Teresa Helena Higginson and the devotion to

The Sacred Head of Christ, Seat of Divine Wisdom

This booklet contains

- a. A short account of the life of Teresa
- b. Prayers to the Sacred Head
- c. Extracts from Teresa's letters, (spellings, punctuation as in letters)

Teresa was the third child of Frances Higginson, a Catholic from Preston, educated at Stoneyhurst, and Mary Bowness from Cumbria, converted by a Jesuit priest to Catholicism, who was her guide on a trip round Rome. The couple met in Ireland and were married at Loughlyn, Roscommon October 1841. Returning to England they settled in Gainsborough. While expecting Teresa, her mother went on pilgrimage to St Winefride's Well in Holywell, North Wales. Teresa was born in Holywell on 27 May 1844 and was baptised Teresa after Teresa of Avila and after Helena, who founded the true cross. The family grew to 5 girls and 3 boys.

Living in a small catholic community, they built a chapel in their house for priests to say Mass. Many famous visitors included Bishop Roskell, Dominic

Barbari CP who baptised Teresa's sister Louise and Ignatius Spencer CP.

Teresa had a lively dominant personality and strength of will. Once she made up her mind she would do it come what may. Aged 3, experiencing the mystery of the Blessed Trinity and feeling surrounded by an overwhelming power and majesty, Teresa bowed down and gave herself to God in imitation of Our Lady giving herself to God as a child. When her little brother died it made her realise how a soul feels when separated from God. Also at a young age she sensed the malice of sin, when after ignoring her mother calling her, she realised what she had done and was so upset that she told a visiting the priest, Fr Smith.

The horror of sin and the awful price it had cost Our Blessed Lord were indelibly impressed upon her mind, and her one desire henceforth was to share His pain and to help Him to win back the souls. So at 4 years old, the little girl took up her cross and set out resolutely to accompany Our Lord on the long road to Calvary, and as she grew, her love of suffering for His sake also grew.

In March 1854, aged 10, Teresa and the girls were sent to be educated by the nuns at the Convent of Mercy Nottingham. She was a highly spirited tomboy but had frail health. After falling from a tree she was sent home to recuperate and returned a year later. Still in poor health she spent much time in the convent garden with the wheelchair-bound Sister M Aloysius Perry. Realising her strong willpower Teresa started to control it by vowing to mortify the senses. To advance in holiness she knelt for hours before the Blessed Sacrament, sometimes in desolations, her prayers hard and dry but she persevered. She even got up in the night to say the rosary.

She saw all things through the perspective of humility, knowing that her very weakness was her strength, for it made her cling to Him and feel that "I was truly His and that nothing in myself was my own, only my sins"

When child was told off in class she realised how guilty the girl felt before people, then what must it be like before the all pure God with mortal sin. She offered up her sufferings in reparation for the sins of others. This infuriated the devil, who would shake the Convent. Aged 12, Teresa made her First Communion on 12 April 1857 and was confirmed Agnes on 17 May1857. While sewing, she looked at the statue of Our Lady and child and felt Jesus watching ever stitch and searching her heart.

"My whole soul lay prostrate in adoration at His Sacred Feet. And He made me feel that as I chose to remain in and do this little act of kindness for Him He would stay and keep me company. For I really did for Him and He amply repayed me for my little nothing.

In 1865 Teresa left the convent aged 21. The family went to live in St Helens. The father became bankrupt so they moved to Liverpool. Teresa went round shops and convents to obtain needlework orders. Next the family moved to Egremont. But she stayed at home because of ill-health. In 1871 an epidemic of smallpox occurred. St Alexander's school in Bootle was short of teachers so Fr Powell wrote to Sister Mary Philips, head of Notre Dame Teachers Training College, Mt Pleasant, Liverpool, for a teacher. She had none but recommended Teresa, the sister of Louise, one of her students. Teresa travelled to the Cross and Passion monastery in Little Sutton, St Helens to see Fr Ignatius Spenser. He told her that God had special designs on her, that she had no vocation as a nun but would live in a convent for a while. She did have a vocation to teach.

Though she had not studied, Teresa impressed Fr Powell so much that he sent her to sit the teaching exam, having heard one was due at the College. She passed. After spending 1 year teaching in a village school in Orrell Teresa was passed by the government inspectors. She took up a teaching post at St Mary's Wigan in 1872 and stayed for 3 years. As Teresa lived with her fellow teachers, Miss Susan Ryland and the Miss Catterall sisters, they witnessed strange goings on in the house. Also in the various places the Lord sent Teresa later, people including priests were able to independently testify as to supernatural occurrences. In Wigan the devil was heard throwing her out of bed and made various noises which frightened the others. The women came to realise her strange fits were states of ecstacy - 'darts of love' in which her body would go rigid and nobody could move her or her body became soft and light. She would come out of the ecstacy by command of the parish priest. Minor miracles were noted, such as the sudden appearance of a bar of soap on the table. From Teresa comments to Susan we learn that Our Lady appeared to her. They noticed her rigorous fasts, living on the Eucharist alone, taking no food for up to 3 days. Teresa suffered much, especially in Lent. Miss Ryland took notes of Teresa's conversation as she took part in Our Lord's Passion

'To see O Lord suffer caused a great horror of sin in Teresa.'

Her fellow teachers realised Teresa was privileged with the stigmata as they first noticed bleeding from her hands and feet on Good Friday 1874. Teresa welcomed the pain to pay for the salvation of souls but shrank in humility from others seeing the blood and so knowing about the privilege. The stigmata appeared at various times but disappeared altogether on her deathbed. The trials and sufferings were a more intense purification of Teresa's soul which lead to the **Spiritual Betrothal** on the feast of the Sacred Heart 1874. Christ gave her a ring of thorns. This brought her closer to Christ as she participated in His sufferings.

