

# THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

## A Way for Today

By IAIN MATTHEW

**I**S THÉRÈSE'S LITTLE WAY STILL VALID TODAY? Yes, of course. Is it valid today the way it was then, for the people who first read her a hundred years ago? Perhaps not. Things have moved on; if her spirituality is to endure, it must now show how versatile it can be.

John Dalrymple makes the point, in discussing the doctrine of 'duties of state [of life]', that holiness is open to all who fulfil their duty out of love: farmers, as faithful farmers; professors, as faithful professors. Thérèse's little way, of trust and love in whatever life-setting, was a huge inspiration here, and helped enormous numbers of people to find Christian meaning in unspectacular lives. Such a vision was and is profoundly valid; but, says Dalrymple, it does not go far enough. It indeed suited 'the recusant catholics of England debarred from positions in society and the Irish immigrant catholics exiled in an unwelcoming Britain'.<sup>1</sup> But it went with a regime where 'states' were a given. Yet one's state may be more humanly imposed than divinely given. Structures may need unlocking, not just enduring. The little way of love may have to loosen the screws on the *status quo*. In fact, Dalrymple says, Thérèse did precisely that. Her love made her innovative, radical. Her discovery of mercy was revolutionary for her community and deeply transforming for the Church.

A century ago, Thérèse spoke to contemporary need with breathtaking vitality. What is her word for today? The pages which follow aim to raise some questions which draw the best from Thérèse for our own time.

To highlight the contrast between the two eras, we recall her original popularity.

### *A welcome voice*

It is undeniable that Thérèse spoke powerfully to her contemporaries. As tuberculosis ate into her, she became convinced that her perception of the gospel would reach and change people. Conversations between Thérèse and her sister Pauline (Mother Agnès) show this sense of mission growing. The invalid's horizons were vast: she saw in

her manuscript something 'for all tastes' ('except for those in extraordinary ways'). Its publication would be 'the work of God, a very important work'.<sup>2</sup> Posthumously in 1898, Pauline published two thousand copies of her sister's text, amply edited.<sup>3</sup>

Unsuspectingly, the Martin family had touched fire to a tinder-box. Months after publication, Sister Marie of the Eucharist wrote with astonishment that everyone was talking about it. 'Priests are comparing her [Thérèse] to St Teresa and say she has opened up a whole new way to souls, the way of love. They are all enthusiastic, not only around us, but throughout France.'<sup>4</sup> Something seemed to have taken off, with a life of its own.

Pauline once asked Thérèse how she had come by such unchangeable peace. Her sister had answered, 'I forgot self, and I was careful to seek myself in nothing'.<sup>5</sup> In the years after her death, the amnesia was reversed: by 1915 around a million copies of her story had been sold together with some thirty million pictures. This was not the manipulation of the market by a few scheming agents. Pauline was to say, 'I could never have imagined even the smallest part of this universal conflagration when I timidly sent out the first spark in 1898'.<sup>6</sup> If Thérèse was popular it was because she spoke to people. Her break-neck journey to canonization in 1925 testifies to that. She was answering a need, and her timing was perfect.

### *Perfect timing*

In her autobiography Thérèse conveys how, as a young woman, she began to flourish after harrowing years of scrupulosity. 'God was able in a very short time to extricate me from the very narrow circle in which I was turning without knowing how to come out.'<sup>7</sup> The words could sum up the liberation Thérèse worked for the Catholicism of her day. Ultramontanism, Jansenism, and the baroque had coalesced into a rare mix. Liberal opponents dubbed French Catholics *émigrés de l'intérieur*, exiles at home, living in increasingly tiny circles, with rules for an increasingly minority game.<sup>8</sup>

Fear, extremism, exaltation of the spectacular, downgrading of the ordinary, all could thrive in such a climate. Thérèse's own family was free from the worst excesses. Still, her writings provide telling instances of fare currently on offer. These are four.

'I do not understand souls who fear a Friend so tender.'<sup>9</sup> So Thérèse answers Père Roulland, a missionary in China. She is picking up on something of a throwaway remark in Roulland's letter. Presumably she thought the matter important. She understood there *were* people whose relationship with God was crippled by just this kind of fear.

