

Little Peter

Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,
for of such is the kingdom of heaven. (Mark 10:14)
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and a little child shall lead them.
(Isaiah 11:6)

THE little Peter of our story is not an imaginary person. Not so many years ago you could have seen him running along the beach at St. Malo in the northwestern part of France where he lived, swimming and fishing and doing all the things boys like to do when they are about six or seven. On sunny afternoons when the brilliant-winged butterflies and dragon-flies drifted about the meadows, Peter loved to chase after them, caring not at all that he often ruined his clothes among the thorn-bushes and rocks. Later, he would take his fishing-net and run down to the beach. There at ebb-tide, when rocks and cliffs lay unconcealed, Peter went fishing, like his great namesake, the Apostle. Barefoot he jumped into the water in search of crawfish, who scurried away at his approach, looking for shelter in the seaweed of the dark pools. Laughing, Peter went after them, and soon one struggling little victim after another was tossed into the basket strapped to his back.

But, of course, life is not all made up of summer holidays, and when it was time for school, Peter took his books under his arm and went off to do a little struggling himself with the mysteries of reading and writing, often asking his much-loved Guardian Angel to help him.

First Holy Communion

When Peter was seven years old, a mission was held in the parish church shortly after the feast of the Purification. Because the missionary wanted many prayers said in order to obtain the conversion of sinners, it was decided to give some of the children who were ready their first Holy Communion. So it was that Peter received Our Lord for the first time. Every morning from that time he went to the altar-rail and Jesus came to him, filling his heart with a joy Peter could not find words to tell even his mother. In his own little way, then, Peter also preached a kind of mission. Of course, he did not wear a surplice or stole like the priest, but his daily going to the altar spoke louder than the most beautiful sermon. His small friends, seeing his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, chose Peter as the secretary of their First Communion League. As secretary he wrote many letters to the missionary, letters which tell the story of his life better than we could. Believing that his letters will help many souls to be more fervent and devoted in their love for Jesus, we give them here.

Letters to the Missionary

Dear Father: April, 1912

This is Peter writing to tell you that he has remembered you every day since the mission. After you had gone the older children told me that they went with you to the station. Oh, I would have liked to go, too, but since I am only seven years old, no one told me you were going, and, winter or summer, Mother puts me to bed at eight o'clock!

Monday was the last day of vacation, and now my teacher tells me that he is better pleased with me. He says I have learned to work harder. I have to, because I am going to Holy Communion every morning. But even so, I do not always know my lessons and still make mistakes in spelling. But I am going to try to do better and be more careful so that you will see I am improving and trying to be a good member of the League.

Dear Father, Our Lord will bless me if I love Him very much, won't He? I love Jesus with all my heart and tell Him so every day. Since you left, there was one day I did not receive Holy Communion, but, please forgive me, as it was not my fault. I went to church early enough, but they were having a funeral Mass, and no one paid any attention to me.

My older brother Jack is now in the first section of the League, too. I got him to join and I am very glad of it, for I know the Child Jesus is happy when many children go to Holy Communion every day. I am not quite so bad at home as I used to be. But sometimes Daddy is angry with me because I often get up from table without permission and because I quarrel with Odette, my little sister. They were going to spank me, but they didn't do it and I hope they won't!

Your little secretary, Peter D'Airelle

Dear Father, April, 1912

I am very glad to write and tell you that I always love our dear Lord and His holy Mother Mary. But I don't know if they love me, too, for I still have many faults. Mother wants me to tell you that I am not always obedient when they tell me to let Odette alone and not to quarrel with her. Once we even beat each other a little when we were fighting, but I will never do this again, I promise, dear Father. Also, I am as lazy as a dormouse and I often make a long face when I have to study my grammar. I sometimes contradict the teacher and am always stubborn when they try to make me eat soup or fish. These are all my faults, but I will keep trying to do better as fast as I can. Then the Child Jesus will be pleased when He sees me coming to Communion every morning.