St Paul - the greater the saint the sterner the conflict

Despite all the sufferings, Teresa was witty humorous and alert, entering whole-hearted into everything she took in hand. She had no interest in clothes, wearing her sisters cast-offs and spending money on books and holy objects for others. She was never cross or out of humour. Always living in the presence of God, Teresa introduced religious topics without boring people. She had a devotion to her guardian angel and would know other people were coming because she recognised their guardian angel, who arrived before them. Her brother tells of her guardian angel carrying a heavy tray upstairs while she remained at the bottom. Her influence with the children was very great and they quickly fell under the charm of her personality. She seemed read their minds and knew if they spoke the truth.

Susan Ryland, her close friend, left to be a Sister of Charity, July 1875 and in December Teresa returned home. She took a job with Fr Lynch in Seacombe then at St Albans, Liscard for short time. In 1977 the Jesuits started a mission at Sabden. Before leaving to take a teaching job there, she had a vision of her father's death in a St Helen's street. The Father died October 13 1875 in a street in St Helens.

In 1897 her health broke so she returned to the family who now lived in Neston as they had charge of the school. Fr Powell had become her spiritual director and Teresa made a solemn vow of obedience to him. He asked her to write down the experiences of her soul. From these letters we learn of the events in her life, the supernatural happenings, her visions, the reasons for the Devotion to the Sacred Head and how God lives in the Soul and how He taught the soul.

Teresa was not happy at Neston as she could not get frequent Communion. Fr Powell got her a post in St Alexander's School Bootle. Teresa remains there from 20/Sept/1879 to 1887 – nearly 8 years.. Though the first revelation concerning devotion to the Wisdom of Christ occurred at Neston, most happened while Teresa was in Bootle. She taught the devotion to the children and spoke of it to friends. Many, to her joy, were enthusiastic. Among them were Father Wilberforce, the well-known Dominican, Father Humphrey, S.J, and Mons. Weld. Bishop O'Reilly of Liverpool gave permission for a book of prayers to be printed.

Teresa first lodged with Mrs Carter then moved to Mrs Nicholson who had a shop next to the church. Her daughter Ellen had a great admiration for Teresa and was later to become a teacher. When Mrs Nicholson died she went to live with her fellow teachers, the Catterall sisters and Elizabeth Roberts. They and the landlady

were to testify to Teresa ecstacys, stigmata and her tremendous self-control.

The devil's banging and dragging noises frightened the people Teresa lodged with. He even impersonated Teresa in order to deceive people, so fuelling rumours and gossip. People argued as to whether she was a hypocrite or not. The unrest caused Bishop O'Reilly to asked other bishops and priests for their opinion. Fr Bertram Willberforce OP and Mons Weld reported that Teresa had profound humility, love of mortification, unhesitating obedience, and her suffering was only paralleled by that of the greatest saints. Fr Hall OSB, was at first in favour, but changed his mind so his unfavourable report led Bishop O'Reilly to tell Teresa to stop writing about the devotion. Fr Powell was moved to Our Lady's Lydiate and told to get another spiritual director for Teresa. Fr Snow, once a curate under Fr Powell at St Alexanders and now at St Mary's Aughton, agreed to take on the task and began studying the mystical life. However Bishop O'Reilly was reported saying "If it is the work of God it will prosper in spit of opposition."

Her mother died while Teresa was at home in 1883. On her return to Bootle the new parish priest who did not believe her, refused her Holy Communion. As Lent was approaching, the Miss Catteralls, on Fr Snows advice, took her to Fr Smith in Walton where she could get Communion.. Her landlady told her not to return and

the Catteralls sisters left as men were brought in to teach the boys.

Teresa could not get a job in Liverpool because of the rumours so she took a post in Eccleshall in 1886 but there was a 5 mile walk to Mass. The school was temporarily closed so Teresa returned to Neston then took a job in Osbaldistone near Blackburn. The church was near and open for visits, but no daily Mass. She went to Newchurch for Lent to where the Catteralls and Ellen Nicholson were now teaching, and stayed 4 months. The parish priest, Fr Musseley, and his housekeeper, Margaret was impressed by Teresa. However the church was $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles away.

At the end of July 1887 Teresa went to visit a friend, Elizabeth Dawson, in Clitheroe and stayed 3 months. Here she was near the church and attended 2 Masses each morning and visited during the day. Elizabeth reported seeing a host come through roof. Teresa's suffering greatly increased till on 24th October, 1887 she experienced the **Mystical Marriage** This is the highest state of union a soul can attain in this life, still God is able to communicate Himself more and more to the

soul and the soul can more and more advance in holiness and merit.

I feel as though I had no heart or soul but that God Himself is my soul and there He shines and rules all in such wonderful wisdom and peace

Teresa did not want to return to Newchurch as the church was so far away that she had even missed Sunday Mass. However she did feel drawn to go to Scotland. Fr Snow's sister was the Reverend Mother of the Mercy nuns at St Catherine's Convent Edinburgh. Teresa remained 12 years with the nuns, continuing the same life of prayer and suffering, participate in the Passion, but with an absolute peace, like a man in clouds above the storm. After the Mystical Marriage Teresa felt power from within. She had not the same thirst to suffer, but felt it better to rest so as to

work. As the body needs nourishment so she took tea and bread with mashed potatoes for lunch. Teresa cooked for the nuns. She taught for a short while at Fr Forbes Leith SJ.'s school in Selkirk, foretelling that some of the children would die in a war of submarines and aeroplanes (The machines had not even been invented). She knew of deaths of people at a distance, bilocating to the deathbed of Bishop Roskell's.

