




Our Lady of the Smile

FEAST DAY: MAY 13



The story of Our Lady of the Smile highlights an event in the life of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus (*Thérèse of Lisieux*). You may wish to begin by telling the young people her story, which is presented in both *Blest Are We Faith in Action* and *Be My Disciples*, as well as at SaintsResource.com.

The Story

One of the most-loved saints of the Catholic Church is Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, also known as Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. Her parents, Louis and Zélie Martin, are saints of the Catholic Church too!

Thérèse's mother died when Thérèse was only four years old. Her sister, Pauline, who was sixteen at the time, then began to look after Thérèse. But five years after their mother's death, Pauline left home to join the Carmelite sisters. Thérèse was heartbroken. She thought she would never see Pauline again. That thought made her physically ill. She suffered from high fevers, her body shook all over, and Thérèse could no longer speak.

Looking for ways to comfort and calm Thérèse, her family moved a favorite statue of Our Lady of Victory from their garden to Thérèse's room. One night, when Thérèse was having an especially hard time, her sister Marie knelt in front of the statue and prayed to Our Lady to heal Thérèse. Two other sisters, Leonie and Celine, entered the room and knelt and prayed with Marie. When Marie looked over to check on Thérèse, she noticed that Thérèse's eyes were fixed on the statue. But it was not the statue Thérèse saw; it was the Blessed Virgin Mary!

Later, when Thérèse was able to talk about what she saw, she explained that Mary's face was beautiful, but Mary's smile was what had most caught her attention. After several minutes of just gazing upon Mary's smile, tears had fallen from Thérèse's eyes, and she was healed.

This is what began the devotion to Our Lady of the Smile.