

# Women Of Faith

**OCTOBER 2020 Gathering**

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# ST. TERESA OF AVILA

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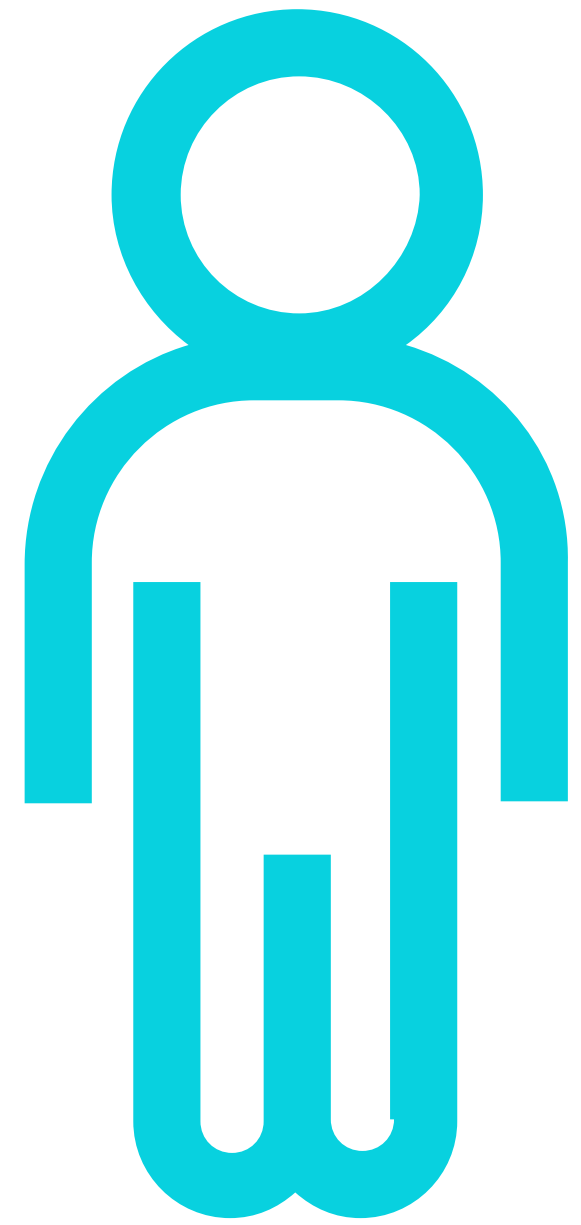
October 15th

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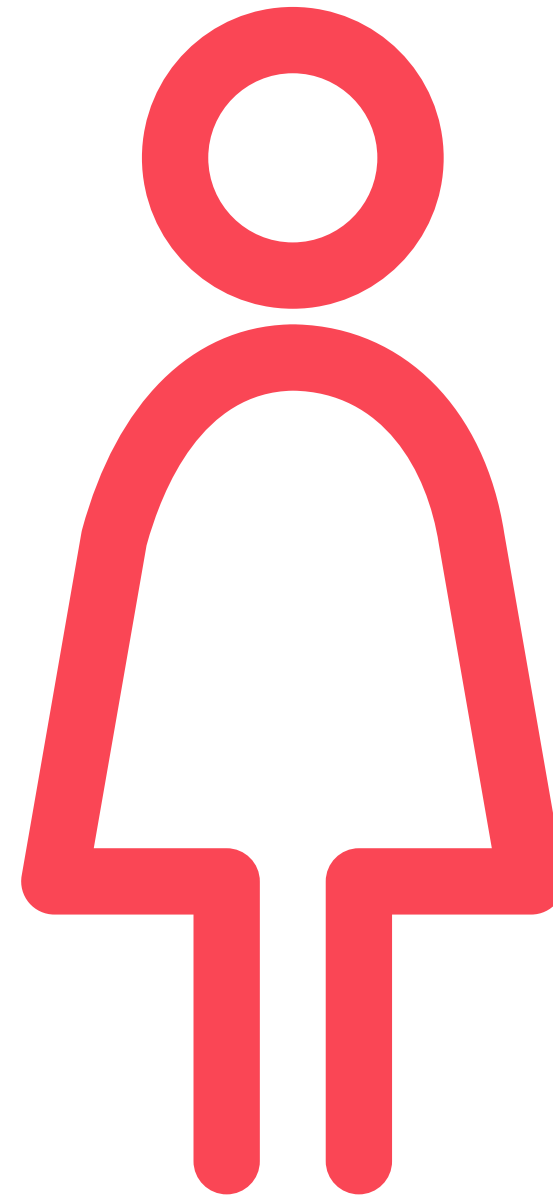
THE  
EARLY  
YEARS