Fr Humphreys SJ and Fr Parker were enthusiastic about the devotion and preached on it. Also a shrine to the Sacred Head was built in the Edinburgh convent. Teresa returned home to Neston on visits in October 1891 and 92. She

revisited Clitheroe (scene of the Mystical Marriage)

Teresa's sister, Fannie took ill so she finally returned home in July 1899. Fanny recovered so she went to Annie Garnett who was ill. Annie and her brother had a shop on Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. Teresa was so happy as she could go to 3 Masses a day, Benediction and Quarante Ore. It is reported that looking through a window in the shop Teresa pointed to the work house for the poor, saying that a Catholic Cathedral will be built there. (In 1938 work began on 'Christ the King' Roman Catholic Cathedral. After the crypt was built the design was changed to a circular one topped with a Crown of Thorns)

To celebrate the Jubilee of 1900, in September Teresa went with a Mrs Fleck on pilgrimage. They visited Paris, Genoa, and Rome, meeting Pope Piux X. Then they travelled to Florence, Venice and Padua. Teresa prayed at the tombs of St Clare and St Francis's of Assisi, as she was a Franciscan Tertiary. Returning to England they attended Mass for the Feast of All Saints at Brompton Oratory. To mark the pilgrimage their guide had a photograph taken. Next Teresa went to nurse Fr Powell and then she went with the Garnet's invalid sister to Bruges in Belgium. Fr Powell died on 26/12/01and was buried in the grounds of his church. Fr Snow was made a Canon. In 1902 Maggie Garnett died so Teresa returned to Neston.

By November 1903 Fr Dowsett, chaplain at Chudleigh in Devon, needed a teacher for the children of the workers on Lord Clifton's estate. He wrote to Sister Mary Philips who contacted Teresa. She took up residence in a small house next to the school in January 1904. She was one mile from the church but could cut across fields if the weather was not too wet. The area is known as The watering can of England' as it often rained. The house was freezing cold, damp and infested with rats. On her return from visiting Neston for Easter, Teresa caught bronchitis. She only stayed because she thought she had a mission there as prior to coming she had a vision of the place. Some repairs were done and the weather improved in the summer. The children loved her. She was always busy with making vestments for the Canon or clothes for the children. On the 14/12/1904 when preparing to return to Neston for Christmas, Teresa was struck by a stroke. Nurse Miss Casey was engaged to look after her. Mrs Statt, the nurse's sister, use to sit and talk to Teresa, promising that if she died she would give Teresa her Franciscan Tertiary habit to be buried in. Teresa had given 3 of hers away. Fr Dowsett gave her the last sacraments and Fr Dawson from Teighmouth visited her. She seemed to get better but took a

turn for the worse. It was decided to send her home in stages. Teresa suffered much, becoming a nervous wreck from the seizures. She told the nurse 'love the will of God and you will enjoy heaven on earth.'

Teresa died 15 February 1905. Nurse Casey laid her in the Franciscan habit. The body was carried into the Clifton's church and the people noticed that her look of suffering gave way to peace and happiness. Teresa's sisters came to take her back to Neston. Snow lay on the ground as Fr Thompson buried her in her mother's grave in the churchyard of St Winefride Neston.

The seventh century St Winefride, figures at both the beginning and end of Teresa's life. Winefride ran away from Prince Cadoc who tried to seduce her, but he caught up with her and cut off her head. Her uncle, St Bueno, prayed for her to be restored to life. She revived and spent the rest of her live as a nun. A well sprung up where her head fell by the church in Holywell. Many people over the centuries have gone there on pilgrimage and bathed in the waters.

Canon Snow, Teresa's spiritual director for over 20 years, collected her letters and other peoples eye-witness accounts and records of Teresa's conversations. Thus we know about Our Lords apparitions and even Our Lady's appearances to her in various places. Especially from Wigan, Bootle and Edinbrugh came reports of her sufferings, fasting, of seeing the Sacred Host alight on her tongue, the stigmata, and hearing but not seeing attacks by the devil. Minor miracles were reported in many places, While visting Fr Musseley and Margaret, living in St Patrick's Manchester, the priest reported seeing Tersa raised in ecstacy to receive the Host. Later, she bilocated from Neston to see Margaret, who had slipped and burnt herself. From her descriptions of people, Teresa is believed to have bilocated to Africa and to Red Indians in North America. When Bishop O'Reilly died she foretold Dr Whiteside would succeed him.

Canon Snow was convinced that Teresa was not only a saint but also one of the greatest saints almighty God has ever raised up in His Church. He studied the Spiritual Life and consulted many priests so he knew Teresa was being prepared for the Mystical Marriage. Therfore it was no surprise to Him when it happened. Canon Snow points out that Teresa was essentially a contemplative and not an active saint. She never did any great outward work. She was always weak and feeble and suffered without ceasing - truly meriting her title of "Spouse of the Crucified."

Teresa's cause for canonisation went to Rome in 1937 and it reached the stage of her being declared 'Servant of God'. The church of St Alexander, where she was told would become a place of pilgrimage, was firebombed in May 1941. Like Walsingham you can destroy the building but you cannot get rid of the site.

The Devotion to the Wisdom of the Sacred Head

Our Lord told Teresa that the devotion would sum up in itself all the worship due to His sacred Humanity, and be the great antidote to the pride of intellect and disbelief which are the crying evils of these latter times.

