Saint Therese of Lisieux

Small actions offered with great love

Ages about 7-11 | Video 4:30 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth God's grace helps us offer ordinary actions with trust and love.

Learning goals Recall Therese's Little Way and life in Carmel; distinguish loving action from seeking attention; choose one small, concrete kindness.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask whether a small action can matter to someone. Give an example of quietly listening or helping when no one is keeping score.

Watch and notice

Notice Therese's loving family, desire to enter Carmel, Joan of Arc play, and discovery that little acts can express deep love.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What is Therese's Little Way?
Trusting God's love and offering ordinary acts with love. It is not a contest to collect the most good deeds.

2. Did her wish to be heroic disappear?
Her love found expression in everyday faithfulness. The Joan of Arc play shows a desire to love bravely, without requiring battlefield adventures.

3. Can sadness and holiness exist together?
Yes. Therese knew grief and difficulty. We can tell God how we feel and seek care from trusted people.

4. What small kindness could you offer?
Listen patiently, include a child, or help with an agreed task. Name someone it could help and do it with love.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Draw ordinary life in Carmel and one specific kindness; a helper may label the picture.

Read & Write Explain loving intention, recall a story detail, and choose a small action.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: draw one petal and dictate a simple loving action.

Ages 9-11: compare seeking praise with doing an unnoticed task out of love.

Petals of ordinary love | Optional 4 minutes

Draw a flower with three petals. On each write or draw a small loving action: listen, include, or help. Choose one to practice today, without comparing your flower with anyone else's.

Look for understanding Look for trust and concrete care rather than earning God's love. God loves us first; our kindness is a response to that gift.

Closing prayer Jesus, I trust your love. Help me offer small actions with a generous heart and ask for help when I am sad. Saint Therese, pray for us. Amen.

At home Choose one ordinary family task with an adult. Offer it lovingly and thank someone for an unnoticed kindness.

Handout answer notes Little Way: trust and ordinary acts with love, not earning God's love. Play: heroic desire expressed in faithful life. Accept safe, specific acts of care.

Teach with care

Preview the death of Therese's mother and her later illness and death. Welcome sadness and questions; feeling grief does not make someone less holy. The dialogue and childhood scenes are a retelling. Therese entered Carmel at fifteen and died at twenty-four. Her promise of roses is devotional imagery for helping others through intercession, not a guarantee of flowers or an instruction to seek signs. Illness and suffering are not things children should cause or seek.

Words to explain Carmel: a religious community devoted to prayer. Little Way: Therese's way of trusting God and loving through ordinary life. Grace: God's freely given help.

Sources for the leader

Story source: Servus Dei video and English transcript

Vatican teaching: Benedict XVI: Saint Therese, April 6, 2011