



School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Atlantic-Midwest Province

## “Being People of Encounter”

Commemorating the Feast Day of  
Blessed Theresa of Jesus  
Gerhardinger

**Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Hymn:** [A True Encounter](#), by  
Tony Alonso, Chris de Silva, Liam  
Lawton

### **Call to Prayer**

We commemorate this feast day of Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, remembering that we are made to be in relationship with the Triune God, with creation and with others. We are called to be people of encounter. In this encounter, we realize the dignity of the human person and the call to care for all creation. We, Sisters, Associates and Colleagues, ask for your intercession Blessed Theresa, as we journey as one, encountering as you did.

(Pause)

### **Reading**

Human beings are so made that they cannot live, develop and find fulfilment except “in the sincere gift of self to others”. Nor can they fully know themselves apart from an

encounter with other persons: “I communicate effectively with myself only insofar as I communicate with others.” No one can experience the true beauty of life without relating to others, without having real faces to love. This is part of the mystery of authentic human existence. “Life exists where there is bonding, communion, fraternity; and life is stronger than death when it is built on true relationships and bonds of fidelity. On the contrary, there is no life when we claim to be self-sufficient and live as islands.” (Pope Francis, *Frattelli Tutti*, no. 87)

(Pause)

### **Reflection Question**

How am I fostering a culture of encounter in my life, community and ministry?

(Pause)



## **Prayers of the Faithful**

**Prayer Leader:** Let us encounter the Triune God through prayer. Blessed Theresa, help us to root ourselves more deeply in prayer, cultivating a loving and trusting relationship with God. May we realize our vocation more deeply as you did.

**Response:** “Our encounter with the living God forms us into a community which expresses and nourishes its life in a special way in communal prayer. Praying together in community opens us to a deeper relationship with God, with one another, and with all people.” (YAS, C29)

**Prayer Leader:** Let us encounter our sisters and brothers different from us. Blessed Theresa, draw us out of ourselves to others in life. As you saw the potential in little girls to transform society, help us to see the potential in others, no matter their race, color, ethnicity, faith and socioeconomic status.

**Response:** “True and sincere love of our neighbor is at the same time the infallible criterion of our love of God.” (4307).

**Prayer Leader:** Let us encounter creation on a deeper level, realizing that we are called to communion. Blessed Theresa, help us to care for

creation, knowing that we are all interconnected and future generations are inheritors of our actions today.

**Response:** “An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us, whose presence “must not be contrived but found, uncovered,” (*Laudato Si'*, no. 225).

**Prayer Leader:** Let us encounter one another through open dialogue. Blessed Theresa, help us engage openly with others in a charitable manner, sowing seeds of peace.

**Response:** “Each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, by uniting and not dividing, by extinguishing hatred and not holding on to it, by opening paths of dialogue and not by constructing new walls.” (*Frattelli Tutti*, no. 284)

**Prayer Leader:** Let us encounter others in moments of crisis. Blessed Theresa, strengthen our resolve to work for systemic change to address issues of racism, climate change, immigration, poverty, and human trafficking.

**Response:** “We work actively, especially in our local situations, to eliminate the root causes of injustice in order to realize a world of peace, justice, and love,” (YAS, C17).

**Prayer Leader:** Let us encounter change with increased faith. Blessed Theresa, amidst transitions that we are experiencing in our lives and ministries, may we learn to embrace the moment, trusting and daring as you did.

“Trust in God and walk in his ways; then he will also be with you – the infinitely good and merciful God,” (714).

### Closing Prayer



**Prayer Leader:** Journeying together as Sisters, Associates and Colleagues, we embrace the courage to encounter as Blessed Theresa did. In our encounters, may we foster transformation in the world through the

mind and the heart. Through encountering, may there be transformation of persons – of self and others.

**Response:** Amen.

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Transforming the world through education

The **Department of Ministry Services** gratefully acknowledges Sister John Vianney Zullo, SSND for her support in designing this year’s feast day prayer.