



**Teresa Gallifa:  
a valiant YES  
to life.**

**Servants of the Passion.**

*Sr. María José Ameigeiras*

# Jubilaeum

Defending life was the vocation, the ideal and the dream, which gave birth to the work of venerable Mother Teresa Gallifa y Palmarola (20 June 1850 – 17 March 1907). Teresa was an exemplary daughter, a model wife, a selfless mother, a courageous widow and a religious in love with her crucified Lord.

In the strongly Catholic Catalonia region of Spain, her mother taught her to follow the ways of God and to be a Christian who matured throughout her life. At the age of seventeen her prayer was courageous and persevering-- *“My God, by your Passion, let me know what you want from me. I only want to do your will.”*

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# Jubilaeum

FORMATION AND CATECHESIS

It is inspiring to observe the story of the invitations that God offered Teresa throughout her life and how she responded generously in all situations. At the age of nineteen, with the help of her mother, a priest and personal prayer, she clearly discerned her vocation and mission to the married life. She married the young Manuel Benito Codolosa and together they had seven children.

Their home was a school of prudence, tenderness, patience, and prayer. With perseverance, Teresa encouraged her husband to change his difficult character and become a good and kind man. God subjected her to trials that culminated in poverty, sickness, and death. One after another she lost five of her children at very young ages, but, to Teresa's joy, they were all baptized. Later, while caring for a family that was afflicted with typhus, she became ill and infected her husband, who after a long convalescence failed to fully recover and died, leaving her a widow at the age of thirty-two, with two small children.

Consequently, Gallifa had to emigrate to the Spanish city of Vich. In the first months she lived by begging for alms. Later she worked taking care of children until, in Barcelona, she obtained the title

of midwife, a profession that she exercised with great success in the cities of Manlleu and Vich.

Her favorite prayer, *"My God, by your Passion, let me know what you want from me. I only want to do your will"*, became the moving force of her life and work. Praying this prayer and gazing at Christ Crucified, she asked for light to discern her vocation and the courage to care for her only living son and to do the work she was called to do. Every day and especially in all the painful events of her life Teresa prayed--*"Thy will be done."*

She then began to care for children in need and, little by little, her new family would be composed of the poor and marginalized and, especially unmarried young mothers who were the object of social criticism.

Truly the love of Christ Crucified gave her the strength to commit herself to this difficult task, without sufficient financial means and with great opposition, even from within the Church. Her great interest in caring for children and all those who came into contact with her led her to found an association that in time, would be called the CONGREGATION of the SERVANTS OF THE PASSION.



# Jubilaem

FORMATION AND CATECHESIS



Teresa, a strong woman, unwavering in her faith and selfless in love, is a witness for all Christians who can and must be present in the world at the service of the humblest and of the voiceless.

More than a hundred years have passed since this woman, moved by the Spirit of God, sowed the seemingly insignificant seed of a Work that she was born to promote, that developed over time, but which responded to the pressing needs of the moment, i.e. the life and rights of every human person, beginning with the right to be born and become a child of God.

It was a Work that began, like the things of God, in the simplest and most natural way, i.e. when Mother Teresa, instead of a monument, placed in the center of her heart the first abandoned woman who was expecting a child and who no one even wanted to look at. Thus, little by little, she was making a missionary maxim a reality with an evangelical air: *"I would go anywhere to save a soul! A life!"*

These are women who would dedicate themselves to meditating on Christ in the first Station of the Way of the Cross and seeing in Christ condemned to death those who are most unjustly condemned, i.e. in those who have not yet been born.

As a model of merciful action, Teresa Gallifa took our Lady of the Visitation as an example of love, humility, and generous service. The Servants of the Passion ask her every day to intercede *"that we be bearers of God like you."*

On 17 March 1907, Mother Teresa died in Barcelona, after a long and painful illness that did not prevent her from creating several associations of midwives, and of young people and adults that evangelized in the social environment of that time. Her remains currently rest in the chapel of the Generalate in Barcelona. In 1972, in Barcelona, the process of the Beatification and Canonization of Mother Teresa Gallifa y Palmarola began and on June 25, 1996, His Holiness St. John Paul II declared her Venerable, recognizing the heroism of her theological and cardinal virtues in the various states of her life.