(read the extracts from Teresa's letters on the back pages).

Prayers of Teresa Higginson

O WISDOM of the Sacred Head, guide me in all my ways. Love of the Sacred Heart, consume me with thy fire.

Three **Glorias**, in honour of the Divine Will, Memory Understanding.

O seat of Divine Wisdom, and guiding Power, which governs all the motions and love of the Sacred Heart, may all minds know Thee, all hearts love Thee, and all Tongues praise Thee, now and for evermore.

Let us Pray

Dearest Jesus, teach me to be generous, teach me to serve Thee as Thou deservest, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to ask for any reward, except to know that I do Thy Will, O my God.

My Lord and my God humbly prostrate before Thee, I adore Thy Sacred Head as the seat of Divine Wisdom, the Shrine of the Powers of Thy most Holy Soul and Intellectual Faculties and the centre of five senses of Thine adorable Body.

When I gaze into the depths of this fathomless abyss of Goodness, Power, and Wisdom, which has contrived and instituted such unheard of ways and means of providing Thine infinite love, and lavishing Thy choicest gifts upon me, Thy poor child, I am lost in astonishment and admiration.

O Light of lights, in whose glorious rays I see fresh mines of wealth in the Sacred Heart; O Son of Justice, in whose intense heat I feel the burning Love that consumes the Sacred Heart.

O Will, which was always in meek subjection to Thy Heavenly Father's, control me in all things, as Thou didst govern all the affections and motions of the Sacred Heart of the God made man.

O Understanding, which knows all things, ever guide me with Thy Light.

O Memory in which the past, present and future are at once reflected, which is ever mindful of me, and always seems studying some new means of giving fresh favours, force me to love Thee more and more.

Complaints of Our Blessed Lord

My Soul is not known. My soul is not loved. Night and day I see living lamps burning before My Altar. My Sacrament of love finds worshippers and victims; but My Soul does not meet with sympathising souls.

Every day I give Myself to My creatures, and swallowed up in this union, they praise everything in Me but My Soul and My Sacred Head crowned with thorns, the Seat of Divine Wisdom.

Each day My Cross is bathed with tears, and the daughters of Zion cannot be comforted, because they see Me without brightness and beauty, but few there are who compassionate the anguish of My Soul, sorrowful unto death. My Heart has found thousands of hearts, but My Soul remains solitary, and My thorn-crowned Brow unhonoured. My Face besmeared, and My Eyes and mouth filled with congealing Blood, and no one is there to wipe it away and refresh My parched Lips and swollen Tongue.

"My Soul is sorrowful even unto death, and I have looked for some one to comfort Me and there is none."

Memorare

Remember O most Holy Soul of my Jesus, all Thou hast done and suffered for my soul, and let it not perish. I beseech Thee, through and anguish that forced Thy very Heart's Blood from Thy Sacred Veins, and I conjure Thee to bathe mine, and all poor sinners, in that precious Stream, which ran down in ruby drops upon the ground. Remember the deep and boundless love Thou hast shown to it, and drive not away from Thee this soul which comes back to Thee fainting under the weight of its miseries and sorrows. O deign to feel for its weakness; behold the dangers which encompass it on all sides, the evils which cause it to sigh and groan.

Full of trust and love, it comes to Thee, O most tender and compassionate of all souls; receive it in Thy Mercy and Goodness; cause it to feel the effects of Thy most plentiful Redemption, and the excess of Thy burning Love. Show Thyself its advocate with Thy Heavenly Father, in the name of all Thy merits Thy humiliations, and sufferings, and grant it strength in all its struggles, and grace to love and console, and thank Thee for all eternity

AMEN.

Soul of Jesus, sorrowful unto death would that I could console Thee in Thy bitter anguish and grief.

LITANY TO THE SACRED HEAD OF JESUS

as the Seat of Divine Wisdom. **IMPRIMATUR:** 26 August 1937. G. Puyo, V.G.

Lord have mercy on us
Christ have mercy on us
Christ have mercy on us
Lord have mercy on us
Lord have mercy on us
Christ have mercy on us
Christ hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us
God the Father of Heaven
Have mercy on us

God the Father of Heaven
God the Son, Redeemer of the world
God the Holy Spirit
Holy Trinity, one God
Have mercy on us
Have mercy on us
Have mercy on us
Have mercy on us

[before each invocation say]
Sacred Head of Jesus

[after each invocation say]
Guide us in all our ways

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"	Formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary	"
66	Substantially united to the Word of God	"
**	Temple of Divine Wisdom	"
66	Hearth of eternal clarities	"
"	Sanctuary of Infinite Intelligence	"
"	Providence against error	"
"	Sun of Heaven and earth	- "
"	Treasure of science and pledge of faith	"
66	Beaming with beauty, justice and Love	"
"	Full of grace and truth	- 66
"	Living lesson of humility	•
"	Reflection of God's Infinite Majesty	"
"	Object of the delights of the Heavenly Father	66
"	Who received the caresses of the Blessed Virgin Mary	"
"	On Whom the Holy Spirit reposed	"
"	Who allowed a reflection of Thy Glory to shine on Thabor	"
"	Who had no place on earth to lay	"
"	To Whom the perfumed ointment of Magdalen was pleasing	"
"	Who deigned to tell Simon that he did not anoint Thy Head when Tho	11
	entered his hou	
"	Bathed in a sweat of Blood in Gethsemani	"
"	Who wept over our sins	66
"	Crowned with thorns	"
"	Disgracefully outraged during the Passion	"

