

MY HEART SPEAKS TO THEE

—THE LIFE OF MARIE ROSE FERRON

By: Little Rose Friends



**Marie Rose Ferron –“Little Rose” (1902-1936)
American Mystic, Stigmatic, Victim Soul**

*“Oh Jesus, the happiness I have in loving You far outweighs the
martyrdom that I endure.” -Little Rose Ferron*

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BY: L. R. FRIENDS



Little Rose in ecstasy at Christmas time. In the background is her first manger. On her dresser are statues of St. Joan of Arc, Jesus carrying the Cross, St. Therese and St. Gemma Galgani. She is 23.

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The factual statements concerning Marie Rose Ferron presented in this booklet are taken mainly from Rev. Father O. A. Boyer's book "*She Wears A Crown Of Thorns*" and from personal interviews with close relatives and friends.

CHAPTER I

An ordinary girl with an extraordinary life is the simplest way of beginning the life of Marie Rose Ferron; the heroine of suffering and victim of love from Woonsocket, Rhode Island and, whose life is one that has reached from one side of the earth to the other, touching the hearts of the rich and the poor alike, and having a very special way of reaching the simple ones as well as the hearts of hardened sinners. She suffered and prayed in place of friends and relatives and had a special love for priests whom she called "other Christs". Rose acquired this great love and faith from her parents, John Baptist Ferron and Delima Mathieu. Their life was one of poverty but very rich in love and faith. In those surroundings the life of Rose Ferron bloomed into one of the most beautiful roses in God's heavenly Garden, whose petals are more and more falling to all parts of the earth, touching the hearts and souls of those who are stumbling in the dark.

This Rose was born on May 24, 1902 in St. Germain de Grantham in Quebec, Canada. She was named after the Blessed Mother Mary, the Mystical Rose, and to her family and friends she was "Little Rose".

The Ferron family moved to Fall River, Massachusetts when Rose was three years old. She was always ready to sing and play but just as ready to pray; she already had devotion to St. Anthony of Padua and to the Cross. It was at this time that the Child Jesus appeared to her. He was carrying a cross and looked at her with grief in His Eyes; He spoke to her and she spoke to Him.

At the age of seven she was already pleading in behalf of souls, and Jesus Himself taught her the following prayer which she said every day:

"Oh , Lord Jesus, when I reflect upon the words which Thou hast uttered; *'Many are called, but few are chosen'*, I fear and tremble for those I love, and I beg Thee to look upon them

with mercy; and behold, with an infinite tenderness, You have placed their salvation into my hands, for everything is assured to him who knows how to suffer with Thee and for Thee. My heart bleeds under the weight of affliction; but my will remains united to Thine, and I cry out to Thee: Lord, it is for them that I want to suffer... I wish to mingle my tears with Thy Precious Blood for the salvation of those I love! Thou will not turn a deaf ear to my sorrowful cry, and I know that Thou will save them."

Her obedience and piety were evident when she was eight: A priest who was conducting a Mission in Rose's parish was impressed by the manner in which she attentively listened to his sermon, and by her practice of saying the Rosary and making the Way of the Cross after Mass. She learned this from the example of her parents, for Mr. Ferron attended Mass daily and never left the church without making the Way of the Cross, and Mrs. Ferron with all of her household tasks always found time to sit with the children and read the lives of the saints to them. The rosary was her constant companion and when her first child was born she offered it to God in honor of the first mystery of the rosary and continued this practice until all the fifteen mysteries were thus honored.

When Rose was ten she made her first Holy Communion, and after that her love for Jesus grew more and more.

CHAPTER II

Rose's teen-age years were full of sorrows, disappointments and sufferings. When she was twelve years old she wanted to become a nun. Before she was old enough to enter a convent she decided to work in order to help her poor parents, but Jesus had other plans for His little Rose.

Rose worked for about a year caring for the children of a lawyer. On one of her days off she carried a hot dinner to her

father at work. She missed the trolley and walked both ways in the early Spring slush. That evening she became ill and it was discovered that she was running a temperature and the following morning she was confined to her bed. When she eventually recovered from this illness, her right hand and left foot seemed to be paralyzed, and later she began having to use crutches in order to walk.

The time of trials had arrived and Jesus began to prepare His bride for her mission. The affliction of her leg which grew worse as time passed prevented her from taking part in normal activities. Because she could not yet understand the designs of her Jesus, Rose shed many tears during these years, yet she was never discouraged. Though she accepted the cross Jesus gave her, this did not lessen her pain and anguish.

Her physical affliction was but one of her problems. She left school while quite young and was practically without education. This depressed her more than her infirmities, and her sorrows increased. These were some of the trials that Jesus put little Rose through before she was found faithful to bear His stigmata.