I have learned the morning offering by heart. I say it as soon as I wake up so that the whole day may be spent for the Sacred Heart and for the poor souls. At Mass I say the beads: the first decade for the Apostleship of Prayer, the second for the Pope, the third for my father; the fourth for my mother, and the fifth for Jack, Odette and myself. After each mystery I say the little prayer

mother taught me: "Little Child Jesus, make me good and obedient and guard and bless my father, mother, Jack, Odette and all of us." --- Peter

P.S. Every day more children ask to join our League. I have all their names in my book. Ten go to Holy Communion daily; eight, twice a week; and thirty, every Sunday.

The Small Missionary

Dear Father: May, 1912

Grandmother was vexed with me because I go to Holy Communion daily and she does not do so, although she is much older than I. She said to me: "You are not good enough." I answered her as you taught us: "Granny dear, I don't go to Holy Communion because I am already good, but I go to be able to be better and I promise you to make real efforts to be good." Now she lets me alone.

In the morning I get up all by myself. Jack helps me put on my shoes. Then we go to Mass. We don't make any noise on the way downstairs so that Daddy doesn't wake up. I always ask Daddy to go to Holy Communion at Easter, but he never will and he never says any prayers. But each morning I ask Our Lord to convert him. When I am all by myself I often cry because I don't want to go to heaven without Daddy. Because you told us once that everyone who does not receive Our Lord at Easter time commits a mortal sin and is a scandal to others. I told this to Daddy, but he ordered me to hold my tongue. Dear Father, please pray for him.

With much love, -- Peter

Dear Father: June, 1912

Today at dinner, Daddy said: "Jesus Christ is not God; he is only a man as we are." I cried then and said: "Oh, no, no! He is God! The missionary said so." Jack said it, too. Then Odette jumped up from her chair, crying: "He is God! He is God! The missionary said so!" Dear Father, please pray very much for my Daddy and tell me some books that he may read in order to believe again. You told us often not only to preach by good example to our parents but also to pray for them and make sacrifices for them. So every night I say the rosary and after each decade I add: "Dear Child Jesus, please convert Daddy and make him believe in You again." When I get some candy or cookies I save half for the poor people and ask them to pray for him too. --- Your little Peter.

Dear Father: July, 1912

Good news! Mamma now goes to Holy Communion every day, with me. She used to go only on Sundays, so I asked her: "Mamma, why don't you go every day to convert Daddy?" She hugged me, but did not answer. The next day she started to go daily with Jack and me. This makes me so happy--surely Daddy will be converted now! -- Peter

Dear Father: August, 1912

Vacation time is here. It seemed to long in coming! We went to the seashore. We caught crawfish. I caught three hundred, and Jack four hundred. Odette broiled them and we had a picnic on the rocks. Going home, we met a little rag-picker. He was no taller than Daddy's boots, and he was dragging a big sack of paper which was certainly heavier than he. It was cold, then, and raining, but the poor little boy was barefoot. As he went from one box to another looking for papers, three big bullies threw themselves on him and tried to empty his sack. The poor little fellow began to cry and ran away. They ran after him, throwing stones at him. But now I threw myself on the biggest of the three and showed him all Daddy has taught me about boxing. When he had enough, he ran away with his friends. Then I asked the little boy: "What's your name?" -- "Andy." "Where do you live?" -- "Near the bridge." "Where are your shoes?" -- "I have none." "Come with me, Mother will give you a pair." -- "I have no mother." "My mother will give you some." I brought him home and Mamma gave him my old pair of shoes. Then I asked: "Have you any marbles?" -- "No." "Then I'll give you some of mine." I filled his pockets with marbles. Then he was happy and ran off, hungrily eating a piece of bread and butter.

Oh, I was so glad! You told us once that all we do for the poor, we really do to the Child Jesus. So I jumped for joy and called Mamma and shouted: "Hurrah! I gave half my marbles and a piece of bread and my old shoes to the Child Jesus! Daddy will be converted!"

But now I will tell you a secret. One month after the mission when I went up to Holy Communion I remembered your sermon about sin and the little martyr who wanted to die rather than commit a mortal sin. Then I asked the Child Jesus to let me die also rather than commit a mortal sin. It seemed to me that Jesus liked my prayer and now every night after the Rosary for Daddy, I say: "My Jesus, please let me die rather than commit a mortal sin." Is this all right? -- Peter

Happy Near Jesus

Dear Father: October, 1912

School has begun again. Today in my Geography lesson I memorized the tributaries of the Garonne River.