"	Consoled by the loving gesture of Veronica	•
"	That Thou inclined toward the earth at the moment Thou savest us by	
	the separation of Thy Soul from Thy Body on the Cross	•
"	Light of every man coming into the world	
"	Our Guide and our Hope	6
"	Who knows all our needs	6
"	Who dispenses all graces	6
"	Who directs the movements of the Divine Heart	6
"	Who governs the world	6
66	Who will judge all our actions	6
"	Who knows the secrets of our hearts	6
"	That we want to make known and adored by the whole world	6
66	Who ravishes the Angels and the Saints	6
"	That we hope to contemplate one day, unveiled	6
W	e adore Thy Sacred Head, oh Jesus, and we submit ourselves to all the	
	crees of Thine Infinite Wisdom	

LET US PRAY

Oh Jesus, Who deigned to reveal to Thy servant Teresa Higginson Thine immense desire to see Thy Sacred Head adored, grant us the joy to make It known and honoured; let fall on our souls a ray of Thy Light, in order that we may advance from clarity to clarity, conducted by Thine adorable Wisdom to the recompense promised to Thine elect Amen.

After Teresa's death, the following lines were found in her writing book

Father of all, we fain would say, as did Thy only Son,
In every hour of every day, Oh let Thy Will be done.
In thought, in word, in deed, in death, things finished or begun,
Let every transitory breath whisper, Thy Will be done.
In daily cares to thousands known, or known perchance to none,
Let this request be beard above, Oh! Lord, Thy Will be done.
In sickness though some stroke unseen may oft the senses stun,
Let grace suggestive intervene to feel Thy Will be done.
In health, when in its full career the race of man is run,
Let joy be taught by holy fear to pray, Thy Will be done.
Amid the rocks and shoals of life which few can ever shun,
Let peace compose each spark of strife and cry, Thy Will be done.
And when the bow of hope shall blend all colours into one,
Time with eternity shall end with LORD, THY WILL BE DONE

Oh! By the bright and shining light of Thine Eyes, teach me to see Thee in all things; and by Thine Ears, which are ever open to the prayers of the needy, grant that I may ever hear the voice of Thy Church and listen to Thy holy inspirations. Oh! give me always a love and a relish for what is right and just. Let me taste how sweet Thou art. Let me be drawn from the odour of Thy Virtues, and feel for ever the intense joy of seeing, loving, praising, blessing and glorifying Thee for all eternity.

O Flood of Lightl Mine of Wealth! Ocean of goodness! Sea of Mercy! Fountain of Living Waters! Fire of Love! Source of all Good! to Thee I consecrate myself with all that I am or have. O Sacred Head, Seat of Divine Wisdom, Tabernacle of God with man, in Thee I behold at once a celestial and terrestial Paradise, a new Heaven and a new earth: the new Jerusalem coming down from God, out of Heaven, prepared and adorned as a bride, glowing with light and glory, in whose sparkling crystals I behold all the attributes of the Godhead reflected as in a sea of glass. O Rainbow of Peace! O Burning Bush! O Peerless Pearl! Storehouse of the Treasures of God! O Lamp ever burning Brightness unfading! Sun forever shining! O Tree of Life and Life amid Light of those who are Thine! O Seal of the Elect.

O Wisdom without beginning or end! Boundless knowledge! Love so great that we cannot understand it! I raise my prayer of love, reparation and thanksgiving, from the center of the Sacred Heart where I safely hide; and beg of Thee to accept, O my Jesus, all the treasures of this infinite mystery of love and riches in atonement for my coldness, misery and poverty. O Jesus, my beloved Jesus, I love Thee far more than I can tell; Jesus, my spouse and my treasure, I grieve that Thou art so little known and so much offended. Jesus, my Life and my Light may all minds know Thee, all hearts love Thee and all tongues praise Thee, now and for ever more Amen

Jesus, Jesus! O Seat of Divine Wisdom, have mercy on me. O Sacred Head and loving Heart, guide me with Thy light, and consume me with Thy fire. Amen

Prayer for the spread of Devotion to The Sacred Head of Our Blessed Lord.

O Infinite Wisdom, boundless Love, how unsearchable are Thy ways. Make known, O Lord, Thy desire to have Thy Sacred Head honoured as the Seat of Divine Wisdom, and to have Thy Holy Soul, sorrowful unto death, comforted. Arise and show that Thou art the Almighty God.

Make known the burning desire of Thy Sacred Heart. Make haste, O Lord, for Thy own dear sake. Do not delay; I conjure Thee through Thy most Precious Blood, and for Thy bitter Passion's sake.

I ask Thee, O ever Blessed Trinity, in the holy name of Jesus, in honour of his same Seat of Divine Wisdom, and through the burning love of His Sacred Heart; I ask Thee in the name of Mary and Joseph, and for the salvation of souls, that Thou wilt make known and spread this Devotion.

O Lord Thou knowest the desire with which I desire to satisfy Thee; yet how weak and helpless I am; and how little is yet done. Speak, Lord, and say what Thou wouldst have us do.

