



For many contemporary Catholics the sobriquet “the Little Flower” conjures up images of a simpering young woman, sporting rouged cheeks and wearing a brown robe, and holding in her slim, white hands a bouquet of colourful flowers. Countless kitschy holy cards and plaster statuettes depict Thérèse Martin, later known as St Thérèse of Lisieux, as overly pious and more or less unreal.

So it is almost always a surprise when sceptics finally read her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*,

To mark our anniversary, we have invited 50 Catholics to choose a person from the past 175 years whose life has been a personal inspiration to them and an example of their faith at its best

and encounter what you might call the “historical Thérèse”. They discover the considerable resolve that lay beneath the seemingly delicate petals of this hothouse flower. This was, after all, someone the who, at age of 15, refused to let something as minor as canon law prevent her from entering a Carmelite monastery: she simply accompanied her father on a parish pilgrimage to the Vatican and asked the Pope. Pope Leo XIII was blandly noncommittal: “You will enter if God wills it.” God did.

Similar surprises await those

who expect Thérèse to conform to our usual saintly stereotypes. She disliked praying the Rosary (“an instrument of penance”). She once said, “If only I were a priest!” (Those who argue “she didn’t mean that” might ask themselves why they are reluctant to take her at her word.) And on the edge of death, the Carmelite nun struggled with doubts about what awaited her in the afterlife. “If you only knew what darkness I am plunged into,” she admitted to one sister.

But perhaps most surprising is

that God could coax such a unique flower from the overheated soil of nineteenth-century French Catholic piety. Declaring that she could never be a “great saint” like St Teresa of Avila, she was content to be “little”. It was her famous “Little Way” of doing small things with great love for God, which proved her most lasting legacy. Her spirituality finds resonance with anyone who has ever been humbled by life, confused by God’s will or overwhelmed by the world. In other words, with everyone.

Little Flower, pray for us.

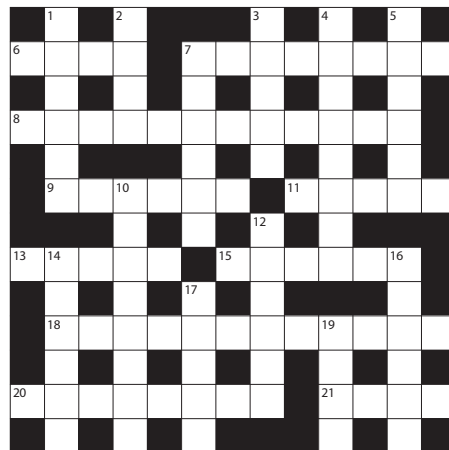
James Martin SJ is author of *My Life with the Saints* and, most recently, *Jesus: a pilgrimage*.

## PUZZLES

### PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 460 | Axe

#### Across

- 6 Flower at first Nubians in Lower Egypt identified (4)
- 7 In Rome I love ceremonies with biblical folk (8)
- 8 Emeer? I’m Irish, silly. It’s something penitential (8,4)
- 9 Responses found here by novice at the end of the Latin Mass (6)
- 11 There is sustenance for all to see in the requiem he wrote (5)
- 13 A Church article makes O.T. chap a troublemaker (5)
- 15 Prophet this morning seen by a Welsh lake (6)
- 18 They have no faith in noble verse, sadly (3-9)
- 20 Steal up between wooden supports to overthrow the cathedral city (2,6)
- 21 Swift, perhaps, to become a head of cardinals (4)



#### Down

- 1 Month in France, on edge, upset a girl from 6 country (6)
- 2 Cab Eden-bound for a scholarly monk (4)
- 3 Not so tough to excommunicate female, this Pope (5)
- 4 Either way, mine’s also known as a Buddhist canon of Scriptures (8)
- 5 Yesterday in France the French toppled a patron of Jersey (6)
- 7 King of Nabatea’s territory enclaves the north of Trans-Jordan and the south (6)

### SUDOKU | Beginner

		5	7		1			
					3			
7						6		2
3				2				
	9		5			7	8	
8								9
		6		5				1
				7	6	4	3	
		8						

- 10 Runs flat out to become Bishop of Metz (2,6)
- 12 Persian’s heading to desert area, right into Uzziah’s snare (6)
- 14 Danish leader’s reactionary account on pond life is broadcast (6)
- 16 Memory kind of returned to Scotsman of the Blessed Virgin (6)
- 17 Many acres held, in double figures, in a part of Edom (5)
- 19 Hindu books almost 24 hours of celebrations in Europe (4)

#### Please send your answers to:

#### Crossword Competition 16 May

The Tablet, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY.

Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. A copy of *Begat: the King James Bible and the English Language*, by David Crystal, OUP, will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random on Friday 29 May.

● The answers to this week’s puzzles and the crossword winner’s name will appear in the 6 June issue.

#### Solution to the 25 April crossword No. 457

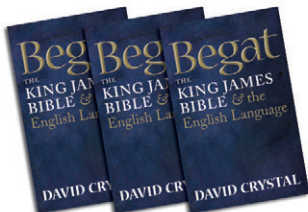
**Across:** 6 Abbeys; 8 Zophar; 9 Jane; 10 Anathoth; 11 Hanamel; 13 Haran; 15 Torah; 17 Eulalia; 19 Diaspora; 21 Spem; 23 Caesar; 24 Elijah. **Down:** 1 Abba; 2 Teresa; 3 Ezra; 4 Apphia; 5 Naphtali; 7 Shaker; 12 Adonijah; 14 Curate; 16 Assisi; 18 Austin; 20 Omri; 22 Ebal. **Winner:** Anne V. Bond, Forestdale, south Croydon.

7	2	9	3	5	6	8	4	1
1	3	8	4	7	2	9	5	6
4	5	6	8	9	1	2	3	7
2	7	4	1	3	8	5	6	9
8	6	5	2	4	9	7	1	3
9	1	3	7	6	5	4	8	2
3	4	2	5	1	7	6	9	8
5	9	7	6	8	3	1	2	4
6	8	1	9	2	4	3	7	5

Each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

Solution to the 25 April puzzle

## Begat: the King James Bible and the English Language



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