Now for a few secrets. Father, I like to be alone in church with Jesus and speak to him. Sometimes He answers me; sometimes He doesn't. I always ask Him to convert Daddy. When I have to go, I say: "Little Child Jesus, I would like to stay longer with You, but I have to study my lessons. I will not forget You, though. I will do my homework for You, as Father said that we are praying when we are working for You."

During recess at school I try to slip into chapel to say hello to Jesus, and when we go for a walk I keep on the lookout for a church to do the same. At night I turn toward the church and say to Him: "Good night, Jesus! How beautiful it must be in heaven when we are always with You... but where will

my Daddy be?" Please pray for him. --- Your Peter

Sacrifices for Conversion

Dear Father: November, 1912

I am so sorry that Our Lord has not yet converted Daddy. I ask Him for it every morning at Mass, at Communion, when I say the Rosary, everywhere. But yesterday I thought that three things are necessary to convert souls: prayers, preaching and suffering. I have prayed a lot and even preached, but I haven't suffered for Daddy yet. So I asked Jesus to let me suffer and make up for Daddy's faults and blasphemies so that he may be converted. He is always telling Mamma that Jesus Christ is not God, that the priests invented religion and many other awful things. He read the books you sent him, but he says they don't prove anything and that he will never go to confession and there isn't any hell. It makes us all feel so sad and Mamma cries very often. -- Peter

Dear Father: December, 1912

Last Sunday after Holy Communion I seemed to hear Jesus calling to me and saying: "Little Peter, would you like to die to convert your father?" I said quickly: "Oh, yes"... "But you will have to suffer very much." "All right, if You help me, I'll be glad to do it." Now I am ready to die. But perhaps I was wrong in accepting without your permission, Father? Daddy has to go to another garrison, so we shall be leaving here before the month is over. -- Peter

"To Give Jesus Joy"

Dear Father: February, 1913

We left our old garrison and are now at the new one, and I am awfully sorry. For this place is not like the other one. There is no Communion League here and none of the children go to Holy Communion daily. Even the most pious ones go only once a month. After we had been here only a week, the priest called Mamma and me into the sacristy one morning after Mass. I was a little frightened. He looked at me for a moment and then said to Mamma: "Madam, people here are very much surprised at the way you act. They do not object to your going to Holy Communion every morning, but that you make your child do so, too, is beyond them. Do you really think your son understands what he is doing?" Mamma answered: "I think he does, Father. Besides, it was not I who made him go, but he is the one who has led me to receive Communion each day." "How old is your child?" "He is eight years old, Father." "And why do you want to receive Holy Communion every day, Peter?" "To please Jesus and the Holy Father." "So?" "And also to convert Daddy." For a long time the priest said nothing at all, then he smiled: "Well, Peter, continue to receive Our Lord daily. When the Holy Father urges children to do so, it would be very wrong for me to prevent you." We went home very happy! -- Peter

P.S. We got an invitation from the General's wife. Tomorrow we are going to her place to tea. So Mamma is getting me a little soldier's uniform.

Dear Father:

March, 1913

I am a little sick today, as I caught cold on the way home from the General's tea. So Mamma is helping me write to you. Many officers and their wives were at the General's house, and all these ladies attacked Mamma because she lets me go to Holy Communion every day. The General's wife started it. She said: "Madame D'Airelle, I cannot understand how a good Catholic like you can do such a thing! To let an eight-year-old child receive Holy Communion daily-- surely this is turning things upside down! We were taught that a Christian's first duty is reverence for the Blessed Sacrament. I have four children myself, and not one of them shall receive Communion before they are at least eleven. Then they will know what they are doing." Then the Major's wife joined in: "Such a late breakfast after Mass is not good for children's health. I have my children served their breakfast in bed, before they get up." "Moreover," added a fat lady with a big white feather in her hat, "they are already giving up these innovations. Many are complaining that First Holy Communion is no longer as solemn as it used to be."