Teresa's Prayer To Mary

"O Mary, I implore Thee by all the love and homage Thou hast bestowed on this Seat of Divine Wisdom before which the Cherubim and Seraphin lie prostrate in awe and trembling, fear and love, by this Sacred Head which Thou hast so often pressed on Thy Immaculate Heart and pillowed on Thy bosom. Oh Mary and Joseph, oh ye Choirs of Angels and glorious Assembly of Saints, raise now your minds, your hearts, and your hands to the adorable Trinity and beg the Holy of Holies to look upon these warn vermilion drops of priceless worth, The Precious Blood of Jesus that have obeyed to the orders of His Divine Wisdom; ask Him through His obedience unto death, through the Wisdom and Love He has displayed towards His creatures, to arise and spread this light over the whole face of the earth. Where should we all be if it were not for His Infinite Wisdom and Love? In the Nothingness out of which Ho called all things. Then let all creatures acknowledge, praise, bless and love this Wisdom, let them adore the Sacred Head or Jesus as its Seat. Not my will but Thine be done. I mean that I am ready to await Thy good pleasure, but Oh Lord. Thou knowest how this fire burns within me, Thou knowest all things. My love and my desires are not hidden from Thee

Prayer to Jesus sorrowful unto death.

Remember, O most sorrowful Soul of my Jesus, the fearful agony that Thou didst endure, when plunged into the depths of Thy Father's Justice and Wrath, Thou didst cry out, "My Father, if it be possible, let this bitter Chalice pass from Me; nevertheless not My Will but Thine be done;" and when overwhelmest in deepest woe, Thou didst complain that "Thy Soul was sorrowful, event unto death;" and when agonizing, dying and deserted by all, even by Thine eternal Father, these words of wondrous mystery were wrung from Thee. "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me!"

Remember the sights, the groans, the anguish of soul, the agony of mind, and the breaking of Thy Loving Heart. Remember the many stripes, the blows, the insults, the blasphemies, the thorns, the blood, the tears, the stripping of thy garments, the shame, the prayers, the separation of Thy holy Soul from Thine adorable Body.

Remember the Wisdom of Thy Sacred Head, that contrived so much suffering, and would thus prove the Love of Thy Sacred Heart, for the souls of Thy children. Remember too, what Mary suffered. Remember the price I have cost Thee, and when Thou beholdest. all these fearful tortures, have mercy and pity on my soul and forgive me through Thy Precious Blood Why, O my crucified, loving Jesus, are so many souls in darkness amid sin? Art Thou not the Almight God? The God of Wisdom of Knowledge of Light.

Art 'Thou not our Creator, our Redeemer, our Sanctification, our holy and strong God? Why then is our enemy and Thine so bold? O Lord, for the love Thou hast for souls, for the price we have cost Thee, for the glory of Thy Name, arise arid show that Thou art the Living God. Lighten up every darkness by the Light of Thy Divine Wisdom; expel all heresies by spreading the truth of Thy doctrines, and the beauty of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith throughout all nations.

Consume all hearts with the burning Fire of Thy Love. Draw all souls to Thy Soul, that we may console and comfort Thee here, by weeping over sin, which is the cause of Thine intense sorrow. Hide us, dear Jesus in Thy wounds, bathe our souls in Thy most precious Blood. Stamp Thy Sacred Head and Face deeply in our hearts and souls that we may never forget Thee, nor the sorrow we have caused Thee. Remember us, Lord, in Thy Kingdom, Grant us pardon and peace here and eternal happiness in the world to come. Let us keep near Thee, Jesus, in Thy sorrow, that we may be found worthy to dwell for ever with Thee, the Father, and the Holy Spirit, One God in three distinct Persons, in the world without end. Jesus, Mary, Joseph AMEN

Prayer For The Beatification of TERESA HELENA HIGGINSON

O Jesus by Thy bitter Passion; O hidden God by all Thy yearning love for men in the Blessed Sacrament, grant, we humbly beseech Thee, that if it be for Thy greater glory and the good of souls, the halo of the Blessed may soon be placed on the head of Teresa Higginson, Thy servant. Amen.

TERESA'S LAST WORDS

Do not fear, dear child, but put your hand with loving confidence into your Father's hand and He will guide you safely through every path Where the road is rough and stoney He will carry you in His arms."

We worship Jesus, The seat of divine wisdom and we submit our souls and bodies to all her decrees

Jesus my true, my only Good I wish for naught but Thee Behold me all Thine own, my God, Do what thou wilt with me

Holy Mary, Our Lady of Wisdom, Saint Joseph, Foster father of Jesus and patron of the Universal Church

Pray for us

PRAYER FOR ENGLAND

Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England, your Dowry, and upon us all who greatly hope and trust in you. By you it was that Jesus, our Saviour and hope, was given to the world; and he has given you to us that we may hope still more. Plead for us your children, whom you did receive and accept at the foot of the Cross, O sorrowful Mother. Intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the one true fold they be united to the Chief Shepherd, the Vicar of your Son. Pray for us all, dear Mother, that by faith fruitful in good works we may all deserve to see and praise God, together with you in our heavenly home.

Amen.

Passages taken from Teresa's letters and her spiritual director

Teresa's letter s on Our Lord's reason for the Devotion

In these days of pride, self-will, rebellion against His Church and intellectual pride He wishes that sacred Head, treated with such mockery and crowned with thorns, to be publicly and specially adored as the special Seat of Eternal Wisdom, the Shrine of the Will - so tortured (as man sins especially with the will) by His taking upon Himself all the sins of the world, so awful for the will of an all-pure God to do; of the memory clearly cognisant of every sin of every individual; of the understanding grasping iniquity by the full knowledge of God's Justice and Holiness. These powers of the Soul of our blessed Lord being specially dwelt upon complete the devotion to the sacred Heart, thus revealing the springs so to say of His love.

Lately He has let her participate in the sufferings of His Divine Soul. Unspeakable as where the sufferings of His Body yet they are but a drop in the ocean compared with what His soul endured. As man's soul is the seat of guilt, our blessed Lord through His Passion, but particularly in the Agony in the garden took upon Himself the punishment due to every sin that would ever be forgiven – in fact equal to an eternity of Hell for each mortal sin.

