

Day 4: The Little Way



At 5:50 a.m. we gathered downstairs in the lobby of the Hermitage; bags in hand, breakfast already had – thanks be to the staff who provided to-go breakfast bags – and awaited the bus driver. As we waited, we took last photos of Lisieux's backdrop, the monastery, etc. Hard to believe we saw and did all that we did in just a few days. Somehow, it seemed longer as we breathed in St. Therese's home one last time, for now....

We journeyed back across the French countryside on another gloriously sunny day and prayed the morning prayers and listened to Fr. Kelvin's talk about the connection between Therese and her "Little Way" and Fatima. Just as Therese had discovered her vocation in Love and desired deeply to pray for the conversion of souls, especially for the prisoner Pranzini's conversion, we too, in our spiritual journey can be the transforming help of others along the way. Therese prayed to receive a sign to know there was a conversion in Pranzini before the end. This prayer was answered as she heard that in the last hour, he asked for a Crucifix that he took into his hands and kissed...a remarkable sign of conversion. We too must pray deeply for others and trust that our prayers are heard and being answered even if we do not always see or hear the signs of answered prayers such as Pranzini's kiss upon the Cross.

The Lourdes apparition happened before Therese and the message, which is the same message of all of the Virgin Mother's apparitions, is the message of transformation and the uniting of the hearts God's people and conversion. Also, Fr. Kelvin drew the link of the Fatima message as well as Lourdes to the contemplative experience of Mary, Mother of Carmel. Mary stands as a disciple whose mission is to awaken humanity to God's great love.

The last apparition to Bernadette at Lourdes was on July 16 th – which is also the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel – and Therese follows suit to Mary in her quest to convert sinners and expound of God's great love for His people. So, from Lourdes to Fatima and the three children: Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta we hear the same message to God's people: pray and pray hard for the conversion of souls. The world is always at war.

It is said that at any time there are approximately 35 conflicts (wars) going on in the world. Our time is no different and with cultural shifts as they are and deep divides and confusion as to basic understandings of who and what we are as men and women – prayer and transformation is needed more than ever.

We are to be that transforming instrument of God's love. Even one person can be capable of bringing about this good; to transform and convert through living out our spiritual lives in accordance with God's Will.

“if you wish to be a saint, it is not hard. Have one aim – to please Jesus and to unite yourself more intimately to Him”

Once landed in Lisbon airport after a very smooth flight over from Paris Orly Airport we had an unexpected wait at luggage as we awaited the driver. Never mind, we tended to personal business, sampled some tasty sandwiches near to the luggage ramps and then were finally off and onto a new motorcoach enroute to Marinha Grande, Portugal, just outside of Fatima. Along the way we got a chance to see some of Portugal's beautiful landscapes including some very impressive windmills... and not just a few but lots of windmills amidst the thickly forested rolling hills before arriving at the Hotel Cristal where we will be lodged until Tuesday, May 14 th .

After a long day's journey being fed by the gift of Holy Communion was such a blessing! This followed by a most magnificent feast of a buffet where one thing seemed better than the next. Oh...the treasures of our Lord. Tomorrow...Fatima!