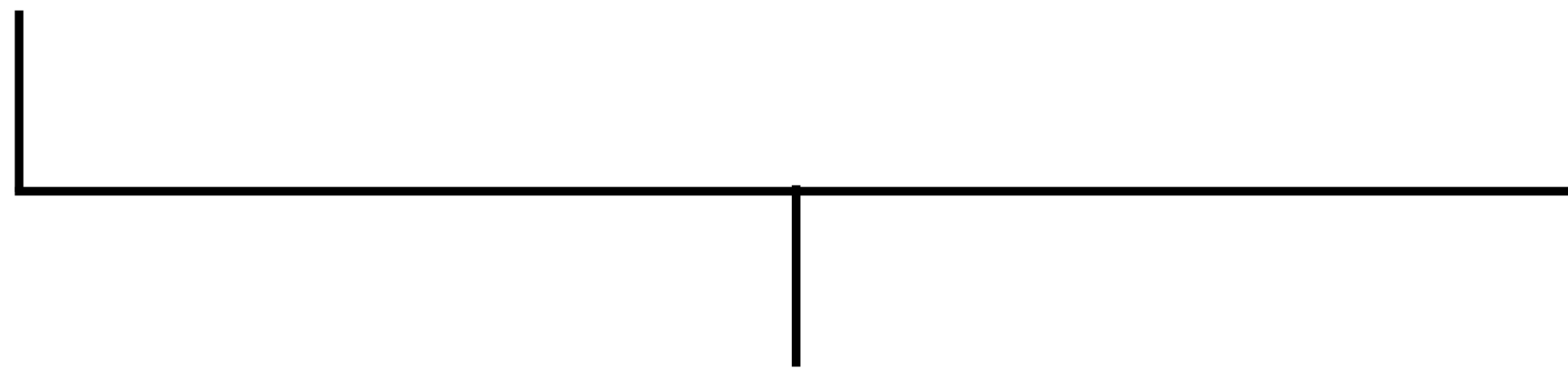
**Alphonsus  
Sanchez of  
Cepeda**

FATHER



**Beatrice  
Ahumada**

MOTHER



**Teresa Ali Fatim Corella  
Sanchez de Cepeda y Ahumada**

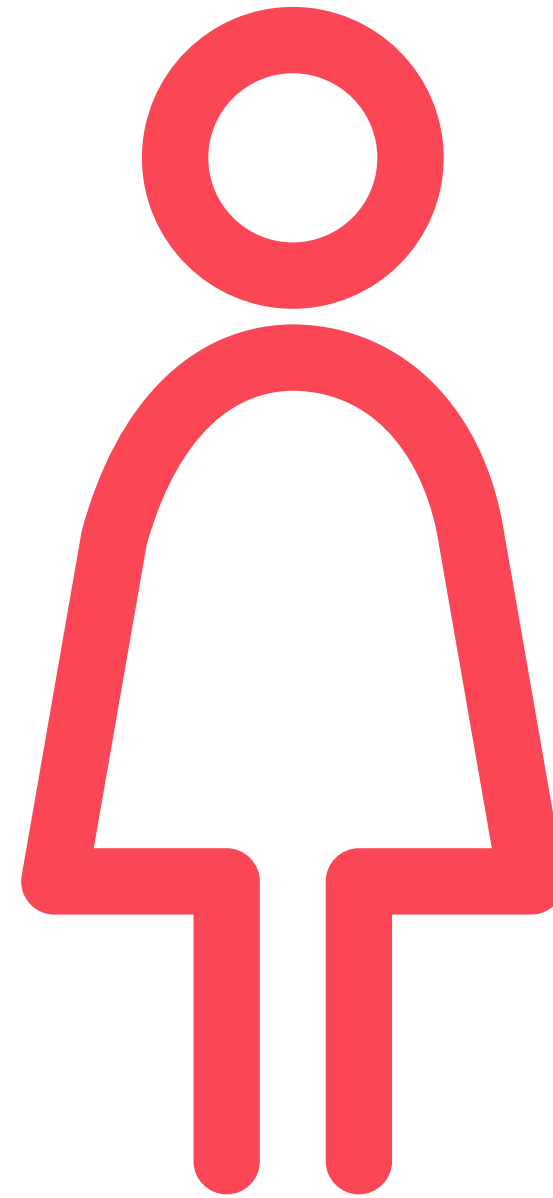
