

different members... I continued my reading and this sentence consoled me: *'Yet strive after THE BETTER GIFTS, and I point out to you a yet more excellent way'* (1 Cor 12:31, 13:1). And the Apostle explains how all *the most PERFECT gifts* are nothing without *LOVE*. That *Charity is the EXCELLENT WAY* that leads most surely to God. I finally had rest.

Charity gave me the key to my *vocation*. I understood that if the Church had a body composed of different members, the most necessary and most noble of all could not be lacking to it, and so I understood that the Church *had a Heart and that this Heart was BURNING WITH LOVE*. I understood it was *Love alone* that made the Church's members act, that if *Love* ever became extinct, apostles would not preach the Gospel and martyrs would not shed their blood. I understood that *LOVE COMPRISED ALL VOCATIONS, THAT LOVE WAS EVERYTHING, THAT IT EMBRACED ALL TIMES AND PLACES... IN A WORD, THAT IT WAS ETERNAL!*

Then, in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: O Jesus, my Love... my *vocation*, at last I have found it...

MY VOCATION IS LOVE!

Yes, I have found my place in the Church and it is You, O my God, who have given me this place; in the heart of the Church, my Mother, I shall be *Love*. Thus I shall be everything, and thus my dream will be realized..." *Story of a Soul*



God continues to call young women who receive the breathtaking call like St. Thérèse to be "Love in the Heart of the Church", embracing all times and places.

To find out more about the Carmelite vocation, please contact:

Carmelite Monastery of St. Joseph
Upper Kilmacud Road
Stillorgan

Co. Dublin

Website: www.kilmacudcarmel.ie

Email: vocations@kilmacudcarmel.ie

My Vocation is Love



*Thoughts on the
Carmelite Vocation
by*

*St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus
and the Holy Face*

“Opening the Holy Gospels my eyes fell upon these words: ‘*And going up a mountain, he called to him men of his own choosing, and they came to him*’ (Mk 3:13). This is the mystery of my vocation, my whole life, and especially the mystery of the privileges Jesus showered upon my soul. He does not call those who are worthy but those whom He pleases.



I felt that Carmel was the desert where God wanted me to go to hide myself. I felt this with so much force that there wasn't the least doubt in my heart; it was not the dream of a child led astray but the certitude of a divine call.

Before ‘*resting in the shadow of him whom I desired*’ (Songs 2:3), I was to pass through many trials, but the divine call was so strong that had I been forced to pass through flames, I would have done it out of love for Jesus.

How beautiful is the vocation which has as its aim the preservation of the salt destined for souls! This is Carmel's vocation since the sole purpose of our prayers and sacrifices is to be the apostle of apostles. We are to pray for them while they are preaching to souls through their words and especially their example.

To be Your *Spouse*, to be a *Carmelite*, and by my union with You to be the *Mother* of souls, should not this suffice me? And yet, it is not so. No doubt, these three privileges sum up my true *vocation*: *Carmelite, Spouse, Mother*, and yet I feel within me other *vocations*. I feel the *vocation* of the WARRIOR, THE PRIEST, THE APOSTLE, THE DOCTOR, THE MARTYR...

O Jesus, my Love, my Life, how can I combine these contrasts? How can I realise the desires of my poor *little soul*? Ah! In spite of my littleness, I would like to enlighten souls as did the *Prophets* and the *Doctors*. I have the *vocation of the Apostle*. I would like to travel over the whole earth to preach Your Name, and to plant Your glorious Cross ... But *O my*

Beloved, one mission alone would not be sufficient for me, I would want to preach the Gospel on all the five continents simultaneously and even to the most remote isles. I would be a missionary, not for a few years only, but from the beginning of creation until the consummation of the ages. But above all, O my Beloved Saviour, I would shed my blood for You, even to the very last drop.

During my meditation, my desires caused me a veritable martyrdom, and I opened the Epistles of St. Paul to find some kind of answer. Chapters 12 and 13 of the First Epistle to the Corinthians fell under my eyes. I read there, in the first of these chapters, that *all* cannot be apostles, prophets, doctors, etc... That the Church is composed of