The more that Rose's sufferings increased the more her soul, through the mystery of grace, became more perfect. She no longer yearned for the things of this life, but she resigned herself completely to the divine workings of God with Whom she was so deeply in love. She wanted to give herself wholeheartedly to Jesus' love and service by a close imitation of His perfect humility, charity, obedience, mercy, compassion and patience. It was only by her great love for Jesus and by the grace of God that she was able to endure the agony that followed, and yet still go on living. Looking for no reward, she only desired to love Him, serve Him, and suffer with Him. She no longer existed, for her will was to imitate Christ in His obedience to His Father and in all His virtues. Thus Rose Ferron's vocation of suffering began; it was a vocation that made difficult demands on her soul and called for long trials, sacrifices and sufferings.

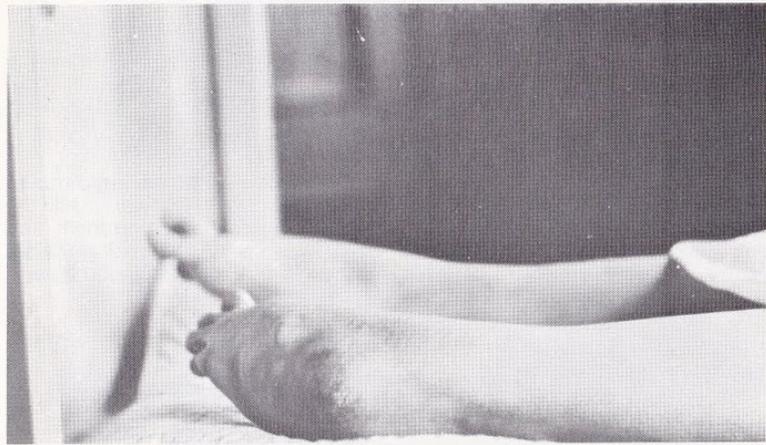
By God's gift of fortitude her soul was strengthened against natural fear and supported her to the end in her vocation. Her will was strengthened to undertake without hesitation trials and sufferings and to endure without complaint the slow martyrdom of lifelong tribulation.

She began to hunger and thirst for suffering for she believed that her love for Jesus grew in proportion to her suffering. To those who asked her about sacrifice and suffering she gave the following spiritual recipe: ***“Grind up all your sufferings in the mill of patience and silence; mix them with the balsam of the Passion of the Savior; make them into a small pill, and the fire of charity will digest it.”***

CHAPTER III

Jesus, the Divine Gardener, now transplanted the Little Rose He had nurtured with His graces, and He began to shower her with even more gifts. In 1925 Rose moved from Fall River to Woonsocket, Rhode Island. She was now confined to her bed and could no longer move about with crutches. Her limbs became thin, weak and deformed. She began to be compelled to lay on a plank board covered with a quilt and was bound to her bed with sheets, because her body seemed to want to constrict and roll up like a hoop. When this happened it took more than one member of the family to get her back into proper position, and it caused her so much pain that she fainted.

Her deformed and twisted feet caused her much pain. Although her mother wrapped them in absorbent cotton the bones sometimes pierced the skin. Her left arm became crippled with the fingernails of that undersized and deformed hand digging into her palm. Although she could use her right arm, she nevertheless had to wear a splint which extended from the elbow to the palm of that hand.



Her distorted feet without the bandages.

The sufferings of Rose sometimes made her so weak that she could hardly breathe. She would lay almost lifeless, with her lips stuck to her teeth and an expression of agony on her face as though she were dying. Yet, Rose did not brood or dwell over her own sorrows. She wished to suffer even more in union with Jesus for the conversion of sinners—her heart burned with a desire to bring souls to Him; she wished only to love Him and to help others to love Him.

A relative of Little Rose related the following incident: One time a wealthy man from the Midwest came to visit Rose. On seeing her lying in bed he was moved to tears and said, "Oh, you poor little girl; you're so sick!" Never having seen or heard of the man before, Rose looked up at him and said, ***"Don't cry for me, for you are sicker than I am. You've been away from Jesus for thirty-five years."***

When the man heard these words his heart was deeply moved, and after this visit he became a daily communicant, made the Stations of the Cross daily and later died a practicing, devout Catholic.

One day, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Rose in a vision and showed her a scroll. On this scroll the fifteen

mysteries of the rosary appeared, with the names of each of the Ferron children beside one of the mysteries. When she came to the tenth mystery, that of the Crucifixion, she saw her own name, and thus she suddenly knew why she was to suffer so much. Afterwards her mother revealed to her that from the beginning of her marriage she had secretly consecrated each of her children to the Blessed Virgin Mary, each in honor of the individual mysteries of the Rosary, and in time God arranged it so that she ended up having exactly 15 children—one for each mystery of the Rosary, with Marie-Rose being the tenth, that is, in honor of the Crucifixion. And so it was that from a very young age, Little Rose had great devotion to the Passion of Our Lord and had a burning desire to make reparation to God for the sins of men.