I was thinking about the souls who offer themselves as victims of God's Justice in order to turn away the punishments reserved to sinners, drawing them upon themselves. This offering seemed great and very generous to me, but I was far from feeling attracted to making it.<sup>10</sup>

Presumably there *were* people so attracted. A deceased sister from the Carmel of Luçon had made just such an offering, crying in her death agony, 'I am bearing the rigour of divine justice'.<sup>11</sup>

Recounting her pilgrimage to Rome (1887), Thérèse humorously describes the earnestness of Italian officialdom:

I still cannot understand why women are so easily excommunicated in Italy, for every minute someone was saying: 'Don't enter here! Don't enter there, you will be excommunicated!'<sup>12</sup>

A gifted mimic, Thérèse must have got mileage out of such scenes in later years. But the story tells us something too about the nineteenth-century ecclesiastical mindset.

Closest to home, and most insidiously, there is Thérèse's scrupulosity. When she was twelve and thirteen, her mind was a torture-chamber:

It was during my retreat for the second Communion that I was assailed by the terrible sickness of scruples. One would have to pass through this martyrdom to understand it well, and for me to express what I suffered for *a year and a half* would be impossible.<sup>13</sup>

The retreat notes she took at the time make poignant reading. From Abbé Domin's conferences for first communion Thérèse's notes concern judgement, the suddenness of death, hell (the eleven-year-old scribbled, 'me, I'm preparing myself well, I hope to go to heaven'); and sacrilegious communion ('he told us things that made me very afraid'). Her notes from the second retreat, a year later, included these words for the instruction on mortal sin:

What Monsieur l'Abbé told us was very frightening. He spoke to us about mortal sin. He painted for us a picture of the condition of the soul in sin in death [*sic*] and how greatly God hates such a soul . . .<sup>14</sup>

Instances like these tell us something about Catholic Europe a century ago: at least one brand of it appears anxious, morose, extremist, and prone to make many people feel that they were non-starters. Thérèse's 'way' spoke to that.

*Thérèse's word for her day*

Thérèse's notes from Abbé Domin's retreats show some of what she was hearing in relation to the eucharist. Against such a backdrop, her own perspective at first communion is astounding:

Ah! how sweet was that first kiss of Jesus! It was a kiss of *love*; I *felt* that *I was loved*, and I said: 'I love You, and I give myself to You forever!' There were no demands made, no struggles, no sacrifices; for a long time now Jesus and poor little Thérèse *looked at* and understood each other. That day, it was no longer simply a *look*, it was a fusion

...<sup>15</sup>

Though describing her sentiments as a girl, the mature Thérèse is writing here. She speaks as one who has perceived the heart of God, and risked everything on that perception.

Thérèse's 'little way' hangs on such an understanding of God. She describes her discovery of the way twice in her autobiography (manuscripts B and C). The discovery rested on key elements: great desires, honesty about herself, and faith in God's power to create something new.

As we read her account, what stands out is her pioneering courage. Her great desires demanded a choice: either to go with them, into unknown waters, or to stay on the familiar, if barren, mainland. She could not straddle boat and shore indefinitely. Some felt the shore was safer: one Jesuit preacher had advised her, 'Moderate your desires', when Thérèse the novice had expressed her wish to love God as much as St Teresa had done!<sup>16</sup>

Thérèse's description in manuscript C of the discovery of her way starts with a refusal to renege on her hopes:

Instead of becoming discouraged, I said to myself: God cannot inspire unrealizable desires. I can, then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness. It is impossible for me to grow up, and so I must bear with myself such as I am with all my imperfections. But I want to seek out a means of going to heaven by a little way, a way that is very straight, very short, and totally new.

This is the only occurrence of the phrase 'little way' in Thérèse's writings. She stresses its newness: 'totally new', *une petite voie toute nouvelle*.<sup>17</sup> That is a bold project; evidence of how stale the 'ways' currently on offer appeared to her, and of how convinced she was of the inventiveness of Christ. She goes on:

We are living now in an age of inventions . . . I wanted to find an elevator which would raise me to Jesus, for I am too small to climb the rough stairway of perfection. I searched, then, in the Scriptures for some sign of this elevator, the object of my desires, and I read these words coming from the mouth of Eternal Wisdom: 'Whoever is a LITTLE ONE, let him come to me'. [Prov 9.4] . . . The elevator which must raise me to heaven is your arms, O Jesus.<sup>18</sup>

The account of the little way in manuscript B focuses on love. Thérèse encourages us to invest the smallest task with love. This would achieve little if holiness had to be bought. But if God lavishes his love freely, no detail is too tiny to be an expression of gratitude:

The science of Love, ah, yes, this word resounds sweetly in the ear of my soul, . . . this love is the only good I ambition. Jesus deigned to show me the road that leads to this Divine Furnace, and this road is the *surrender* [*l'abandon*] of a little child who sleeps without fear in its Father's arms. . . . Jesus does not demand great actions from us but simply *surrender* and *gratitude* . . .<sup>19</sup>

This was Thérèse's word for her day. She was telling millions of disenfranchised people that they too were included; that holiness and ordinariness can run together. 'Her life shows that emotional handicaps, neurosis, catastrophic heredity, various diseases, nothing can separate us from merciful love.'<sup>20</sup> She was saying that your hunger for God is not an illusion, God means to fill you, holiness is his gift, given to the poor.

For a Catholic world heaving under the weight of its own anxiety, this spelt resurrection; her way brought joy, relief, fresh air.

But we have, presumably, moved on. Enough air has surely blown through this century to clear out residual Jansenist odours. Does Thérèse have nothing else to say?

### *The 'little way' today*

One of Thérèse's qualities is resilience, refusal to let circumstances defeat her. Where situations looked hopeless, she would devote extra energy till they produced life. Her pages on community life are evidence of this: incorrigible old Sister St Pierre warned to Thérèse because, over and above all the work the young sister did for her, she would end with a charming smile given *gratis*.<sup>21</sup> This is typical of Thérèse: she does not wait, chip on shoulder, for life to be good to her. She wrestles with life till it yields fruit.

Our dialogue with Thérèse must follow the same lines. If the message that once prompted thirty million pictures and a breathless curia has now become accepted doctrine, she may yet have unsuspected answers to questions she is waiting to be asked.

Where, then, does Thérèse cross our story today? Among the points of contact are these: her challenge is personal; her message is irreplaceable; her horizons are vast; and she witnesses to hope in an age prone to panic.

### *A personal challenge*

We have, presumably, moved on. Or have we? Fear, minimalism, anxious withdrawal are not the preserve of bourgeois Catholicism of the last century.

In terms of religious fashion, 'fear' and 'justice' language may well be out. But Thérèse is touching something deeper than religious mood-swings. Her little way is not just an alternative. For her it was a personal discovery which left no alternative. She sliced deep into life to find it, and her commitment to truth ensured that she reached bedrock. Pauline recalls her saying,

I've never acted like Pilate, who refused to listen to the truth. I've always said to God: O my God, I really want to listen to You; I beg You to answer me when I say humbly: What is truth? Make me see things as they really are . . .<sup>22</sup>

Thérèse proposes a journey which no one can make for another. Our century-old familiarity with her can put us at a disadvantage: we risk imagining that we know what she is talking about. In fact her passage from self to surrender cannot become part of a mere heritage. She leads us to a threshold in life that each individual must cross personally.

The diffusion of Thérèse's authentic texts has equipped us to trace the development in her spirituality. Especially helpful are her letters, spanning some twenty years. Her journey took her from the conquest of love, to surrender to love, to the vocation of love. Significantly, the word 'surrender', *l'abandon*, does not appear in her writings till 1893.<sup>23</sup> In 1890 she had stated: 'I know no other means of reaching perfection but love'. Six years and a great deal of self-knowledge later, she was to write: 'It is confidence, and nothing but confidence, that must lead us to love'.<sup>24</sup>

Such development shows that Thérèse did not simply arrive at her doctrine. She struggled and grew through to it at great personal cost. Her growth is easy to report, but the personal revolution it involved

cannot be passed on cheaply or by mere osmosis. Her legacy for today is not merely a doctrine but the pattern of a pilgrimage, of committing one's existence. No one can discover love if they want to keep straddling boat and shore.

That is a first word for us from Thérèse. No amount of familiarity with her language supplants the personal challenge she puts to each Christian today. She invites us not to rehearse, but to weigh and appropriate.

*No other way*

The little way is set before each person; and it is the only way for each person. That is a second emphasis to highlight. A century ago, she offered Christian meaning to multitudes of people who felt excluded from holiness by the ordinariness of their lives. Her message was taken like this: 'There has been a path for the great; I announce now a path for the ordinary'. Thérèse sometimes puts it in those terms: great saints – but now a new way, for little saints; mighty eagles, but now fledglings too.<sup>25</sup>

However, her deeper intuition is that her way is indispensable for all: not two ways, great and little. There is only one way, and it is little. Only loving surrender gives access to the heart of God: 'Jesus was pleased to show me the only way [*l'unique chemin*] which leads to this Divine furnace, this way is the *surrender* of a little child'.<sup>26</sup> And in this personal discovery she believes she has touched something universal: 'I feel that if You found a soul weaker than mine, . . . you would be pleased to grant it still greater favours, provided it abandoned itself with total confidence to Your Infinite Mercy'.<sup>27</sup>

Again, she seems to accord her way of littleness the same pre-eminence that Scripture has over other books. That is the implication of her answer to Père Roulland: sooner or later, he will have to travel the road she is travelling.

