would be a great saint, she herself collected the clippings of her nails and invited her sister Pauline (Mother Agnes) to take them, presumably to be used as relics! Also, she encouraged the other sisters to keep the rose petals that had touched her crucifix, saying, “They will help you perform favors later on; don’t lose one of them.” What? Did the mortal sickness that devoured Therese’s poor lungs also affect her brain? No. Therese was completely sane, and her words are actually consistent with the doctrine of her Little Way.

It’s like this. According to traditional Catholic spiritual wisdom, to think you will be a great saint is basically to disqualify yourself from becoming one. After all, to think such a thing (not to mention collecting relics of yourself) is certainly pride, right? Well, not in Therese’s case. The reason has to do with her revolutionary approach to two virtues: magnanimity and humility.

The word “magnanimity” comes from the Latin words *magnus*, meaning “great,” and *animus*, meaning “soul.” So, it’s a kind of “great-souled-ness” that moves a person to aim high in the spiritual life. For instance, it was because of her extraordinary magnanimity that St. Therese once said, “I would so much like to love [God] ... to love Him more than He has ever been loved.” And such magnanimity is a good thing.

Still, having said that, traditional Catholic spiritual wisdom teaches that the virtue of humility is supposed to keep magnanimity in check. It’s supposed to pull back great desires for holiness, like reining in a horse. For instance, the virtue of humility would respond to Therese’s magnanimous statement about wanting to love God more than he’s ever been loved before with something like this: “Come on. Don’t say that. Be a little more humble and realistic. I mean, look at who you are. Frankly, you’re a very broken little girl. So why not just aim to be a little saint who simply makes it into heaven without spending time in purgatory? Isn’t that

enough for you, given how weak and little you are? Why don't you just leave great holiness to the great souls?"

That's certainly reasonable, but Therese would have none of it. She didn't believe that humility's role is to rein in the horses of her great desires for holiness. On the contrary, she saw humility as being what smacks magnanimity's horses in the rear, sending them racing to the moon! In other words, it's not in spite of humility but, rather, because of humility that she believed she could become one of the greatest of saints. And this firm belief stemmed from her insight into God's amazing mercy. Remember that God's Merciful Love is like water: It rushes to the lowest place — and Therese knew this. Therefore, she saw her humility, that is, her awareness of her littleness, as her greatest treasure. Why? Because she knew it was her littleness that attracted God's Merciful Love. And because she was so little and trusted completely in Divine Mercy, she believed that God's mercy would surely rush to the lowest place — her little soul! — and fill it to overflowing.

Wonderful. Good for St. Therese. But what does all this have to do with becoming a great saint? Well, ... everything.

Why? Because what is holiness but the Merciful Love of God poured into our hearts? (See Rom 5:5.) For Therese, that is the true and greatest holiness. Moreover, such holiness is not a human work but, rather, God's work, a work of Divine Mercy rushing down to the lowest place. And because Therese believed she was the littlest soul, she, therefore, believed she could become one of the greatest of saints. In fact, she even told the Lord, "[H]ere on earth, I cannot conceive of a greater immensity of love than the one which it has pleased You to give to me freely, without any merit of my part."

Actually, come to think of it, she did have one "merit": her trust. After all, it's trust that opens the floodgates of God's mercy, allowing it to come rushing down, down, down into little souls.

What a revolution in Catholic spiritual theology! Therese believed that she was the weakest and littlest of souls (humility) and therefore she felt confident of becoming one of the greatest of saints (magnanimity). So, her humility didn't rein in her desires for holiness. Rather, it sent them racing to the heights. Better yet, it brought her down low, deep down low into a hollow abyss that a superabundance of Divine Mercy could rush down into. That is literally the deepest holiness! And it's not pride to hope for it. Rather, it's humility. And such hope is what Therese wants every little soul to experience: "O Jesus! Why can't I tell all little souls how

unspeakable is Your condescension? I feel that if You found a soul weaker and littler than mine, which is impossible, You would be pleased to grant it still greater favors, provided it abandoned itself with total confidence to Your Infinite Mercy ... I beg You to cast Your Divine Glance upon a great number of little souls. I beg You to choose a legion of little Victims worthy of Your LOVE!”

