

Feast Day
MAY 9, 2025

Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger:

COMPELLED BY THE URGENT CRISIS OF HER TIME

CALL TO PRAYER

Let us gather in spirit and in hope on the feast day of Blessed Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, who responded with courage and faith to the urgent needs of her time.

OPENING PRAYER

God of all times, you called Bl. Theresa to see the suffering and needs of her world and to act with compassion, wisdom and unwavering trust in your providence. As we remember her today, we, too, are surrounded by urgent crisis – of global climate change and changing geopolitical and social climates, increasing division, the migration of people, poverty, injustice and *[please name additional crisis that are close to your heart...]*. Inspire us by her resilience and vision, compel us to live the Gospel in our time. Let us respond with an open, fearless and hopeful heart, along with willing hands and feet.

SONG - Carrie Newcomer – [You Can Do This Hard Thing](#) [4:00 min]



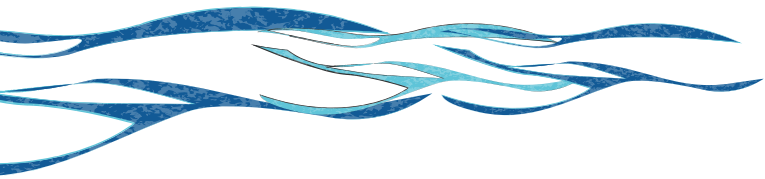
“Resilience is really a secular word for what religion was trying to say with the word ‘faith’. Even Jesus emphasized faith more than love. Without a certain ability to let go, to trust, to allow, we won’t get to any new place. [...] To have faith, to grow toward love, union, salvation, or enlightenment, we must be moved from order to disorder and then ultimately to reorder.” - Richard Rohr, OFM

[Click here](#) to read the full meditation from the Center for Action and Contemplation

“When something good is to come into being, opposition is never lacking [...]. If a tree is to strike deep roots, it must be jolted and joggled.”¹

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, [...] They are like a tree planted beside the water that stretches out its roots by the stream. It does not fear heat when it comes; its leaves stay green; in the year of draught it shows no distress, but still produces fruit. - *Jeremiah 17:7-8*

¹ Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, Introduction Document 2699, September 2, 1858



REFLECTION & SHARING

Recall times...

... when Blessed Theresa and the early congregation needed to be resilient in response to the urgent needs of her time.

... in your life that required resilience of the congregation/personal life.

What is currently demanding

your and SSNDs resilience considering today's urgent crisis?

What helps you

build and maintain resilience?

PRAYER OF THE COMMUNITY

Inspired by *The Call of the 25th General Chapter*

Prayer Leader (PL): Compelled by the Urgent Crisis of Our Times...

We seek to heal divisions and fractured relationships through **forgiveness...**

ALL: Let us lay aside all unkindness, bearing each other's weaknesses patiently, lovingly offering one another the hand of forgiveness before the sun sets!

-Bl. Theresa [4760]

PL: We seek to heal divisions and fractured relationships through **reconciliation...**

ALL: We expand our understanding of interculturality and commit to developing skills in community and society. - *According to YAS GD 36*

PL: We seek to heal divisions and fractured relationships through **dialogue...**

ALL: Let us turn away from hurting words and anger and turn to kind words and patience ... - *Pope Francis (from: Do you want to fast this Lent?)*

PL: We seek to heal divisions and fractured relationships through **compassion...**

ALL: Use mercy and compassion, then God will be merciful to us. - *Mother Caroline*

PL: We seek to heal divisions and fractured relationships through **peacemaking...**

ALL: The Triune God impels us into the heart of the world to be women of peace, hope and love. - *Love Gives Everything*

PL: We seek to heal divisions and fractured relationships through **[add your own actions or behaviors]...**

ALL: Love gives everything gladly, everything again and again daily. - *Bl. Theresa [1]*



CLOSING MEDITATION

Carrie Newcomer - If Not Now [3:48 min]

CLOSING BLESSING BY BLESSED THERESA

Herewith I solemnly commend all the sisters to the most Holy Trinity. May the God of Creation, care for you all and keep you steadfast and faithful in your holy vocation! May the God of Redemption deliver you from all evil of sin and be the way you walk, the truth you follow and the life you lead! May the Holy Spirit sanctify and preserve you in his love and grace! May Mary, the mother of divine grace and mother of our congregation, take you all into her loving, maternal heart and stand by you in life and death! **AMEN.**

- *Trust and Dare May 9, [719] (adapted)*



The Department of Mission Formation gratefully acknowledges SSND Associate Jean Fredricks for her collaboration in developing this year's feast day prayer.

Graphic Design: Laura Stafford