The time had now arrived and the little victim of Jesus was about to be given her first mission. When Rose moved to Woonsocket in the Diocese of Providence it was a move into the center of a controversy that had been gaining in momentum for some time. Out of a drive to raise funds for the construction of additional catholic high schools, a difference of opinion arose between some of the faithful and their Bishop concerning the raising of funds. Those who opposed Bishop Hickey published a newspaper which expressed their views and aroused public opinion against the Bishop and his drive. This opposition grew to such strength that the Bishop was obliged to take stern action against its leaders, issuing a letter of excommunication.

Bishop Hickey had heard of Little Rose. He knew that she was a victim soul, and in the hour of peril he went to visit her. With tearful eyes he said, "*My child, will you suffer for the Diocese of Providence, for its priests and for those I was obliged to punish?*" Rose at once accepted, and told her bishop that it would be her mission to pray for their return to the Church.

She offered her prayers and sufferings for this serious intention and was often heard at this time in ecstasy begging

Our lord for the return of all of them to the Church at any cost. She would say, *"Take my speech away, if that will help, take my eyes, take my mind."* With tears she said to Jesus, *"Take everything I have and cherish. I am willing to suffer until the last one returns, even a hundred years if You so wish it."*

It was about this time that those about her discovered that she began spending the time of thanksgiving after receiving Holy Communion suffering in union with the Passion of Jesus, in honor of His Sacred Wounds. It was also at this time that the stigmata were first noticed.

While Jesus' little victim silently suffered, sacrificed and prayed, a calm came over those who opposed the Bishop, and after a short time all those who had been excommunicated resubmitted themselves to the authority of the Church. The humble and fervent prayers of Little Rose were answered.



Little Rose (in ecstasy) with her mother

CHAPTER IV

Her burning love for God and souls was so great that the loving hearts of Jesus and Mary showered this young victim soul with many mystical gifts and graces, such as ecstasies, with the accompanied rigidity and phenomenon of weight; heavenly visions; partial abstinence from food; the ability to feel the presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist and to receive Holy Communion without deglutition (ie. –swallowing); the ability to know which objects had been blessed and to feel the blessing of a priest even at great distances; bi-location and the stamping of His Sacred Wounds on her body.

Rose often went into ecstasy, being thus called and drawn so by God. Sometimes she remained in this state for a few minutes and at other times for more than an hour. The phenomenon of weight and muscular rigidity accompanied her ecstasies, for while she was in this state she could not be lifted or moved even an inch by anyone; in fact on many occasions numerous men would together try to move her bed, and were unable to do so even a little. However her ecstasies did not interfere with the function of her mind and will, and her body obeyed the promptings of her soul; her hands moved, her mouth spoke and her eyes saw, while at the same time those nearby could behold with admiration the love expressed on her face for the vision that was enrapturing her.

While in ecstasy she asked Our Lord to bless the religious articles that she would give freely to others, or those that people had given to her to be blessed. She would take a crucifix, a rosary or medal in her hand, then she would tell Jesus the name of the person for whom it was intended. She asked Him to bless them and to grant special favors for those who would use them. Afterward, she would ask the first priest who visited her to impart also the Church's blessing upon them before she gave them back to anyone.

At times while in ecstasy, Jesus would ask her to sing a song to Him, or one to the Blessed Mother, or another to Saint Joseph. Once while singing to Jesus she paused a few times and was heard saying: *“How sweet it is to rest by Thy side. Oh my Jesus, You know very well that I love Thee!”*

Her family, priests and religious who saw her in the ecstatic state all remarked at how beautiful she looked at the time. Everything was always modest and edifying. Rose was a model of purity, of patience, of humility, and her words were full of love for God. When she came out of this state her soul was strengthened with a fortitude that overcame the obstacles in the way of her salvation and her soul acquired a thirst for sacrifice that even martyrdom could not satisfy. Many times while in ecstasy she was heard begging Our Lord to spare others and pile upon her their miseries and pains.

Sometimes Our Lord gave her personal messages for others. She would plead with Jesus to be excused from such messages, yet she always obeyed; she felt that she was a mere nothing and unfit to be His messenger.

Rose never neglected to ask a visiting priest for his blessing. She was actually able to feel the power of such a blessing. One time while in ecstasy she tried to speak but she was too weak. The moment she was given the blessing she became stronger and the words simply gushed from her mouth.

If she were in ecstasy and a priest brought Holy Communion, she always revived to receive Our Lord because she was able to feel His presence. When she received Communion she usually fell into ecstasy, and the Sacred Host disappeared the moment it was placed on her tongue, without any movement of her mouth or throat muscles. Thus she often received without the act of swallowing.

Since 1925, when she became extremely ill from eating a piece of fresh bread, she was obliged to undertake partial abstinence and did not eat solid foods. She was able to take

some liquids and at times a broth that her mother prepared. Although she always felt hunger and thirst, she could take very little food for her sustenance. What little she took at times upset her stomach and caused her to eject it painfully. As a victim soul, Rose gained more merit this way than if she had lost the desire to eat and drink. Whether she took some food, abstained from it or had to eject it, she always kept her peace of mind, her serenity, her good judgment and her smile.