I close the learned book that is breaking my head and drying up my heart, and I take up Holy Scripture. Then all seems luminous to me; . . . I rejoice at being little since children alone and those who resemble them will be admitted to the heavenly banquet.<sup>28</sup>

'Children alone . . .' The 'great' saints, mystically favoured or ascetically extreme, were saints only in so far as they were little: in so far as they let themselves be carried across the threshold, from self to surrender. If some ended up with great achievements, that is because they said 'yes' to the little at each moment with great freedom. If they

went at all, they went by a way of 'confidence and love', of 'surrender and gratitude'.

That is a second emphasis important for us today: in a world of macro-projects and super-heroes, it is good to be reminded that Jesus healed the universe by love, hidden in the littleness of the cross. Thérèse proposes a gospel for which there is no substitute.

### *The radiance of Christ*

A third gift of Thérèse is radiance. She restores radiance to the faded and familiar. A century ago the suspicion was that holiness, being great, was not for the many. Today the malaise has shifted: we know holiness is for all, but is it great? Thérèse can help us here: at the centre of the little way there is indeed a still point of trust, but it is held in place by huge cords of hope and wonder.

Firstly, hope. The autobiography describes how as a child Thérèse had been inspired by heroines like Joan of Arc; Thérèse too felt called to greatness. How ridiculous, given her weakness! Yet instead of disowning her desires, she redirects them at the source, 'Him who is Virtue and Holiness'.<sup>29</sup>

The pattern recurs. 'Instead of becoming discouraged, I said to myself: God cannot inspire unrealizable desires . . .'<sup>30</sup> She holds on to her hopes till reality splits its seal and yields new possibilities. For instance, she senses the call to love like Jesus, knows she cannot herself, but finds a new solution: you, Jesus, must do the loving in me.<sup>31</sup> She yearns to live out all kinds of vocations, knows she cannot, but discovers love as the vocation that holds them all.<sup>32</sup> Ultimately, she knows humanity's divine destiny, knows too its sin, but calls her brothers and sisters to claim with boundless trust God's infinite mercy.<sup>33</sup> Hope unrestrained keeps expanding, till she experiences 'desires that are *greater* than the universe'.<sup>34</sup>

That is one side to the greatness of the little way: it is powered by expectation. It is held on the other side by wonder at God's love.

Thérèse has a resurrection faith. Her Christ is not exhausted. He does not wait impassively, but acts, anticipates, initiates, fills. In searching for a way in spite of her powerlessness, she found the answer in Jesus: he would lift her, if she relied on him. She can trust him, because she knows what he is like. This perception of his character underlies her offering to merciful love (June 1895):

In order to live in one single act of perfect love, I OFFER MYSELF AS A VICTIM OF HOLOCAUST TO YOUR MERCIFUL LOVE, asking You to consume me incessantly, allowing the waves of *infinite tenderness* shut up within You to overflow into my soul . . .<sup>35</sup>

That tells us something about Christ. His love ‘overflows’, ‘consumes’. Her Christ is not just there, but radiates.

The same perception concludes manuscript B. Thérèse expounds for her sister Marie her vocation as love, and her plan to show love in ‘all the smallest things’.<sup>36</sup> But the manuscript is really a love-song addressed to Jesus (‘since this makes it easier for me to express my thoughts’).<sup>37</sup> As the dialogue progresses, Thérèse’s wonder expands into the most daring praise:

O Jesus, allow me in my boundless gratitude to say to you that Your *love reaches unto folly*. In the presence of this folly, how can You not desire that my heart leap toward You? How can my confidence, then, have any limits?<sup>38</sup>

On reading the manuscript, Marie knew she was touching fire. ‘I wanted to cry when I read those lines . . . Do you want me to tell you? Well, you are possessed by God . . . absolutely possessed.’<sup>39</sup> Thérèse wrote back, trying to convince her sister that the way she was walking was for her too. Again, it is Christ’s radiance that gives Thérèse confidence, his love that retrieves and transforms:

Let us love our littleness, let us love to feel nothing, then we shall be poor in spirit, and Jesus will come to look for us, and *however far* we may be, He will transform us in flames of love . . .<sup>40</sup>

The expressions ‘I feel it’ and ‘I know’ often accompany Thérèse’s statements of faith in Christ’s character. ‘Yes, I feel it, Jesus wills to give us the same graces’; ‘I know how much He loves the prodigal child who returns to Him.’<sup>41</sup> Thérèse speaks with the authority of one who knows. She has journeyed into the heart of God, and found the vision wonderful. Her littleness belongs in that context.

In short, Thérèse’s little way is not a mildly pathetic way. It is set against vast horizons, of hope and wonder. Few have dared to widen their vision so far. In our tired, *déjà-vu* world, Thérèse offers the gift of radiance.

### *Courage to believe*

A fourth gift Thérèse offers is courage to keep believing.

She committed her whole self to the God she had perceived. At the end of her life, that perception began to fog over. Her physical condition had its part to play (the experience began after her first coughing up of blood, Easter 1896); but it was her relationship with

God that was at stake. She heard mocking voices, and feared blasphemy:

Jesus [. . .] permitted my soul to be invaded by the thickest darkness, and that the thought of heaven, up till then so sweet to me, be no longer anything but the cause of struggle and torment . . . One would have to travel through this dark tunnel to understand its darkness.<sup>42</sup>

That was the issue: would God fill her after death, or would death bring only 'the night of nothingness'?<sup>43</sup> Céline later put it laconically:

She suffered the trial of a frightful temptation against the faith, a temptation which assailed her two years before she died and only ended with her death. These attacks had to do especially with the existence of heaven. She did not talk about it to anyone, for fear of communicating her inexpressible torment to others.<sup>44</sup>

In this, Thérèse found herself a sister at table with unbelievers, in whose name she prayed. Her response was to will belief. She confides in her manuscript that the poems she composed at this time, apparently so heaven-filled, were in fact singing what she wanted, what she willed to believe, '*ce que je veux croire*'.<sup>45</sup> Faith could hardly be lived in more concentrated form. There are telling relics of her struggle: on the lintel of the door of her cell she carved with a sharp instrument the words, *Jésus est mon unique amour*;<sup>46</sup> and taking the advice to carry a copy of the creed, she wrote the creed out in her blood.<sup>47</sup>

It is possible for a once life-giving vision to become a hazy memory. This can happen because other attractions have taken its place; but also because the perception we once had seems too good to be true. Too much has battered it, too many voices mock it. Hope can take only so much before it crumples into a tinier, if safer world.

A hundred years ago people were swept up in the sunshine of Thérèse's message. Thirty years ago, springtime happened for the Catholic Church. At some time in our personal story, a fresh understanding may have flung wide life's doors for us. The experience can be transforming, conspiring to undermine what we have previously come to know. Growth will depend, not on some new formula, but on our holding on to what we have perceived when the load-tests seem unbearable.

Thérèse of Lisieux is a sister in hope. She is capable of giving courage to people who are verging on letting go, on settling for less than what they once perceived. She let the gospel open her vision by its

radiance. When lights she had trusted seemed to go out, she refused to disown them. She had come to know Jesus' heart, and would not let panic overwhelm her. So she sang what she willed to believe. Thérèse's companionship is a gift to the Church today. If mocking voices tell us it was always too good to be true, Thérèse encourages us not to panic, that this is the hour of faith.

