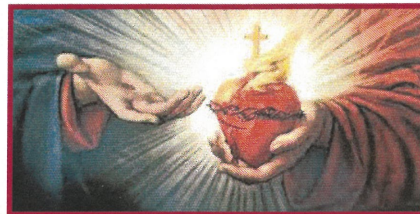


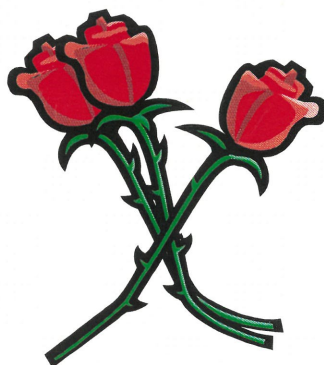
God is Love

“Mama!” cried Anna Maria, running towards her mother, who caught her in her arms. “Will you tell me who is God?” Camilla smoothed the hair away from the serene forehead of this serious-minded child of hers. “God is love,” she said softly. “He loves you and wants you to love Him. He made you because He loves you and wishes to have you forever with Him in heaven, which you will be if you are good and love Him with all your heart.”

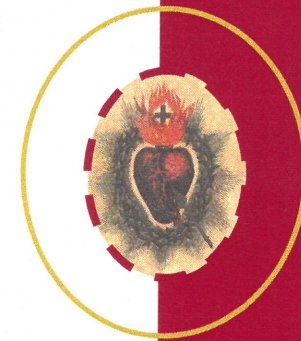


“I am resolved to give complete obedience in everything without exception, not only to my superiors, but also to my equals and inferiors, so as to learn from you, my God, who made yourself obedient in far more difficult circumstances than those in which I find myself.”

Saint Teresa Margaret Redi



St. Teresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart, O.C.D.



The Lily of Florence
1747 - 1770

She was born Anna Maria Redi in Arezzo, Italy, on 15 July 1747, the second of thirteen children all of whom became religious or priests, except for two who died in infancy. Anna was a happy child who from an early age wanted to be a saint, and showed this in her kindness to the poor.

When she was nine years old, she went to a Benedictine school and later considered entering the Benedictines. But then she spoke with a friend who was going to become a Carmelite. During this conversation, Anna had a strong sense of the presence of St Teresa of Avila and believed that she, too, was being called to Carmel. She did not rush into things but took time to discern this call. At the age of 17 she announced her decision to enter Carmel, which took everyone by surprise.

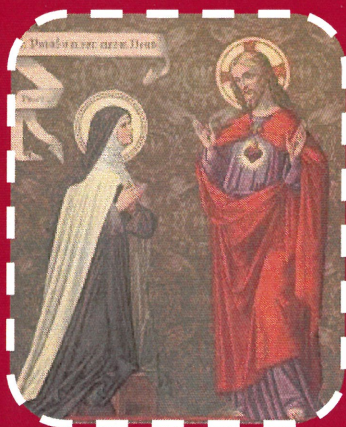
Anna entered the Discalced Carmelite Nuns in Florence on 1 September 1764. She was clothed in the Carmelite habit on 10 March 1765 and Professed on 12 March 1766. She took the name Teresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart.

Sr Teresa Margaret stood out for her charity; she would never speak ill of others and would not allow gossip or criticism. She also showed charity in small acts of service for the other sisters and chiefly through her work in the monastery infirmary. Those who were sick often asked for her and she offered to take care of the more difficult ones, including a sister who was suffering from dementia and whom the other sisters found difficult to cope with.



Sr Teresa Margaret treated her with great patience and compassion. She had a great devotion to Christ crucified, “the captain of love,” who held high “the standard of the Cross”. She made a resolution in 1758 to be motivated only by love and the will of God. She was often heard to exclaim “God is love!”

Sr Teresa Margaret died from appendicitis at the age of 23 on 7th March 1770 and her incorrupt body is venerated at the Carmelite monastery in Florence. She was beatified by Pope Pius XI on 9 June 1929 and Canonized by the same Pope on 19 March 1934. Edith Stein was a novice in Carmel at this time and was given permission to write one of the first short biographies of the new Carmelite saint.



Poem

From my beloved cell
where I dwell in peace
(if one finds it to his liking)
I am coming to greet you...

Truly I have great pleasure
in entering the monastery;
but my joys shall be greater still
when I find myself really within...

Permit me at least
to embrace you with delight
and show you at the same time
the happiness of my heart...

I find such great pleasure
in this delightful sojourn
that it seems only a day
that I have been here...

Never as at present
have I been happy and content,
I am well; but sickness nor
suffering frightens me.

My delights will always be
to keep joyous
this wonderful company
and to see it rested...

A poem to her father Sir Ignatius Redi
December 1764