BORN MARCH 28, 1515



# **Alphonsus Sanchez of Cepeda**

FATHER

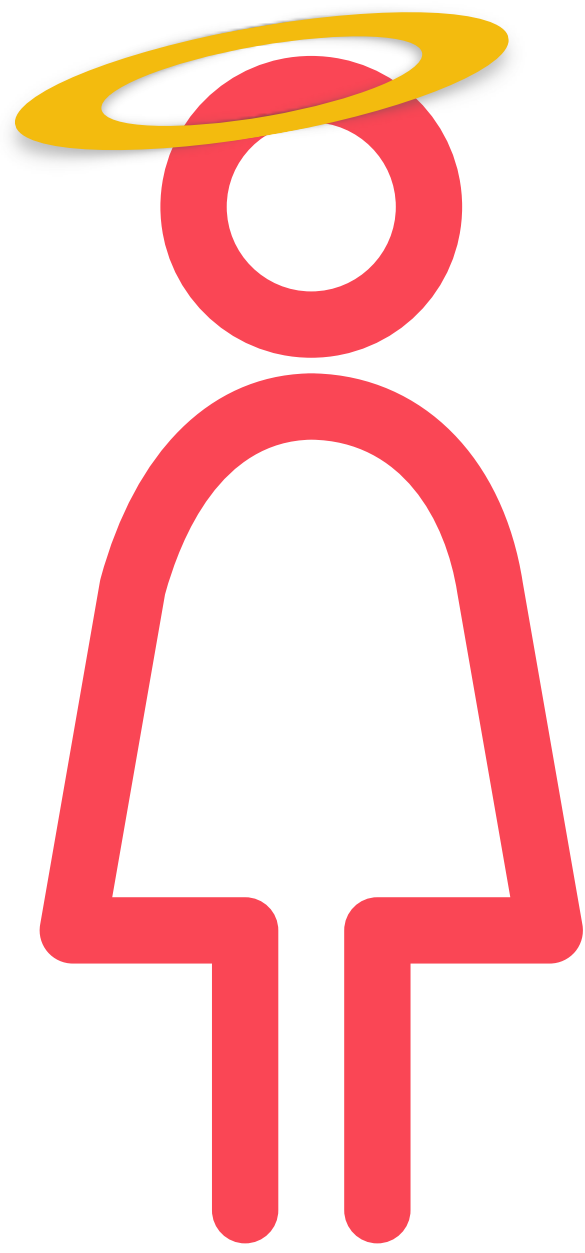
- ▶ A Gentleman
- ▶ Loved Reading
- ▶ Charitable
- ▶ Compassionate
- ▶ Kind
- ▶ Rigid
- ▶ Honest
- ▶ Strict