Sometimes Rose was permitted to take on the pains of childbirth for her sisters or friends. At one time, one of her sisters was in a hospital forty miles away; she was in severe pain and she called out to Rose for help. Immediately the sister saw Rose in the hospital room and all of her pains vanished. Meanwhile in her room in Woonsocket Rose was observed going through the pains of childbirth. Rose did this three times in one year.

It was toward the end of 1926 that the stigmata were noticed. This supernatural gift permitted her to participate in the Passion of Christ in an outward manner - to suffer a share of the Passion of Christ - which exceeds all earthly sufferings. Because the stigmata made difficult demands on her soul, Rose had to undergo long trials and sufferings. Only after a long period of purgation did these wounds make their appearance. The first to appear were the marks of the flagellation on her arms. They were red and purple stripes which were swollen and close to each other; they were sensitive and felt like a burn.

During Lent of 1927 the marks of the hands and feet appeared. In January of 1928 the stigmata of the thorns appeared and during Lent of 1929 the stigmata of the heart. In August of the same year her eyes shed tears of blood, and from that time on she represented the Holy Face each Friday.

Some of Rose's stigmata such as the five wounds and the crown of thorns were more permanent, but when she suffered the Passion on Fridays, other wounds appeared and were gone

the following day. Two such wounds were on the shoulder and on the lower part of the neck. The larger of the two was the shoulder stigmata which was a large red blotch that was very painful; all of her wounds were painful and some were deep in the flesh.

On Thursdays about midnight the wounds began to bleed slowly and blood would ooze from her eyes. Thus the drama of the Passion began. From the hours of twelve to three in the afternoon on Fridays she represented the crucifixion. She went into ecstasy and her right arm straightened out as though she were on a cross. Her left arm was tied and could not move. Her chest came forward and shoulders went backward as if pulled by the arms. When this took place the arm was wrenched from the socket and remained outstretched until after the ecstasy. Then a doctor was called and the arm was rotated back into place. This sometimes took a half hour to perform and was accompanied with excruciating pains. The attending doctor couldn't understand how she could suffer so much.

On Saturday the wounds stopped bleeding. Her appearance became normal and the remaining blood dried up and scaled off. With the aid of lukewarm water her mother would dampen and simply peel and wipe the blood off.

During the Lenten season as Holy Week and Good Friday approached, her sufferings were even greater than usual. The agony she endured seemed to be beyond human endurance. Yet through all of this she never complained.

In August of 1931 when Jesus removed the visible stigmata at her prayerful request, the blood continued to rush to those parts of the body where the wounds had been and caused an intense agony of pain. There was no more bleeding; and all of the stigmata disappeared except those of the head—the crown of thorns-- which always remained and were still visible at her death.

CHAPTER V

Our Lord bestowed on Rose His choicest favors in the form of crosses and trials, but He gave her the light to see the value of suffering for His own glory, for the salvation of souls and for her own eternal reward.

Little Rose was a mystic and to be a mystic one must be a great lover of God and man. Mysticism or contemplation has its degrees of intensity. The first degree of mysticism reveals itself in the passive realization of God's presence. The second degree affords a person a passive awareness of union with God. In the third degree the soul reaches ecstatic union with God. In the fourth degree, in the union of transformation, the soul has the passive experience of her permanent espousal to Christ.

Our Lord appeared to Little Rose in her early childhood preparing her for ecstatic union with Christ. Finally, after the dark night of her spirit, she achieved the highest mystical union, and the extraordinary gifts which accompanied this degree of union accredited her as Christ's chosen victim. Before she reached the highest degree of mystical union she had to experience the sufferings of the dark night of the soul. In this state the mind is left in darkness, the will in aridity, the memory in forgetfulness and the affections are immersed in pain and anguish. St. John of the Cross says of this dark night that the light and wisdom so bright and pure of infused contemplation suffers the soul great pain. The length of this dark night depends upon how much imperfection there is to destroy and the degree of union with Himself to which God desires to raise the soul.

It was while Rose was suffering the painful purifications of this dark night that she endured many humiliations. Rose prayed for the removal of the visible stigmata. She had several reasons for doing so and one of them was the danger of pride.

She was afraid of pride for she knew that it could harm her spiritual life. With her confessor's approval she prayed for that favor and obtained it. So the wounds which drew the admiration that frightened her were replaced with a number of crushing humiliations which were extremely trying to her and to her parents.

