

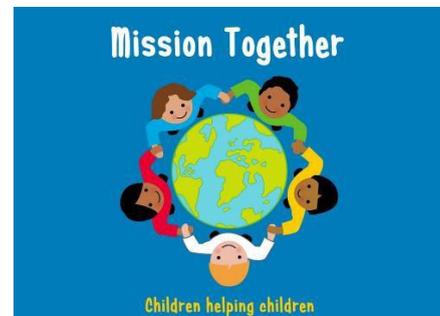
# Mission Together

## Five Fact Assembly: St Thérèse of Lisieux



### LEADER'S NOTES & HOLDING SLIDE

As Christians, we all have a mission: to share God's love with the whole world. No one is too young or too small to take part. Through *Mission Together*, children everywhere pray for, and share with one another, in a unique exchange of love and friendship. When we pray for one another and share what we have, we are reminded that we belong to God's worldwide family.



This assembly focuses on a young woman whose lifelong love of mission led her to be canonised St Thérèse of Lisieux, patron of missionaries. We hope she inspires your pupils, as she has millions of Catholics for almost 200 years

*This assembly contains animations. It is advisable to run through the presentation, using the slides, before delivering the assembly.*

### SLIDE TWO

Today's assembly is about this little girl.

***Does anybody recognise her?***

She was called Thérèse Martin and she lived in France almost a hundred and fifty years ago with her parents and four older sisters. On the screen you can see a picture of little Thérèse praying with her family.



Thérèse led a very ordinary life. She went to the local school and she loved reading, playing with her dolls and dressing up. So why is today's assembly about this ordinary little girl? It's because of who she grew up to be.

***Click to reveal images of St Thérèse of Lisieux.***

Today we are going to hear five facts that reveal how little Thérèse Martin became one of the most-loved saints, with statues of her in churches all over the world. And you might be surprised at how ordinary people like you and me can do extraordinary things through little acts of kindness.

### SLIDE THREE

#### **FACT ONE: Saint Thérèse was caring and generous.**

From being a young girl, Thérèse trusted that Jesus listened to her prayers and was very close to her. Through her prayers, Thérèse came to know Jesus like a friend.

As she got older, Thérèse decided to spend her life staying close to Jesus and sharing his love with others. She told her family that she wanted to become a missionary.

[Click to reveal image of missionary sister.](#)

A missionary is someone who shares the message and love of Jesus in places far away, in countries where people are suffering and in need of help.

Thérèse had learned about missionaries through the charity *Mission Together*\*. To help missionaries share God's love around the world Thérèse would pray and send her pocket money to *Mission Together*, just as children do today.

[Click to reveal question: What can we share to help care for others?](#)

**Possible answers:** *We can share our time by reading a story to a younger relative. We can share our talents by baking biscuits for an elderly neighbour. We can donate some of our toys to a charity shop. We can donate some of our pocket money to Mission Together. We can spend some of our time praying for those in need.*

\* Thérèse was a supporter of Holy Childhood, now known in the England and Wales as Mission Together



### SLIDE FOUR

#### **FACT TWO: Saint Thérèse was hopeful and faithful.**

As a girl Thérèse imagined herself travelling the world as a missionary. Sadly, Thérèse struggled with poor health and as she grew older it became clear that she would be too weak to travel.

Although Thérèse was very disappointed, she did not lose hope. She prayed and asked Jesus what she should do. It was then that Thérèse decided that if she could not be a missionary, she would serve God as a nun.

[Click to reveal image of the Carmelite nuns that Saint Thérèse would eventually join.](#)

A nun is a woman who dedicates her whole life to loving God, helping others, and praying for the world. Nuns live together as sisters in a building called a convent.



**Click to reveal question:** Who encourages us and gives us hope when we are disappointed?

**Possible answers:** Our family, teachers, friends who care for us, Jesus (we may hear him speak to us through the Bible, in our prayers, through our priests and religious sisters). We should always encourage and give hope to others too.

## SLIDE FIVE

### FACT THREE: Saint Thérèse was courageous and determined.

Thérèse decided to become a nun when she was 14. This was too young to leave home and move into the convent, but it did not stop Thérèse asking the local nuns if she could join them.

The nuns told Thérèse that she should wait until she was older. But Thérèse didn't want to wait. Although she was nervous, she plucked up the courage to speak to the Bishop.

A Bishop is the leader of the local priests and nuns. But the Bishop also told Thérèse that she was too young to become a nun. Thérèse decided to ask someone even more important than the Bishop. So, she convinced her father to travel with her to Rome.

### Does anyone know where Rome is, and which special person lives there?

Answer: Rome is in Italy, which is in Europe. And the special person who lives in Rome is the Pope.

### Does anyone know who the Pope is and what he does?

**Click to reveal image of Pope Francis and Pope Leo XIII.**

Answer: Our Pope today is called Francis, but in Thérèse's lifetime, the Pope was called Leo XIII. The Pope is the head of the Catholic Church. He helps people all over the world to know about Jesus and encourages them to follow the example Jesus gave of loving others.

When Thérèse asked Pope Leo if she could become a nun he replied kindly, 'You will become a nun if it is God's will.' This was enough for Thérèse, she was now prepared to wait until the time was right.

**Click to reveal question:** How can being courageous and determined help us?

**Possible answers:** Being brave can help us to do things that we find a bit scary, like reading out loud or learning to swim. Being brave helps us to learn new things and grow in confidence. Being determined can help us to keep trying even when we find things difficult.