# **Beatrice Ahumada**

MOTHER

- ▶ Very Pious
- ▶ Loved Romance Novels
- ▶ Died young

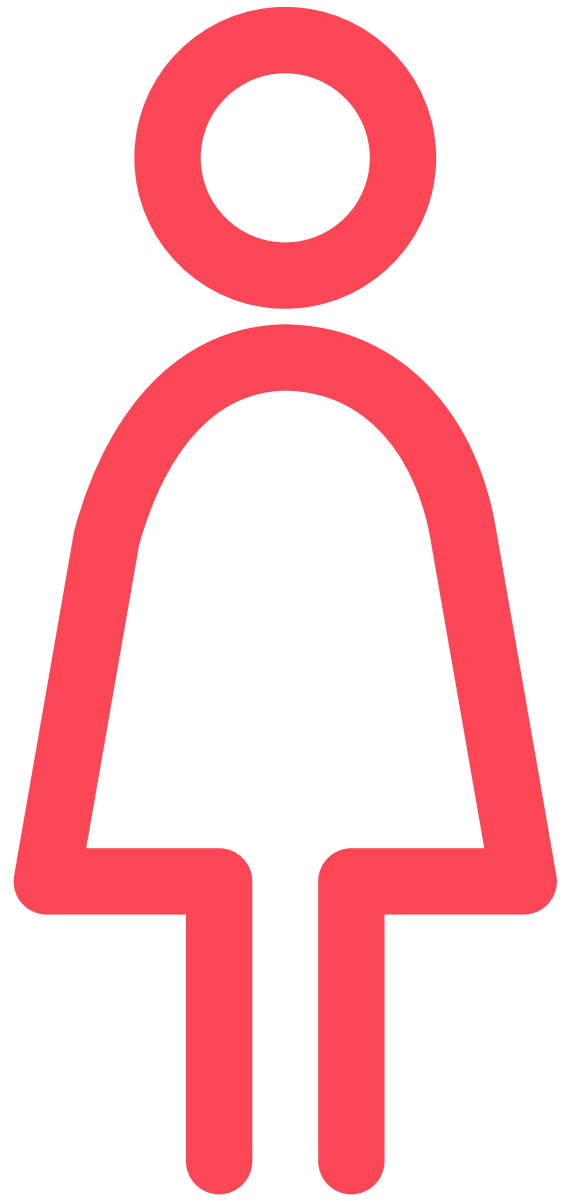


# Teresa

## EARLY YEARS /CHILD

- ▶ Teresa loved reading lives of saints
- ▶ Intrigued with idea of eternity
- ▶ “Becoming a martyr”
- ▶ “Becoming a hermit”
- ▶ Mother died when Teresa was twelve
- ▶ Finding favor with the Blessed Virgin Mary