Rose had an irresistible eagerness for the Blessed Sacrament. One time in an outburst of love she asked to receive Holy Communion when her stomach was upset. In the presence of Jesus and moved by the Holy Spirit, Rose was beside herself with love and although she was sick to her stomach, she forgot all about her illness and simply wanted to receive Jesus. When God moved Rose she was passive and was morally obliged to yield, and forgetting her sickness she was carried off by her unquenchable thirst for Jesus. Afterwards she was perplexed at herself for asking to receive when she knew she was sick, however those about her noted how her stomach improved after receiving. This was a scene of divine love which teaches us that the sufferings of this world are nothing compared to the Glory of God and they become more bearable when we hunger and thirst for Him. Our Lord said, "Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you."

Once the priest who was attending her was away for two weeks. During that time she did not receive Our Lord. All she could do was wait and resign herself to God's Will. Rose said nothing about the way she felt at the time, but later when asked about it the tears streamed from her cheeks because it really was a great martyrdom for her to be deprived of the Blessed Sacrament.

When changes were made in the Parish, another priest took charge of Rose and under his direction she was made to feel the sting of humiliations. She was soon informed that her spiritual life was built on a wrong foundation and that his task was to destroy it and rebuild it properly. This troubled her conscience and increased the storm being waged by the dark night of the soul. Doubts arose in her mind; she questioned her

vocation, and wondered if she were not a victim of illusion. She was so isolated from all other spiritual influence and for a time was not permitted to receive any other director. Rose obediently submitted to his wishes and gracefully accepted the isolation. For a while she was permitted to receive Holy Communion only once a week, after having been a daily communicant for years. Lying in her bed of pain day and night, one can only imagine the suffering that this sacrifice of not being able to receive Her Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament must have caused her.

When God removed the visible stigmata from Rose then rumors began to circulate and grow that Rose and her family were perpetrating a hoax. For her mystical advancement Rose needed to have all the fibers of her human attachments uprooted, so Divine Providence provided the occasion. With her heart broken by what was going on around her, and with her soul torn by the night of the soul, she staggered and fell many times under the weight of the cross. But her confidence in God gave her hope, for while she endured these sufferings she constantly had in mind the goodness and mercy of God, and this thought kept her from despair.

Rose accepted willingly as from God's hands all the mental anguish meted out to her: the bitter humiliations, misunderstandings, condemnation and abandonment by many, even those nearest and dearest to her. Like the Lord she was for a time forsaken, regarded as a fraud and even treated as one mentally unbalanced. Through all of this she endured. Those about her were amazed at how she never once complained, never said an unkind word to her calumniators, never lost her serenity and cheerfulness and peace. Everything that came to her she took as if from God's hand, as if it were a kindness and a blessing; and by so doing she turned everything to the profit of her soul.

Concerning those who spoke ill of her, Rose felt compassion for them and prayed all the more for them. Her resignation to her own misery made her exceedingly tender and

compassionate to the failings of others. To a sister she once said: ***"Jesus was dragged through the streets and the mud and I shouldn't expect to be treated better than my Master."***

When somebody once remarked to Little Rose that it was a wonder her Jesus allowed her to suffer so much, seeing how she loved Him so deeply, her answer full of heavenly wisdom was: ***"The caresses of Heaven are not like those of earth."***

CHAPTER VI

To face death calmly and suffer patiently as Rose did are two virtues worthy of imitation. She prayed that her suffering would not be noticeable; she didn't mind how much she suffered but she wanted to spare her parents. While in ecstasy she appealed to Jesus and said, ***"Oh my Jesus, I wish to suffer more and more, but spare my parents. Increase my sufferings if You will, but allow no one to see them. Put a smile on my lips and a ray of Thy glory in my eyes and show them that I am happy."***

A month before her death she suffered a great deal, but her self control was even greater. From the 15th of April, 1936 her condition steadily grew worse. She fainted when she tried to speak. Her stomach hurt so much that even water became unbearable, and her head pained so that the slightest noise caused her to faint.

Seven years earlier, that is when Marie Rose was age 26, Jesus had revealed to her in an ecstasy that she, like Him, would also die at age 33--which we can presume was meant to be another sign of His union with her. She told those about her what Jesus had said and the news spread throughout the city of Woonsocket and abroad.

So, at this time (1936) right when the month of May came, one of her detractors rudely scoffed ***"She said that she would***

die at age 33. If she spoke the truth then she had better hurry, because this is the month of her birthday.”(May 24). In the last week of her life, her suffering was so intense and the loss of blood from a recent hemorrhage so great that all she could say over and over again was, ***"My Jesus, My Jesus."*** She was content to suffer in loving her Jesus to bring as many souls as possible to Him. This was the same love that we see in the thousands of our missionaries who give their time, homes, fortunes and their lives to bring their Jesus to the pagans of foreign lands.

On May 2nd she received the last Sacraments and at 10 a.m. on Monday May 11, 1936, shortly after the prayers for the dying had been said, the soul of Marie Rose Ferron left her bed of martyrdom to be judged by her Jesus whom she loved so intensely.



