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The “Other Face” Of St. Therese of Lisieux: I Choose All

Review Author: Sister Mary James Wilson, R.G.S.

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is nothing here of the profound lines of thought for which Teilhard is now famous. For those who admire Teilhard, however, certain overtones of intense sensitivity, unaffected gravity, and smiling objectivity, can be detected.

BROTHER D. GABRIEL, F.S.C.

THE "OTHER FACE" OF ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX

I CHOOSE ALL. A Study of St. Therese of Lisieux and her Spiritual Doctrine. By Sister Teresa Margaret, D.C. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1964. 252 pp.

"Another study of St. Therese of Lisieux and her spiritual doctrine?"—one might be tempted to ask on taking up *I Choose All*, a book which purports to be just that in its subtitle. But if one can overcome that initial reaction and choose to read *I Choose All*, one will be rewarded by a very readable and refreshing slant on the Little Flower's spirituality, free from the oversentimentalism so often accorded her teachings as well as from the "psychological" treatment that has been given her during the past few years.

Written by Sr. Teresa Margaret, D.C., a Carmelite from Bridell, Wales, the book presents St. Therese in the light of the Gospels and of the papal documents concerning her virtues and mission, and against a background of Carmelite tradition, particularly the teaching of St. John of the Cross. The author has gone into a good deal of study in its preparation but happily has not succumbed to the temptation of producing a highly technical treatise. Instead, *I Choose All* is appealing and readable; even the four or more subheads under each chapter title do not distract as all are quite aptly chosen and the footnotes are unobtrusive.

In this study of Therese's spiritual doctrine and universal mission, Sr. Teresa Margaret presents the saint's "other face"—the Little Flower's little way washed clean of the sugary sentimentalism that has been wrapped round it by those who have misunderstood the idea of spiritual childhood and other aspects of Therese's teaching and devotions. In the chapter, "The Blessedness of Being Little," the author asserts, "Spiritual childhood... does not imply mental or spiritual immaturity.... The quality of being child-like is the result of development, and development in the right direction; it is something one has become." And this Therese exemplified to an eminent degree—in the short span of her life, she became a mature woman and a saint, one who "discovered" and offers to all of us a simple way of

going to God. This way that she calls "little" is no other than the way of the Gospels proclaimed by Him Who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

The book, however, does not attempt to make an exhaustive study of The Little Way but to show how Therese's method is applicable to all—active or contemplative religious, lay men or women in the world, for no one is exempted from practising the virtues of spiritual childhood, from imitating the virtues of Christ Himself." As Pope Pius XII declared in a letter to the Carmel of Lisieux, August 7, 1947: "There are many who imagine that this is a special way, reserved for the innocent souls... but that is not suited to people of mature years who need prudence on account of their greater responsibilities. Such people forget that it was Our Lord Himself who recommended this way to all God's children, even to those, who, like the apostles whom He was training, hold the highest responsibilities: that of the care of souls. It is also too often forgotten that in order to see clearly amid the complex questions that torture humanity today, one requires, together with prudence, that outstanding simplicity which wisdom brings and which St. Therese manifest in so irresistible a manner that she thereby draws all hearts to her."

An interesting chapter on the influence of St. John of the Cross on the Saint of Lisieux points out a number of their parallel teachings, and Therese's words show how deep and fundamental was her affinity to the Mystical Doctor.

All told, the book presents solid spirituality for all and will make excellent spiritual reading for religious and lay folk alike.

SISTER MARY JAMES WILSON, R. G. S.

TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING AND IMPROVING RURAL COMMUNITIES

HEALTH PRACTICES IN A RURAL COMMUNITY. By Teodora V. Tigla. Diliman, Q.C.: Community Development Research Council, University of the Philippines, 1964. xi, 232 pp.

The purpose of this study was to determine the changes in certain health practices of the people after a ten-year period of intensive public health program; identify the factors related to the changes; and study the dynamics of these changes. Every effort was made to evaluate the impact of a public health programme—environmental