While the ladies were all talking at once, I looked at Mamma. She was flushed and very near crying. So was I. But when they had finished, Mamma answered them calmly: "I cannot answer all your difficulties; I leave that to the priests and theologians. My only theology is obedience. Our Holy Father the Pope wants children to receive Holy Communion as soon as they reach the age of reason. He makes it our duty to allow them to go as often as possible after that. I obey him and do not worry about the rest. It is not my business to be criticizing the Pope and asking reasons from the Church."

"Bravo, Madame D'Airelle!" cried the General, who had just joined us. "That is the way I myself understand the Church and our Faith. If we want to discuss and criticize everything, we might just as well leave the Church-- then we may believe and say whatever we like!" Then he turned to me: "You, little Peter, come here and give these good ladies a lesson in catechism." "Now, who commands the Church?" "The Pope." "Exactly, my small friend. You see, ladies, this is the answer to all your objections. Where would we end if from now on every simple soldier could discuss my orders and teach me tactics? And yet, I am not infallible as the Pope is, nor do I have, as he does, the special assistance of the Holy Spirit. Little Peter, you are a fine fellow; come and shake hands!" We shook hands very heartily and later in the hall when the officers were putting on their cloaks, I heard the General say to Daddy: "Captain, I congratulate you! You have a fine little son-- one who will never shame you." Daddy pressed my hand when we got outside; he was very pleased. And that night I said half my Rosary for the General because he was so good to me. --With much love, Peter

Holy Communion at Any Cost

March, 1913

Dear Father: Trouble has started again. Those ladies came to our house last Thursday and attacked Mamma with all their strength on account of my daily

receiving Our Lord. This time there was no one to defend us. So, when they had gone, Daddy was very angry with Mamma and said: "This is too much; we are making laughing-stocks of ourselves. Will all these devotions never end?" Mamma began to cry. Then I told Daddy what I had read in my little book; "Daddy, why do you want me to eat every day?" "Because you would die if you didn't have sufficient nourishment." "Then, don't you see, Daddy, I want to feed my soul every day, too; that is why I go to Holy Communion." He did not answer and left the room without kissing me goodnight. Mamma is so sad. She came upstairs with me and said: "You see, Peter, everybody is against us and no one encourages us. Perhaps we had better do like the rest." "But Mamma, then we would not be obeying Our Lord!" "That is true, Peter, but if we keep on this way, they will talk against us more and more and Daddy won't like it-- he will be very angry with us." "Mamma, I have an idea. We could do this: on Sunday, go to our parish church and the other days to the rest of the churches. Then no one would know we are going to Holy Communion every day. I can get up a little earlier and dress a little faster when we have farther to go." Mamma hugged me and smiled: "You are right, my Peter! We will do this from now on. Ask your guardian angel to help us."

Since that day I have been getting up fifteen minutes earlier every morning and we go to a different church each day. It is awfully hard for little ones to come to Jesus, Father. Every one tries to keep them away from Him. --- Your Peter

March, 1913

Dear Father:

This time I can write you only a few lines in pencil from my bed. Mamma has gone to Mass with Jack and Odette. I cannot go to Holy Communion today, and sometimes I am afraid I shall not be able to receive Our Lord again.

I am all alone in my little blue room. After Communion last Friday it seemed to me that Jesus was saying again: "Little Peter, would you like to die to convert Daddy?" "Oh! Yes, yes!" I cried. Then I asked Our Lord to let me suffer very much for Daddy's sins. After school that afternoon, I vomited blood. The next day and the day after I did it again. The doctor came. When he had left, Mamma kissed me and cried. Then she told Jack to begin a novena with her for my recovery. But I do not want to get better. I want to die in order to see Jesus and convert Daddy. I am suffering a good deal, but I do it gladly to convert the sinners, as Our Lord did. Please pray for me when I am dead. May we meet again in heaven. -- Your little Peter

March, 1913

Dear Father:

It's me again. But I can't write any more. Jack is writing this letter for me. I shall soon be with Jesus. It will not last very long and I am so happy! When I

am alone I sing the mission song: "Towards heaven, towards heaven, one day I shall be there." I have great pains in my chest, but I am happy, happier than ever before.