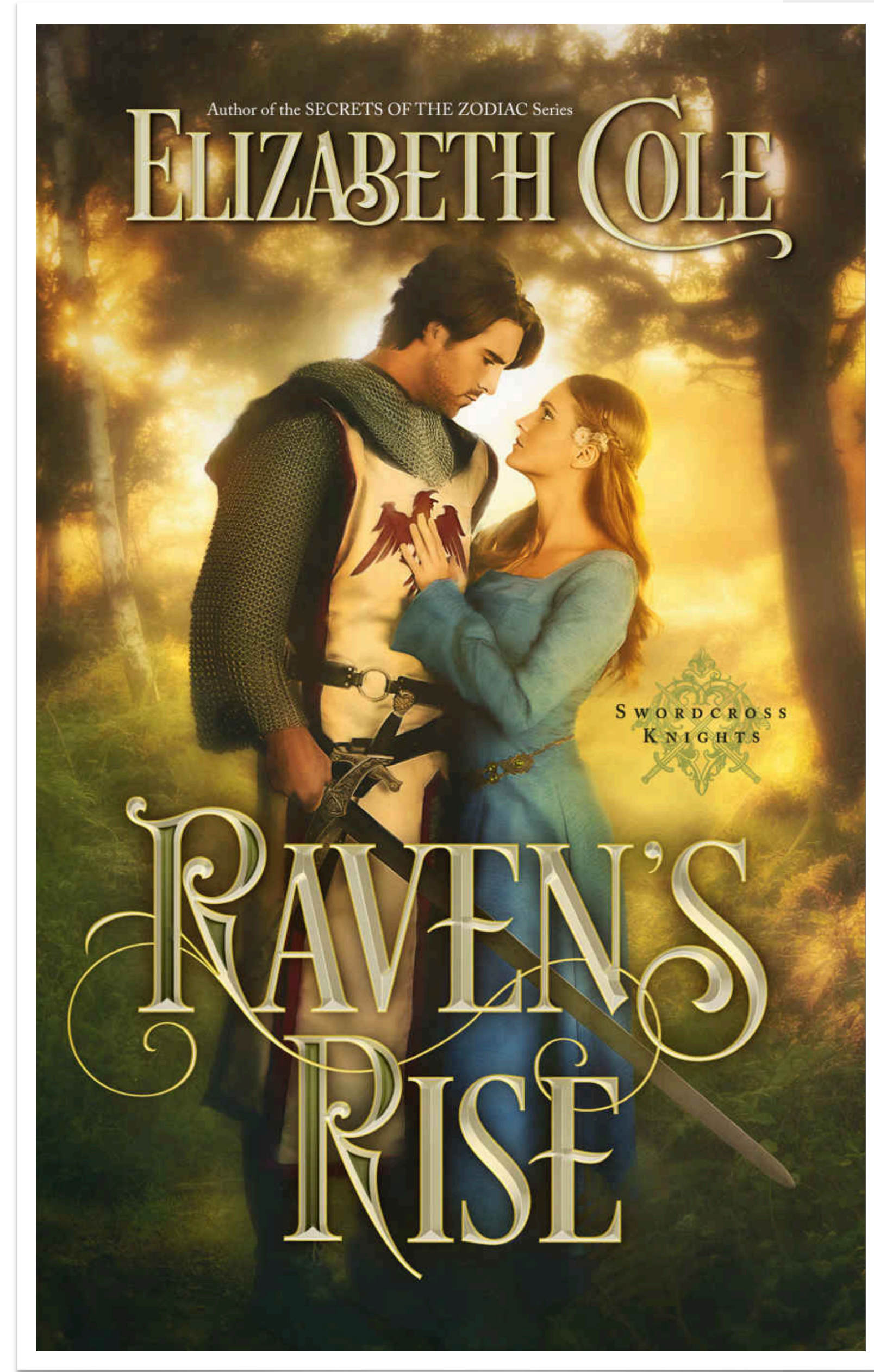




## A new side of Teresa...

### EARLY YEARS /TEENAGER

- ▶ Boys
- ▶ Clothes
- ▶ Perfume
- ▶ Hair Styling
- ▶ Romance Novels
- ▶ Knights in Shining Armor





# Life at the convent...

## OF THE AUSTIN NUNS IN AVILA

- ▶ Dislike for the convent
- ▶ Enjoying the convent
- ▶ “Many are called but few are chosen”
- ▶ Mental Prayer
- ▶ Trouble at the Convent – Paaarrtttyyy!
- ▶ Worldly Life and Ignoring God