Her hunger and thirst for the Cross consumed her, for that was her wish. Her act of immolation found on her person read in part:

"I offer myself as a victim, a holocaust that I may live in constant charity, begging Thee, oh my Jesus, to consume me

without ceasing, that I may become a martyr of Thy love."

She was placed in the private chapel of the Ferron home with the altar in the background. On Tuesday at noon the doors were opened and people from all over the country entered and continued visiting the Ferron home until the funeral on Friday. The crowds of people were a testament to the heroic life and virtues of Little Rose. Nearly 15,000 who viewed her remains signed the register.

A special police detail was required and traffic was rerouted because of the crowds. Most of these people were those who had known her or had visited her during her lifetime.

On Friday morning Holy Family Church was filled long before the cortege left the Ferron home, and many waited outside the church on the steps and sidewalk. More than 4,000 people attended the funeral Mass, with crowds of people flooding out into the surrounding sidewalks and street.

The various local newspapers carried articles on her death and funeral. This is what "L' Independent", the French newspaper of Woonsocket wrote:

"This morning we have seen one of the most magnificent tokens of esteem and veneration that can be imagined. We have seen such demonstrations for the great and powerful of this world. It was an eloquent tribute to the memory of a little girl who became famous by suffering silently and joyfully for God's Holy Love."

CHAPTER VII

Rose's charity could be seen by all who came in contact with her. She was a faithful reflection of her Jesus, and those who came near her were aware of the presence of God. People often remarked that it was heavenly to be with her. She loved

God with all of her heart, soul and mind. She helped others in their needs, and in her life of long suffering she was always kind and thoughtful. She suffered for her fellow men out of a deep love for Jesus and she offered herself as a victim of love to bring Him many souls. According to her close relatives and friends, Rose's charity was truly outstanding.

Her meekness, humility and patience were as beautiful to behold as her charity. With her heart burning with love for God she embraced the crosses that Jesus desired to send to her. With complete resignation in her abandonment to His Holy Will she carried her cross without ever uttering a complaint. When it became heavier than ever, she kept her gaze fixed upon her beloved Jesus carrying His heavy cross and trusting completely in His merciful goodness she carried hers after Him.

Little Rose prayed for those who hurt her, and she never became the least bit angry or resentful. She had a noble and generous heart, especially toward those who were against her. At times she was the object of the silliest and meanest calumnies one could imagine. Some false friends who catered to her for their own satisfaction turned against her when their wishes were not gratified and tried to smear her reputation. Rose's meekness and her resignation to her own misery made her very tender and sympathetic to the failings of others. "***I think I would fall***" she said, "***if I tried to hate or blame those who work against me. It seems I love them even more.***" And so it was that like her Jesus she fervently prayed all the more for those who persecuted her.

Rose always considered herself a nobody, a mere nothing, and her humility, modesty and fear of vanity guarded her from making a show of herself. Although she pretended not to believe in her ecstasies and referred to them as dreams she nevertheless asked her mother to keep others away at such times. With her stigmata she exercised even more prudence for she kept them well hidden and few were able to observe them. Sometimes while she was in ecstasy her mother took the

opportunity to show Rose's stigmata of the hands or feet to others without Rose's knowledge. When she bled while suffering the Passion on Fridays her mother kept the door closed to visitors. Only those with special permission were able to see her in this state.

Rose was a model of obedience; she learned and practiced this virtue while very young. In her later years she continued to give obedience to her parents, priests and doctors. At times her obedience brought her much suffering but also much merit. From the doctors she sometimes took medicine which brought her scant relief but which provoked criticism from others. Also at their request she tried eating various liquid foods which upset her stomach, causing her to painfully eject what was taken.

Father Onesime A Boyer, who was Rose's confessor and a friend of the Ferron family, and who later wrote her biography entitled "*She Wears A Crown Of Thorns*", described her as follows:

"There was something noble in Rose that expressed the beauty of her soul. Nature provided her with a beautiful face, full of grace and purity. At times, these seemed to radiate. I cannot conceive anything more attractive, more soothing."

Concerning her conversation he writes:

"The word of God is holy, even in the mouth of a sinner; but when Rose spoke, it was from the abundance of a heart continually burning with God's love; her words filtered through a soul transformed into the temple of the Holy Ghost; when she pronounced the Name of Jesus, it made you feel He was near by; and when rapt in ecstasy she prayed to her Jesus, no words could express the beauty of her prayer anymore than the emotions you felt."

Referring to her character Father Boyer writes further:

"Humility and generosity mingled with a sense of humor made Rose one of the most charming and beautiful characters you could meet. While Rose was suffering and receiving the sick and afflicted, she always had a smile and was always ready to laugh. She was keen in seeing the funny side of things. When she laughed, an acute pain would generally pierce her heart. Although she watched herself, she was often taken by surprise and would burst out laughing. Then she would faint and as her head fell on the pillow, her hand would rise to drop on her heart. At other times, she would try in vain to refrain from laughing and then burst out and laugh most heartily. We were all pleased when she escaped the penalty of fainting, but the pain generally followed."