The pastor of our parish came to see me. He asked me if it was true that I went to different churches every day to receive Holy Communion, as he had been told. I said: "Yes." "And why did you do it, little Peter?" "To give joy to Jesus and the Holy Father and to convert Daddy. Yes, and for this I've asked Jesus to let me die." Then the priest wept and said nothing more before he left. I did not dare to ask him to bring me Holy Communion; but I asked the Child Jesus to tell him this for me. --- Peter

April, 1913

Dear Father:

It seems to be that I am getting better. I could write with a pencil, but Jack will not let me, so he is writing this for me. The parish priest came again the next day. I thought he would be angry with me, but he took my hand and said: "Peter, wouldn't you like to receive Our Lord every morning?" "Oh, yes, Father!" "Well then, I will bring Him to you, myself, every day. We will start tomorrow. Pray for me, little Peter!"

Next day he came very early. Mamma put flowers everywhere. Jack and Odette knelt down and prayed; they had burning candles in their hands. Daddy was there, too; he was deeply moved and it seemed to me that even he was praying. Father prepared me for Holy Communion. He said the prayers with me; then he helped me to thank Our Lord. When he said: "Let us pray for our parents," I looked at Daddy. He had his handkerchief to his face. In the afternoon Father came again. He asked me: "Peter, what can I do so that all the children will go to Holy Communion more often, like you?" "Father, found a Communion League like the one where I used to live." "I shall start right away. Pray for me. Tomorrow I will bring Our Lord to you again." Mamma said: "Father, do not put yourself to so much trouble; your assistant is young and he could do it quite easily." "No, no Madam. I have to give the good example. I want everyone to know that I wish to nourish the souls of our little children just as Christ did and as the Holy Father desires that they be nourished. Yes, I understand now the special love of Our Lord for the little ones." He kissed my forehead, then he went away. --- Peter

Peter's Last Letter

April, 1913

Dear Father:

The Child Jesus wants to give me everything before I die. Our Parish Priest has started the Communion League here and he said that Odette, who is only five years old, may make her first Holy Communion on Holy Thursday. Now only Daddy is left. I asked him to pray with me and he did. He said the Rosary with me, and the "Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary." Perhaps I won't be here any more when he is converted. But I shall see it from heaven.

I will offer this sacrifice to Our Lord.

This will probably be my last letter to you. I cannot sleep any more and I cough all night long. May we meet again in heaven. ---Your little Peter

P.S. When I am in heaven I will pray for you and the Communion League.

Letter from Peter's Father

Easter Sunday

Reverend Father:

I wish to inform you of our great sorrow. Our little angel, our Peter, is no more. He endured a real martyrdom, and suffered as only saints can suffer, without a single complaint, without a sign of impatience. Father brought him Holy Communion every morning. This hour for which he waited during the long, sleepless night, was heaven for him. When he heard the step of the priest, his face became like that of an angel and his eyes seemed to reflect something of heaven's splendor. The after-effect of receiving Our Lord lasted the entire day. When I came to his room he prayed the rosary or sang the song you had taught them at the mission. If I told him to rest for a while, he would say: "Daddy, when I talk to Our Lord, I am resting." I asked him: "What do you speak to Our Lord about?" "About you!"

On the morning of his last day on earth, his mother told him we were beginning a novena for his recovery, but he cried out: "Oh, no Mamma! You must not try to make me get better. I want to die to convert Daddy!"

He died the morning of Holy Thursday. Odette had just returned from making her first Holy Communion. Peter embraced her for a long moment, then he prepared to receive his last Communion. Father came with Holy Viaticum. Peter knelt on his bed, folded his hands, his whole face shining with joy. He asked my pardon for his disobedience. I wanted to say: "My poor child, I should rather ask your pardon!" But I could not speak because of the tears which choked me. His mother, Jack and little Odette were all weeping. Father was also in tears. Peter alone was serene and consoled us all.