St John He said that as by the cunning and deceit of the devil man first fell from God in Paradise and incurred darkness of intellect and death - so in these later days of darkness, self-indulgence intellectual pride and conceit, the brightness of eternal light into which no defiled thing cometh shall shine out more glorious and brilliant than ten thousand suns, and the image of God's goodness and majesty and power shall be seen in this unspotted mirror of truth, purity knowledge and love. (last 2 chapters of the book of revelations)

The Soul

And this is what I understand-that as the **Reason or Intellect** in us is that part of the soul that is nearest to God-is in a special manner the image of God, nay, is the very light of God in the soul, in which we see God as He is, and ourselves as we are, and are capable of judging right from wrong. And as the head is the seat of the reasoning powers, and the faculties of the mind repose therein, so from the sacred Head shine forth in a blaze of resplendent light all knowledge, wisdom, understanding and a guiding power to direct and govern the Will and Affections of the Sacred Heart; and in this is seen the connection of the desired Devotion-the ruling powers of the sacred Heart are seated in the sacred Head. I will not enter further into detail for I think what you wish to know is clear. The soul pervades

every part of the body, but as the reasoning powers are the highest faculties of the soul, and as the head is said to contain or be the Shrine of these faculties in a special way and the memory is said to exist in the brain, so the reason guides and directs the will and love or affections of the human heart. The head is the highest and noblest part of man but I do not mean that the soul is divided, no, these three powers though really distinct cannot be separated no more than the Persons of the adorable Trinity could be separated - they form together but one soul which is immortal and perfect in its powers when filled with sanctifying Grace as is the holy Soul of Jesus. And our dear B. Lord gave me to understand that though He was much offended by the sins committed through the weakness of the will and misled affections, yet the sins of the intellect far exceeded those in number and in magnitude. And as the sins of intellectual pride were now (more than ever) drawing away souls from the love and service of His holy church and filling Hell with souls, when this so called light of the nineteenth century (as a will O' the wisp) is leading men to think only of gaining painted shadows and empty bubbles,

The Trinity dwelling in the Soul

"In speaking of the feeling I spoke about, I do not refer to that sweet peace and sublime quiet which fills the soul, and in which the brightness of eternal life teaches the soul the hidden secrets of the King her divine Spouse and makes her understand the truth that God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are substantially united to her and dwell in unitv of essence in the inner chamber of her soul, filling her with a most perfect knowledge of the power of God, of herself, and the nothingness of all created things. It seems to me that at times the thrice Holy Trinity treat the soul as though she were their guest, condescending to lavish caresses upon her.

Teresa Relates How God Teaches A Soul

Our b. Lord places in the very centre of the soul those things which He wishes her to know, without any words or image being formed, and this comparison will make clear I think what I mean - that as one looking glass casts those things that are reflected in it to another, so the soul being entirely in God, He impresses, infuses, or reflects in her what He desires she should learn. And sometimes He does this without the powers of the soul being suspended or the senses of the body being lost, certainly they are riveted so to speak and made to drink in whatever He desires. But oh my Father who shall find words to express the delight and glory the whole being enjoys at being thus instructed by so heavenly a tutor!

Working of Holy Spirit

The more we practise devotion to the sacred Head the more we must see of the working of the holy Spirit of God in the human soul, and the better we will know and love the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost who are ever in a unity of Essence though in a Trinity of Persons

Teresa was always aware of the presence of Our Lord

It may seem strange to you, dear Rev. Father, for me to say or think that our dear Lord was actually by my side in the manner I have described, particularly as the Church teaches our dear Lord is only in Heaven and in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar in this manner. Yet I have felt His real bodily presence, present with me, going with me where I went, and watching with His sacred human Eye everything I did - not by His presence in my soul, but standing by my side and listening to every word and counting every notion of my whole being.

Teresa was fearful of betraying Our Lord

But ecstasies and visions notwithstanding, Teresa never for an instant thought that she could slacken in her battle against self. To the end she feared she might turn traitor, and often begged for prayers lest she should become "a castaway." One of her favourite sayings was: "Small straws show which way the wind blows," meaning that it is the little things which prove our attitude towards God.

Fr Snow's reply to Teresa about Vows

You must distinguish in your mind between a perfect tale of life and a state of perfection. The religious is the most - perfect state of life but anyone can with God's 'grace reach a state of perfection in any state of life. And you have also to distinguish between what is best and more perfect in itself and what is best and more perfect with regard to each individual. Now no one can possibly be in a more perfect state than to fulfil in everything the Will of God and have one's will made one with the Will of God. And he gives most glory to God who most perfectly fulfils His Will. So if one person in obedience to God's Will takes no vows and if another in obedience to God's Will takes private vows and another in obedience to God's Will takes vows in religion, all three cannot do anything more perfect or give more glory to God in that particular matter.

The Virtue Of Kindness

Towards the end of her life Teresa was asked which virtue she had practised most and her answer was: "My dear, I don't ever remember missing an opportunity of being kind, for nothing makes us resemble our dear Lord so much as kindness." She then went on to explain how people may be self-denying, merciful, even charitable, and yet not kind. True kindness she said must be a conscious imitation of Our Lord, and by this beautiful apostolate many souls may be won for Him, for kindness brings happiness, softening hearts and preparing them for His grace. How perfectly she herself carried out this teaching is amply confirmed by all who knew her.

