

## **St. John Berchman School**

**October 1, 2019**

**We live in difficult times. We are concerned about the environment. There is so much violence. Our lives are impacted by bullying, being laughed at or pushed aside by others. This is not how God intended us to live. We need to make changes in our lives – all of us. We need models whom we can follow.**

**St. Therese of Lisieux is a much loved role model. She died young. She was only 24 years old. But she is remembered as a wonderful saint. She is often affectionately called the Little Flower. She lived a simple life in a convent, very sick for the last few years of her life. But she is the patron of missionaries throughout the world! She prayed for the missions daily. She was a missionary disciple of Jesus. Why do I say that? Because she knew the importance of love in her daily life.**

**This is not the superficial “love” of popular culture, all hugs and kisses and superficial sharings. To love someone truly to look out for that person’s total well-being, to love one another as Jesus has loved us. It requires going out of ourselves, our own needs and desires. “God is love. . . Whoever is without love does not know God.”**

How are we to love one another? In significant ways, at times. Most of the time, in little ways. The Little Flower has given us the example of following the Little Way – each in accord with our own vocation in life and our gifts. Each of us is different to some degree, and God has created that diversity in God’s own image and likeness.

St. Therese once said: “I understand that every flower created by [God] is beautiful, that the brilliance of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not lessen the perfume of the violet or the sweet simplicity of the daisy. . . if all the lowly flowers wished to be roses, nature would no longer be painted with lovely hues. And so it is in the world of souls, Our Lord’s living garden!” We are called to be a garden of flowers – reflecting God’s love to everyone we encounter. The roses today remind us of this wisdom – and challenge!

Love involves sacrifice. Sometimes great sacrifice – more often simple ones. St. Therese tells us “Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love.”

My dear friends, together we can change the world with love. We can be saints like the Little Flower!! Yes, we can!!