So, in view of Therese’s prayer for little souls, I repeat: If you live the Little Way, that is, if you recognize the darkness of your littleness, keep trying to grow in holiness, and trust in the Lord’s promise of mercy, you will become a saint. It’s that simple.

And if you’re very little and your trust is great, you may even become a great saint, like St. Thérèse — just please don’t keep your nail clippings.

**Today’s Prayer:**

Come, Holy Spirit, fire of mercy.  
Though weak, broken, and sinful,  
help me to trust that I can become a great saint  
through the amazing power of Divine Mercy.

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**Volume 12**

December 6, 1917

The kiss of the Divine Will.

“Being Convinced of One’s Nothingness - Acts done outside of the Divine Will are always low, human and finite acts. Instead, acts in my Will are noble, divine, endless, and infinite as is my Will. They are similar to Mine, and I give them the same value, love, and power as my own acts; I multiply them in everyone; and I extend them to all times and to all generations. What do I care if they are small? They are still the repetition of my acts—and that is enough for Me. With these acts the soul enters into her true nothingness—not merely in humility, in which she always retains some awareness of herself. But as a nothing she enters into the All, and works with Me, in Me, and as I do—completely stripped of herself, not caring about merit or self-interest, but all intent only on making Me happy, giving Me absolute lordship over her acts, without even wanting to know what I do with them. Only one thought consumes her: to live in my Will. And she prays to Me that I may give her that honor. This is why I love her so much, and why I direct all my love and my delight toward this soul who lives in my Will. And if I love the

others, it is by virtue of the love that I have for this soul, and which descends from her—just as the Father loves other creatures by virtue of the Love that He has for Me.

“Being light, she really knows that all the good that she does is done by God Himself, working within her nothingness; and if this nothingness has not been completely emptied of all that does not belong to God, God will not go down into it to make great works worthy of Him.

“That is why not even humility can enter Our Will—only nothingness that knows itself to be nothing. All the good that enters It is only divine work—and it follows that God is the bearer of the nothing—and the nothing is the bearer of God. Indeed, in My Will every-thing changes for the soul. She is nothing but the little light which has to absorb, as much as she can, the great light of My Fiat, so that she may be fed only by light, love, goodness and divine sanctity. What an honor to be fed by God! So it is no wonder that, being the creature, the little flame, God also feeds Himself with it.”

## **Volume 14**

September 11, 1922

Jesus: “Indeed, everything that I have done has had as its primary purpose that man take possession of My Will and me of his. In Creation this was My primary purpose; in Redemption, the same. The Sacraments that I instituted, the so many graces given to My Saints were seeds and means to arrive at the possession of My Will. So, do not go against anything that I want in My Will, whether in writing, in words, or in deeds. From this alone you can know—by the so many preparations that have preceded it—that the living in My Will is the greatest and most important thing, and that it is what interests me most. And do you want to know where this seed of My Will was sown? It was sown in My Humanity. There It germinated, was born and grew. In My wounds, in My Blood one can see this seed that wants to transplant itself in the creature so that this creature may take possession of My Will and so that I may take possession of its will. In this way the work of creation may return to its beginning whence it came forth, not only by means of My humanity but also by the creature herself. They shall be few who do this; it could even be one alone. And was it not one alone who withdrew from My Will, and, so, marred and ruined My plans and destroyed the purpose of creation? So, too, one alone can embellish it and achieve its purpose. But My works never remain

isolated; and, so, I shall have the army of souls who will live in My Will, and in them I shall have creation reintegrated, all beautiful and lovely as it came forth from My hands. Otherwise, I would not have such a great interest in making known this science of My Divine Will.