## SLIDE SIX

### FACT FOUR: Saint Thérèse was humble and grateful.

When she was 15 Thérèse finally became a nun. Having to wait for her dream to come true made Thérèse more grateful. She began to see God's goodness everywhere, even in the smallest things like a flower, someone's smile, or a bird singing. These things made her feel thankful and blessed.

In the convent Thérèse spent her days praying and learning about Jesus. Thérèse would think carefully about the things Jesus said and did, then try hard to follow his example. She had many favourite Bible passages that inspired her, like this from the Gospel of St Luke:

#### [Click to reveal scripture](#)

Jesus said, 'I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden your wisdom from people who are big-headed and proud. But you have revealed it to those who are humble like little children.' The Gospel of the Lord.



## SLIDE SEVEN

Thérèse liked this passage because she too was young, small and shy. But by growing closer to Jesus and learning from his example, Thérèse saw that these things need not stop her from making a big difference.

**Click to reveal question:** How can we show our gratitude to God and to others?

**Possible answers:** We can show gratitude to God by appreciating and caring for the world he created, by treating all God's children with love and respect. We can show gratitude to our family and those who look after us by saying thank you, by eating our meals, by taking care of our clothes and toys.



## SLIDE EIGHT

### FACT FIVE: Saint Thérèse showed how we can change the world with kindness

As a girl, Thérèse had dreamed of travelling the world as a missionary and carrying out big heroic acts to help others.

In the convent she realised that small acts of kindness, undertaken wherever we are, can be just as heroic.



Thérèse decided that everything she did each day – especially the small boring tasks like scrubbing the floors – she would do with **great love**.

Thérèse would complete her daily tasks willingly and cheerfully, and she would show great love to all she met. She called this her 'Little Way'.

The Little Way is a very simple idea, but it is not as easy as it sounds! It can be quite a challenge! Can you imagine not complaining when you are asked to wash-up? Or not complaining when somebody cooks you a meal you don't like. Or being kind to someone who isn't kind to you.

Thérèse wrote about her 'Little Way' in notebooks. She explained how the 'Little Way' taught her to be patient and humble, and how Jesus helped her to see how love and kindness can change the world!

**Click to reveal question:** How can we follow St Thérèse's Little Way?

**Possible answers:** By praying for others in need, by being helpful, grateful, friendly, kind and forgiving.

## SLIDE TEN

After Thérèse died at the young age of 24, her notebooks were discovered. The people who read them hadn't realised how wise she had been. It was decided that Thérèse's notebooks would be printed, so her words could be read around the world.

Soon people everywhere began following Thérèse's 'Little Way'. They still do today. And so Thérèse helped to share God's love in the world, just as she'd dreamed of doing so as a missionary. That is why a few years after her death, the Pope made little Thérèse the patron saint of missionaries.



Throughout her life Thérèse never stopped praying and sharing to help missionaries care for children living in poverty overseas. We can help them too, through our prayers and by sharing what we can with *Mission Together*.

Let's remember these children and the missionaries who help them now, as we say together the *Mission Together* Prayer.

May all children  
In the world  
Share love  
Share friendship and live  
In the peace  
Of God's love  
Now and forever. **Amen.**

We end by saying together **Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, pray for us.**



Fundraising is a brilliant way to involve everyone in raising money for Mission Together. There are more ways to fundraise than we can possibly count, below are a few ideas but you can find other ways to get involved throughout the year by visiting our webpage <https://missiontogether.org.uk/fundraising-ideas/>

Please **share your** fundraising events with us @missioUK adding the hashtag #missiontogether

## Ideas for Autumn term

### Rake-a-Thon

With autumn leaves falling, children can ask family members or caregivers for suggested donations to clear up the garden, yard or driveway. Challenge pupils to clear as many of these spaces as possible. Make sure children have strong gloves and bags if they take up the Rake-a-Thon challenge.

**Family fun evenings:** in colder weather and darker evenings, indoor events rule! Why not host a beetle drive, bingo night or race night at your school? You can use old horse race videos for people to place bets on, or even use wind up toys or counters and dice to create races. You could also host a board game evening. Sell snacks and drinks to boost your fundraising.

**Winter walks:** get sponsored to brave the elements and hold a torch-lit hike or winter walk to raise money. Make sure you have plenty of adults to supervise and assist when organising outdoor events with children. Better still, get the whole family involved!

## Ideas for Spring term

**Pancake races:** hold a Pancake Day event with races and flipping competitions. Everyone gets to enjoy their pancakes after the fun – as long as they didn't drop them!

**Spring flower sale:** everyone loves the first signs of spring after winter! Why not pot some spring bulbs – snowdrops, mini daffodils, crocuses and hyacinths to sell to parents or as Easter gifts?

**Egg hunt:** hide small chocolate eggs around your school or playground. Charge pupils to join in for a massive Easter egg hunt! To maximise your fundraising, why not ask all pupils to donate some eggs so you don't need to spend money to buy them?

## Ideas for Summer term

**Scavenger hunt:** this is a great team activity! Print off some sheets with things to spot on them. You can tailor the items to be outdoors, indoors or whatever suits your space and environment. Either get teams to tick the items off or take pictures to prove they've found them! Charge teams to enter and give prizes for the fastest finishers.

**Sports day fun:** host a football tournament, sports day or outdoor activity day. Charge people to attend and sell refreshments. Prize for the tournament winners!

**Sponsored swim, walk or cycle:** get everyone involved in some outdoor fun once the weather's better. Could you get sponsored to walk a certain distance, or hold a sponsored swim?