

*Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites*

**FORMATION II – YEAR C**

# Story of a Soul

*The Autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux*



This year the candidates are expected to learn how to integrate Carmelite spirituality into their lives as lay persons. They give daily witness in their family and social life to “an integrated approach to life that is fully brought about by the inspiration and strength of the Gospel.” (Epilogue – OCDS Constitutions)

The teachings of St. Thérèse and her Gospel message exemplify the spirit of an integrated approach to holiness in one’s daily life. “I understand and I know from experience that: ‘The kingdom of God is within you’ (Luke 17:21). Jesus has no need of books or doctors to instruct souls; He, the Doctor of doctors, teaches without the noise of words ... I find just when I need them certain lights that I had not seen until then, and it isn’t most frequently during my hours of prayer that these are most abundant but rather in the midst of my daily occupations.” (pgs. 276-277)

In Year C of Formation II, candidates are introduced to “the greatest Saint of modern times,” St. Thérèse of Lisieux, OCD. Her *Story of a Soul* is read and studied as the central document from Thérèse’s own hand describing her life and spirituality. The autobiography contributed to her cause for canonization and helped establish her as a Doctor of the Church. The Study Edition provides additional background and context. “*Story of a Soul* has a power to enkindle devotion in the will because Thérèse’s pen was guided by the living spirit of God.” (pg. 36)

“If we read *Story of a Soul* carefully, we can see the inner process of Thérèse’s mind at work. ... the topic imperceptibly shifts from one subject to another ... We should not interpret this linking of thoughts that we see in *Story of a Soul* as merely a process of free association. Rather it is a stream of consciousness guided by the mind of God. [cf. pgs. 276-277]” (pgs. 34-35)

Note: Unless otherwise stated, all page numbers refer to *Story of a Soul, Study Edition*, published by ICS, 2005.

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Excerpt from “Introduction To Year C”

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