The agony began. Meanwhile the bells of the town rang for Mass. For a moment it seemed to me that Peter wished to speak to me. I bent over him and he whispered: "May we meet in heaven, Daddy... this is for you." Then he breathed his last, pressing the mission-rosary between his thin little fingers. The moment after his death, Peter's face became radiant. It was as if a heavenly light transfigured it. A sweet smile rested on his lips. An inexpressible peace hovered over the little body, worn out and purified by sufferings. I believed that something of the Divine light was shining through this little angel, of whose presence I was not worthy.

I, who had not prayed for twenty years, who had been an unbeliever for twenty years (at least I thought I did not believe), I fell upon my knees beside his deathbed. I was praying, weeping, sobbing, not for his sake, but for my own. I asked God and our angel-child to pardon me the lazy cowardice in which I had spent my life. How utterly ashamed, how little, I felt before my

son who was so great. I felt unworthy to embrace him, I, who was a sinner, a reprobate. The thought of staying beside him all the night long with my unclean soul was utterly unbearable. I think I felt something of the awful shame the damned must feel in the presence of the Almighty at the Last Judgment. Finally I rushed away to find a priest and confess all the sins of my life. Only then did I feel less unworthy to be near my child.

He slept there in his First Communion suit, amid white lilies. I knelt beside his body, asking him to obtain God's blessing and protection for me. On Holy Saturday we took the little coffin to the cemetery. It was more a triumphant procession than a funeral, as the bells were ringing out to announce the Resurrection. All the children of the parish were present in their First Communion clothes. I was weeping, but for joy, not sorrow-- a new, deep, comforting joy.

In the churchyard the little ones, girls in their white dresses, boys with their white arm bands, arranged themselves around the grave. When the first shovel of earth was thrown upon the coffin, the parish priest began to speak: "My dear children, I am too deeply moved to preach a long sermon. Instead, let us say a prayer of thanksgiving to God that He did such great things in the soul of our little friend. God's grace does not always wait for age to lead chosen souls to holiness. Daily Holy Communion made a hero and an apostle of our little Peter. May he be an apostle for all of us now in heaven. May he pray for us and for me, your pastor, that we may better understand our Divine Savior's desire in the Blessed Sacrament to guard you and make you good and holy by daily Holy Communion."

Please pray, Reverend Father, especially for me, that I may be less unworthy of him to whom I gave earthly life, but who obtained for me the life of my soul. -- Captain D'Airelle

In Peter's Footsteps

May, 1913

Reverend Father:

It is Peter's father again, taking his place in writing to you. I cannot use the word "departed" when speaking of him, for never have I felt him closer to me than now. On Easter Sunday after Holy Communion, the first one of my new life, in this life which he won for me by his death, it was as if I heard a voice within my soul, a distinct voice-- Peter's voice: "Now you must take my place at the Communion rail every morning." At first I did not want to listen to that voice; it cut me to the heart, yet filled me with joy at the same time. "Yes, dear Daddy, it is your work now to complete your conversion which I bought at such a price." For several days this call was repeated, becoming especially urgent in the early morning hours when Peter used to go to Holy Communion. Finally I gave in. From now on, I, the eleventh-hour laborer, will daily go to the Communion rail and fill the vacant place as well as I can. This resolution has brought great peace to my soul. I have only one wish-- to follow Peter from afar, to climb slowly up after him on the royal way of self-

denial which he traveled so quickly. I failed to be his teacher, but now I will become his pupil.

Today when I took my morning walk I saw a beautiful white lily in the garden. I stopped to admire the lovely petals which had opened over night. At the foot of this lily, near the earth, a tiny pansy peeped up. I would like to be this humble pansy under the protection of our angel-child and so close to him.

Please pray, dear Father, for my poor soul. --- Captain D'Airelle

Little Peter is gone. He lies asleep there on the high hill which looks down on the sea. Above his grave is a cross of red granite to which a rose-bush clings, bursting into bloom every spring and covering the cross with white roses. On the tombstone is carved a chalice with a radiant host and graven round it: "Suffer the little children to come to Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven!" Above the tombstone, according to the custom of France, there is a small bowl that holds the rain water for the little blue swallows which build their nests in the cypresses and gather there on the hot summer days to refresh themselves with the cool water.