Teresa had A great devotion to Our Lady

"Our dear b. Lady was represented to me in her glorified body, not that I could notice her exact appearance only I knew or understood that she was there in person. I experienced such a love and admiration and astonishment at the excess of glory and knowledge, wisdom and love which was hers that I could no if I had wished describe or form a picture of her in her corporal form. It was her wisdom and knowledge and therefore her love for God and God's goodness to her that was most impressed upon the soul, and I felt that Jesus was so proud of the work of His hand and I felt something of that glory that she rendered to the adorable Trinity

Teresa was very sensitive to the effect of sin. - Stench Of Sin

Sins horrible stenches, each according to its kind, and I verily believe that if almighty God allowed the stench of one mortal sin of impurity to be felt upon the earth, every-thing would be poisoned by its foulness. Oh how horrible is the disgust felt even by us poor sinners when we take upon ourselves the sins of others - if we were to wrap ourselves in a decomposed body what a terrible loathing we should experience, and yet this is nothing compared to the loathing disgust the soul endures, for the senses of the body cannot convey the smallest idea what the sensitive part of the soul is capable of enduring.

Suffering of the Soul of Jesus

Think of the terror of the soul that departs this life in mortal sin as it stands before the all pure God to be judged. Oh what a terror filled the Soul of Jesus as Ho took upon Himself the sins of the whole world and not only stood before, but was actually drawn into the infinite purity and infinite justice of His eternal Father. His understanding comprehended God in the very essence, knew His infinite purity, dread holiness, and strict justice on one hand, and He saw sin as He only can see it

He saw sin as He only can see it in all its infinite malice on the other, and knew that He must pay to the last farthing. He knew the hatred the adorable Trinity have for sin and read its punishment in God. He knew the base ingratitude of sinners and the cowardice of His friends. He saw the whole of Hell let loose against Him: but what are all these? They are as nothing beside the suffering inflicted by the impress of the Finger of God's justice upon Him, for He writhed in agony of Soul beneath its touch. He was drawn into the divine Justice - all the weight of His wrath was upon Him. The flood-gates of heaven were opened and the fountains of the great deep broken up and the torrent of God's vengeance rushed in upon Him, His thunderbolts were hurled against Him-Oh my God Thy very words are works and what Thou dost is well done. When Hell was created to punish sin how well qualified it was to do its work! But this is but a creature, but *here* God Himself touches the soul with the intent to cause it to suffer, how then can one be compared to the other, only so far as to say as the Creator is above the creature so is the suffering caused by one above the other, and beside this the flames of hell grow cold.

Teresa receives the marks of the Cross - the STIGMATA

"And when I was at Wigan in 1874, on the Friday morning in Passion Week, my Lord and my God gave me the marks of His five Sacred Wounds which I earnestly begged of Him to remove, but to give me an increase if possible of the pain. During all the following week they bled, and Fr. Wells saw one of them on the Good Friday,* after which that disappeared, the others having done so earlier in the morning, and on several occasions they have reopened.

The first stage to union with Christ-THE MYSTICAL ESPOUSALS

On the feast of the Sacred Heart of the same year, when I was making a visit to the most Blessed Sacrament Our Lord p laced a small crown of thorns, joined by a cross of unspeakable beauty as a ring on the finger next to the little finger on my left hand, giving me to understand that thorns and crosses are the portion of those He chooses for His own, that He had accepted the offering I had so often made of myself and that I must consider myself for the future to be entirely His even as had given Himself entirely to me, and as proof that this was no delusion, he told me that I should feel the thorns and cross which this little ring symbolised.

The Mystical Marriage

Both St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross use language similar to that of Miss Higginson in speaking of the Mystical Marriage. St. Teresa says: 'More cannot be said than that the soul *become one with God*. It is like water descending from heaven into a river or spring where one is so mixed with the other that it cannot be discerned which is the river and which is the rain water.'

St. John of the Cross says: 'The soul becomes *divine* and by participation God.' 'As by natural marriage these are two in one flesh so also in the spiritual marriage between God and the soul there are two natures in one spirit and love, as we learn from St. Paul who made use of the same metaphor saying 'He who is joined to the Lord is one Spirit'

The Devotion will be the means of the Conversion of England

When I knelt to adore the thrice Blessed Trinity for all the glory of the sacred Humanity, I was caught up as it were and dissolved in the excessive heat and glory of the Sun of divine Justice, and I heard sounds of praise and songs of joy in the heavens which echoed and re-echoed from the earth, and they were hymns of thanks-giving and admiration of the Seat of divine Wisdom. Then I saw reflected in the large crystal the glory which the ever blessed Trinity would receive from the Devotion to the sacred Head and the numberless souls that would be guided by its light to the bosom of the true Church and eventually to the throne of God. I understand too that this should be the one great means of the conversion of poor dear England, and that it was not far distant when she would bow her understanding to the obedience of faith and repair in some manner through this Devotion the great evil of her apostasy, and that Mary's name and Mary's Son should be more honoured than ever they had been dishonoured by our people.

England has been called "Mary's Dower"

"He urged me to pray for true light faith and wisdom for all especially heretics and all poor sinners, and made me feel that the people of our dear land should shine in the brightness of this true light and bring back more souls through this Devotion than they had scattered through the darkness of their infidelity. And it seemed to me that Mary prayed with me and reminded Him her Divine Son that this England is called her Dower and He filled her hands with graces and blessing for us and a new glory as it were shone around her the reflection of the glory that surrounds the Seat of divine Wisdom. And our B. Lord renewed all the promises He has made to bless, etc. all who practise or further this devotion in any way."