In his book Father Boyer includes many testimonials, some of which were given by priests and religious who knew Rose personally. The following is a part of what one priest wrote:

"I was privileged to know Little Rose quite intimately having spoken to her on many occasions. The sweetness of her words, her charming manners and imperturbable serenity never failed to impress me. It was evident that her union with Our Lord was constant and intimate, and yet she was always ready to give you a smile which ravished one's heart. Little Rose was certainly a true servant of God; she suffered much, she suffered in the right way. She was meek and humble of heart like her Jesus."

A nun wrote in part:

"Rose always seemed to me absolutely sincere, also humble, simple and transparent, naive as a child and having manners of a reserved and delicate type. I have never discovered anything which denoted exaltation or false enlightenment or the artifices of mysticism. The humility, the simplicity, the sweet patience of Rose Ferron appeared to me perfectly sincere; she seemed to be a soul of Crystal. Sadness and suffering had not embittered her, though she had been suffering for about ten years and atrociously, yet always

smiling, cheerful, even radiant, resembling in this respect the Little Flower of Jesus, Saint Therese."

CHAPTER VIII

In *"The Way of Divine Love"* Jesus said to Sister Jozefa Menendez, a sister of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, *"I will shower MY mercies on the world to wipe out its ingratitude. To make reparation for its crimes, I will choose victims who will obtain pardon...for there are in the world today many whose desire to please Me...and moreover there are generous souls who will sacrifice everything they possess that I may use them according to My Will and desire."*

Marie Rose Ferron was surely one of these victim souls. Her mission was one of reparation---to fill up those things that are lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body, which is the Church. Reparation means to make up for damages done to our relationship with God and also the damage to another's rights or to pay back another for losses for which we are responsible. When sin is committed, the order of things as established by God is disturbed or damaged. This damage must be repaired as far as it is possible for us to do so, and this we are to do by reparation.

Some souls are drawn to this task of reparation by their great love of God and also out of love for their neighbor. They realize that making reparation for their neighbor's sins is to do something more precious than the giving of any material gift; they realize that their neighbor's soul was redeemed at a great price by Our Lord, and that a soul is worth more than the entire material universe. Thus these great lovers of Our Lord give of themselves generously for this great work of reparation for souls.

At various times Our Lord has asked certain souls and through them souls in general, to make reparation for certain specific

faults. Our Lord through St. Margaret Mary asked souls to make reparation for all the coldness, negligence and ingratitude shown by so many towards the Blessed Sacrament. Here is how Our Lord spoke to St. Margaret Mary, "*Behold this Heart which has so loved men that It has spared nothing, has emptied Itself and died to show them Its love; and in return I receive for the most part only ingratitude in the insults, the acts of irreverence, the sacrileges and the coldness that men show towards Me in this Sacrament*"

In the revelations of Fatima the children were constantly asked to make amends for all the blasphemies committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Our Blessed Mother in her first apparition on July 13, 1917 told the children: "*Sacrifice yourseIves for sinners, and say many times, especially when you make some sacrifice: 'Oh Jesus, it is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for all the offenses committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.'*"

Marie Rose Ferron was also a victim chosen by God to heal the schism that was menacing in her diocese. She was asked by her bishop if she would suffer for the Diocese of Providence, for its priests and for the fifty-six church members he had been obliged to punish with excommunication.

God in His merciful goodness sent His young victim to this diocese in the midst of this controversy, and her bishop who realized that Rose was a victim soul sought her aid in this time of peril. How fortunate were the members of that diocese, and especially those who had received the punishment, that God sent them a victim who suffered, prayed and pleaded in their behalf. What if there had been no victim? How grateful to God and to His little victim we all ought to be and especially the members of her diocese and the families of those for whom Rose offered her all.

After the death of the bishop, Rose was told that her promise to suffer for her diocese was no longer binding. She answered saying, "*You know, I might well continue, for of all the*

dioceses that of Providence needs it most.”

Jesus must have been pleased with her and with what she did for her diocese, because He asked more of this Rose. She was getting known in all parts of the world by bringing help of every kind to souls in need through her sufferings and prayers offered to God in their behalf.

All of us not only can make reparation, but we have a duty to do so. In his encyclical on Reparation Due to the Sacred Heart, Pope Pius X I says:

"We are held to the duty of making reparation by the most powerful motives of justice and love, in order to expiate the injury done God by our sins and reestablish by means of penance, the Divine Order which has been violated."

In the same encyclical he suggests such practices as the Communion of Reparation, the Holy Hour and the recitation of the act of reparation. (Little Rose made a Holy Hour of Reparation every day at twelve midnight.) Many souls even at great cost are faithful to these beautiful practices. Some others go even further. Besides fulfilling their duties and accepting the difficult things that come into their lives, they will, with their priests' approval, even take up the practice of extra voluntary practices; they practice reasonable restraint in matters of amusement, clothing and food to mention but a few.