Little Peter now asks our Father in Heaven to remember the little ones on earth. A plea like this comes from his loving heart: "O Father, You who give the swallows the water they need in the summer heat, who gather grain into Your storehouses for the hungry birds... do not let Your little ones die of hunger! Your little ones who cry to You for their souls' food. You know how to clothe the lilies in a glory of white and to freshen their lovely petals daily with the morning dew... Keep the splendor of innocence in the souls of children by the Divine glory contained in the Daily Bread of souls. Give them fathers and mothers who will see that they receive this Bread of Life daily. Send them good priests who are zealous in distributing it. O Master of the world, listen to the cry of the little ones and hear them crying for Bread; let it not be said again: "There was no one to give it to them!"

This is what little Peter begs of Our Lord in heaven. And all the Guardian Angels of the little children answer in one voice: "Let it be so, Lord! Amen!"

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Our Lord Requested a Legion of Little Victims

THE last written words of St. Thérèse of Lisieux were as follows: "Is it not Thyself alone who hast taught the secrets of thy love, and canst Thou not unveil them to others? Yes! I know it, and this I implore Thee! I ENTREAT THEE TO LET THY DIVINE EYES REST UPON A VAST NUMBER OF LITTLE SOULS; I ENTREAT THEE TO CHOOSE, IN THIS WORLD, A LEGION OF LITTLE VICTIMS OF THY LOVE." (End of autobiography) She also wrote: "I am but a weak and helpless child, yet it is my very weakness that makes me dare to offer myself, O Jesus, as victim to Thy Love.....I am too little for great things, and my folly it is to hope that Thy Love accepts me as victim." Thérèse of Lisieux was canonized in 1925.

After her death Christ answered her petition, and chose little victims: three of the most famous were Peter d'Airelle, Jacinta Marto, and Rose Ferron. When the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared at Fatima in 1917, she said that many souls went to hell because they had no one to pray and make sacrifices for them. She requested the three seers to offer themselves in reparation, and predicted that they would have much to suffer. They accepted, and they all, especially Jacinta, suffered greatly. At the end of her short life, Jacinta Marto suffered in a heroic manner. Peter d'Airelle also suffered in order to obtain the conversion of his father. In the 1920s Christ chose Josefa Menéndez and little Rose Ferron to be victims. Rose Ferron suffered especially for the sins of schismatics. On Nov. 25, 1921, Christ said to Josefa: "I am the great Victim, and you are a very little one, but if you are united to Me, My Father will listen to you." (*Way of Divine Love*, p. 123). He often repeated to her that he had chosen her as a victim (the greatest favor he could grant her), and on one occasion he revealed: "I need victims to repair the bitterness inflicted on my Heart." (Feb. 11, 1923). In 1923 he said: "I will choose victims who will obtain pardon..."

During the 1920s he chose Madre Concepción Zúñiga in Mexico, to be a little victim. She accepted, and offered her works and sufferings in expiation for sins, especially the transgressions of her relatives.

During the 1930s he continued revealing the secrets of his Heart. On one occasion he enumerated a list of sins and sinners, especially schismatics, and said: "These are the ones I want to save by means of My love for justice, extending the Legion of Victim Souls, who offer themselves to My Divine Justice for all of them..... With this legion of faithful servants, with the dissemination of the offering of victims in the world, the works of sanctity of just souls, through the merits of My Redemption, will succeed in increasing. And, before My Justice, this will be a way to repay the debts of the wickedness of humanity and to obtain many graces, before Judgment day comes."

In 1969 he revealed that it was urgent for there to be little victims. Madre Concepción wrote a booklet entitled *Legion of Victim Souls*, (*Imprimatur*, 1966). Our Lord needs the help of many souls, to save sinners from perdition. For more information, please write to the address below.

Legion of Victim Souls. (Imprimatur: 1966). Booklet about victimhood. Our Lord is seeking a legion of victims, who will help to save sinners from perdition. Contact: uscitizen@localnet.com

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"Ask not who is speaking, but mark what is said."
- *Imitation of Christ*, Bk. 1, Ch. 5.