The little way is still valid – but in new, different ways, real for our time. Thérèse invites us to dialogue, search, to test her. She is eager to answer questions we have not yet dared to conceive.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> John Dalrymple, *Costing not less than everything* (London: DLT, 1975), p 113, see pp 112–114.
- <sup>2</sup> *St Thérèse of Lisieux: her last conversations*, trans John Clarke OCD (Washington: ICS, 1977; hereafter *Last conversations*), p 143 (9.8.2), p 126 (1.6.2); see p 113 (27.7.6). (We use Pauline's text notwithstanding current debate.)
- <sup>3</sup> See Guy Gaucher, *The spiritual journey of St Thérèse of Lisieux* (London: DLT, 1987), p 196.
- <sup>4</sup> Quoted in Guy Gaucher, *op. cit.*, p 209.
- <sup>5</sup> *Last conversations*, p 129 (3.8.1); see St Thérèse of Lisieux, *Story of a soul*, trans John Clarke OCD (Washington: ICS, 1996), Manuscript A, p 99.
- <sup>6</sup> Quoted in Guy Gaucher, *op. cit.*, p 209. Gaucher's work has provided many of the details in these paragraphs.
- <sup>7</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript A, p 101.
- <sup>8</sup> See Ida Görres, *The hidden face* (London: Burns & Oates, 1959), pp 23–30; Leopold Glueckert, 'The world of Thérèse: France, Church and State in the late nineteenth century' in John Sullivan OCD (ed), *Carmelite studies: experiencing St Thérèse today* (Washington: ICS, 1990), pp 10–27.
- <sup>9</sup> St Thérèse of Lisieux, *Letters*, trans John Clarke OCD (Washington: ICS, 1982, 1988), vol 2, LT 226, p 1093; see LT 175, p 1063.
- <sup>10</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript A, p 180.
- <sup>11</sup> Thérèse de Lisieux, *Oeuvres complètes* (Cerf DDB), notes p 1446, translation mine.
- <sup>12</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript A, p 140.
- <sup>13</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript A, p 84; the retreat was 17–21 May 1885.
- <sup>14</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, 'Écrits divers', pp 1199–1201.
- <sup>15</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript A, p 77.
- <sup>16</sup> Guy Gaucher, *op. cit.*, p 107.
- <sup>17</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, Manuscript C, p 236, see p 1282 note 17.
- <sup>18</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, pp 207–208.
- <sup>19</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, pp 187–188.
- <sup>20</sup> Guy Gaucher, *op. cit.*, pp 215–216.
- <sup>21</sup> See *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, p 248.
- <sup>22</sup> *Last conversations*, p 105 (21.7.4).
- <sup>23</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, LT 142, p 465; see p 1317 note 6. On this see Conrad de Meester, 'The discovery and implementation of the "little way"', lecture at St Thérèse Conference, Aylesford, 9–13 September 1996.
- <sup>24</sup> *Letters* vol 1, LT 109, p 641; vol 2, LT 197, p 1000. On this and the development theme, see Conrad de Meester, *With empty hands: the message of Thérèse of Lisieux* (St Paul Publications, Homebush NSW), especially pp 29, 46–50.
- <sup>25</sup> See *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, pp 197–200.
- <sup>26</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, p 220, translation mine.

- <sup>27</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, p 200.
- <sup>28</sup> *Letters* vol 2, LT 226, p 1094.
- <sup>29</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript A, p 72.
- <sup>30</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, p 207.
- <sup>31</sup> See *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, pp 220–221.
- <sup>32</sup> See *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, pp 192–194.
- <sup>33</sup> See *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, pp 258–259; cf Manuscript A, p 99.
- <sup>34</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, p 193.
- <sup>35</sup> *Story of a soul*, Appendix: ‘Act of oblation to merciful love’, p 277.
- <sup>36</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, p 196.
- <sup>37</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, p 189.
- <sup>38</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript B, p 200.
- <sup>39</sup> *Letters* vol 2, LT 170, p 997.
- <sup>40</sup> *Letters* vol 2, LT 197, pp 999–1000.
- <sup>41</sup> *Letters* vol 2, LT 197, p 1000; *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, p 259.
- <sup>42</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, pp 211–212.
- <sup>43</sup> *Story of a soul*, Manuscript C, p 213.
- <sup>44</sup> Apostolic Process, quoted in Guy Gaucher, *La Passion de Thérèse de Lisieux* (Cerf DDB, 1972), p 110, translation mine; ET (St Paul Publications, Homebush, 1989), p 117, note m; Gaucher qualifies Céline’s statement that Thérèse told no one.
- <sup>45</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, Manuscript C, p 244; see ET, p 214, ‘want to believe’; Ronald Knox, *Autobiography of a saint* (Collins Fontana, 1975), p 202, translates: ‘what I’m determined to believe’.
- <sup>46</sup> ‘Jesus is my only Love’, *Oeuvres complètes*, p 1276 note 35; see Pierre Descouvemont, Helmuth Nils Loose, *Thérèse and Lisieux* (Novalis/Eerdmans/Veritas, Dublin, 1996), p 261 relate the graffito to the period of the night of faith.
- <sup>47</sup> See Pierre Descouvemont, Helmuth Nils Loose, *op. cit.*, p 259.