Some souls who are more passive, practice the way of loving abandonment to Divine Providence. Instead of using themselves they prefer to let themselves be used. Instead of crucifying themselves, they let Our Lord crucify them as He sees fit. In other words they abandon themselves to whatever sufferings and crosses God in His Providence permits to come into their lives.

Pope Pius XII wrote in his encyclical on the Mystical Body:

"Dying on the cross Christ left to His Church the immense

treasury of the Redemption; towards this she contributed nothing. But when those graces come to be distributed, not only does He share this task of sanctification with His Church, but He wants it in a way to be due to her action. Deep mystery this, subject of inexhaustible meditation; that the salvation of many depends on the prayers and voluntary penances which the members of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ offer for this intention and on the assistance of pastors of souls and of the faithful, especially fathers and mothers of families, which they must offer to our Divine Savior as though they were His associates."

From this statement we see that souls can be bought or ransomed by our reparation. This reparation for souls is brought about by the graces which are won for such souls by our meritorious works. In justice we do not have a strict right to such merit for others, but God in His goodness has made it possible for us to merit for others.

In a manner of speaking there is a price tag on every soul. This means that there is a combination of graces which may vary in number or type, by which a soul somewhere in the world may be spiritually won or reinstated. To win some souls prayer may be enough; others require hard work, and still others may need the proper combination of both. Some souls can only be won at a bitter price of much and long suffering and a few will even require all of these together.

One time a friend of Marie Rose Ferron told his pastor about her. This friend lived in a western city. The pastor listened and then said, *"Ask her prayers for several persons of this parish, for they are hard cases."* The message was delivered to Rose by telephone. A few days later at six in the morning when the pastor was on his way to say Mass he found four people waiting for him on the church steps; they had been waiting for two hours.

The life of Marie Rose Ferron was an unending story of such suffering. Rose believed in the Communion of Saints, but she

thought more of replenishing the treasury of the Mint, than of taking from it without contributing her share.

Reparation stresses two very important devotions; to the Holy Eucharist and to the Passion. Saintly souls have always received much inspiration from Our Lord's Passion and have been drawn towards the Eucharist. These two mysteries have been the source of strength for generating love and heroism in their lives.

Marie Rose Ferron was devoted to the Passion of Christ from early childhood. Long before she relived the crucifixion in her body she relived it in her soul by the grace of contemplation. From her Jesus and from the life of her beloved friend, Saint Therese, she learned that God uses suffering to dispose of His graces. She knew how dear and precious each soul is to God. Thus like the Little Flower she did not perform miracles, lead armies or preach great sermons but in the silence of her room, hidden from the eyes of the world and bound to her bed of pain she lovingly and thankfully accepted the trials and sufferings that God sent her, and she offered them with great love in behalf of souls.

Here is what Rose once said to a friend:

"I will pray hard and my suffering will always be for souls. I give myself to our dear Jesus to do with me just as He pleases, to use me for anything He pleases. I must ask you to pray for a very important intention--It is for souls and at any price I must have these. They are so dear to God. Pray, pray hard!"

Another time she said:

"To save souls one would do anything. So together let us help Him, the One we love, to give Him many souls."

And here are a few more of Rose's sayings while in ecstasy:

“Oh yes Jesus, I love You, and I want, without a cloud, to love You more than myself. Oh, it is for you, my Jesus, that I wish to suffer! Oh Jesus, it is for You alone, for that would be my heavenly Father's will.”

“You alone are my happiness. Yes, I want to live for You, my Jesus!

-Marie Rose Ferron, pray for us!

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Little Rose in ecstasy.



This booklet--“**MY HEART SPEAKS TO THEE**”—details the holy life of the American mystic, stigmatic and victim soul, Marie Rose Ferron (1902-1936). Due to an increasingly debilitating illness, “Little Rose” as she is affectionately called, was completely bedridden in her early teenage years and lived a life of extreme suffering and sacrifice. She was called by Jesus to be a victim soul, that is, to suffer in union with Jesus for the conversion of sinners, and until her very last breath she responded wholeheartedly and devotedly to this vocation given to her by Jesus.

For His part, Jesus showered upon Marie Rose His infinite love and graces, granting her numerous extraordinary mystical gifts—He imprinted His own wounds upon her flesh, bearing the stigmata (both visible and invisible) and the crown of thorns until her holy death, along with being granted many ecstasies and heavenly visions.

Through sacrifice and sufferings, accepted and embraced out of a deep love for Jesus, Marie Rose was a chosen soul who was led through the various spiritual stages, culminating in a very high degree of sanctity, as testified by those who knew her. This biography details much of her holy life, and those who read it will be edified and inspired to imitate and follow Little Rose in her great love for Jesus and Mary.