



*Give thanks to the Lord
for He is good;
for His Love endures forever.*

Sr. Thérèse of the Queen of Carmel (Elizabeth Mary Haffert)

"Our miracle and witness to Love"

Our Sister Thérèse was born Elizabeth Mary Haffert on August 10, 1920 in a lovely small town called Sea Isle City, New Jersey (otherwise known as the Venice of the United States) and was known as "Betty" to her family. She was the youngest child and only girl, surrounded by loving parents and three older brothers: Bill, John, and Horace. Sister applied to the Philadelphia Carmel at the tender age of 19 years, after one year of college. The prioress at Philadelphia almost rejected the young girl by accident; Betty wrote her application on her father's stationery and the nuns thought that the letter was an advertisement. Luckily for Betty and for Carmel, the mistake was rectified and on November 14, 1940, Feast of all Carmelite saints, Betty entered Carmel in Philadelphia.

She understood the sacrifice made by the families of those who enter the cloister. Sister related how forbidding it seemed when the heavy enclosure door closed and her parents and she were separated. Thérèse always kept in touch with her extended family, by letter and by phone. After all her brothers died, Therese remained in close, affectionate contact with their widows, children, and grandchildren. Aunt Betty was a favourite among them.

Thérèse received the title "Queen of Carmel" upon her reception of the Habit on her Clothing Day and she was a true daughter of Saint Teresa as well. Sister helped with the foundation at Durham, consulted Fr. Thomas Kilduff about various Constitutional matters, attended CCA and Forum conferences and workshops. In later years, despite increasing fragility, Thérèse always remained faithful to her prayer life. Members of our community can attest to the universality of her petitions, from rooting for the underdog (the Boston Red Sox) to asking for the conversion of Saddam Hussein. Her breviaries were filled with holy cards marking other people's celebrations; she prayed for them all, asking especially for Our Lady's intercession.

Sr. Thérèse's brother, John, was a founding member of the Blue Army. She would always pray for the success of his apostolate, and for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Therese's rosary was always on her person and could be found in her hand while she slept. Our Lady interceded for this witness to love when Sister had her near fatal accident on October 14, 1996. She fell down our iron staircase, sustaining life threatening injuries. Doctors imagined her to be brain dead with "zero cognition" with no hope of recovery; Sr. Mary Teresa was planning her funeral. Yet, with "determinacion muy determinada", our beloved Thérèse arose from her death bed to go on to rehab and then home with us. We called her 'our miracle'. She became an example to our community of how God works in mysterious ways.

Thérèse suffered another injury just after Labour Day in 2007. She fell in our refectory and was hospitalized. Two agonizing weeks later, our beloved Thérèse died on September 17, 2007, the 800th anniversary of the Rule. She who was faithful in her Carmelite vocation died on the day commemorating Carmel's beginnings. We are thankful to have known her and will always remember her. She was a loving soul with a strong will (one of the strong men Holy Mother wanted us to be). She could be playful with the dogs while focussing on Jesus, her Friend. Thérèse will be sorely missed. She must be having a great time united with her family in Heaven, able to hear perfectly again and walking or maybe even running, free of all obstacles. She never did like her cane!

PHOTOS



First Communion



Young Betty



Before entering Carmel



Clothing Day 1941



The art of calligraphy



Our Thérèse



With the relic of St. Thérèse



Diamond Jubilee 2001



Mass with Fr. Fuller, S.J.

Sr. Thérèse: Birth August 10, 1920 Entrance into Carmel November 14, 1940 Clothing August 12, 1941
Profession August 13, 1942 Death September 17, 2007