**How To Draw St. Teresa Of Avila**

<https://youtu.be/jRR9NgptaR0>

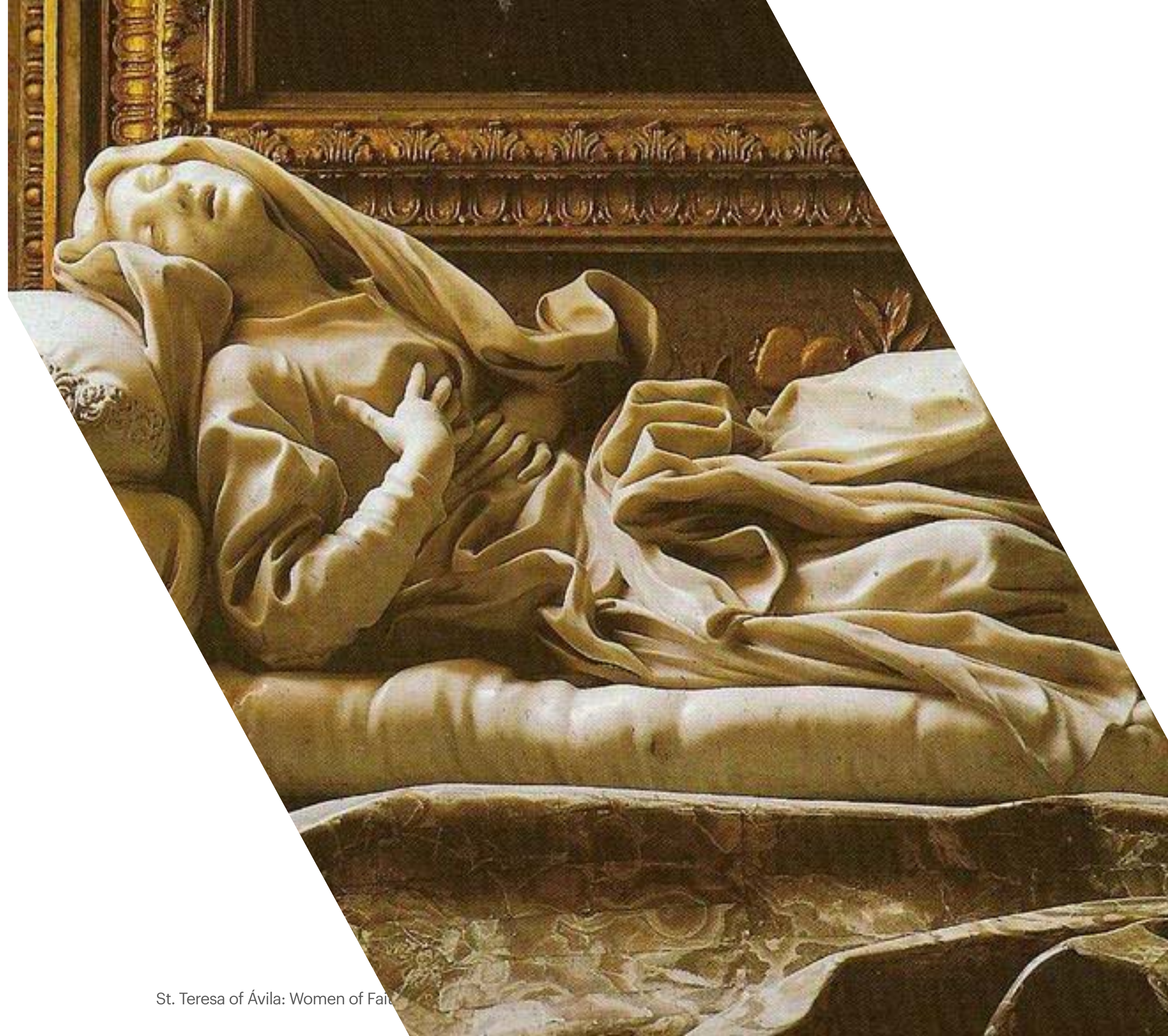


A stained glass window depicting the Virgin Mary in profile, facing left. She is wearing a dark blue mantle over a reddish-brown gown. Her face is pale with a serene expression. Behind her head is a large, ornate golden halo with intricate patterns. The background of the window is dark green with lighter green and blue floral and foliate designs. The overall style is characteristic of Gothic or medieval stained glass art.

# Trials & Tribulations

# Teresa falls ill

- ▶ Falls sick with malaria and has a seizure
  - Believed dead, they dig a grave for her
  - She wakes four days later
- ▶ Paralyzed for three years
  - Never completely gets well
- ▶ An excuse to stop praying





# Return to Prayer

- ▶ For years, she hardly prayed at all "under the guise of humility."
- ▶ When she was 41, a priest convinced her to go back to her prayer.
- ▶ She found prayer difficult and blamed her creativity.
- ▶ The path to Mental Prayer

# God's Gifts or Punishment

- ▶ As she started to pray again, God gave her spiritual delights.
- ▶ Her biggest fault was her friendships.
- ▶ God came first.
- ▶ Friends are convinced she is being tricked by the Devil.
- ▶ She “flips the bird” to Jesus

VERDICT: **Delight from God**





## **3 essential steps for fruitful mental prayer.**

1. We must be searching for God
2. We must be willing to be alone with Him
3. We need but look upon Our Lord Who is present within us.

..... “ .....  
“We need no wings to go in search of God, but have only to find a place where we can be alone and look upon Him present within us.”

Teresa of Avila  
The Way of Perfection

SHE COULDN'T AVOID COMPLAINING TO HER CLOSEST FRIEND ABOUT THE HOSTILITY AND GOSSIP THAT SURROUNDED HER.

When Jesus told her,  
**"Teresa, that's how I  
treat my friends"**

Teresa responded,  
**"No wonder you have so  
few friends."**



# Reform: A New Order





**D**etermined to found a new Carmelite convent focused on a simple life of poverty and devoted to prayer.

When word about her plans were learned:

- ▶ Denounced by a priest
- ▶ Sister nuns told her she should raise money for the convent she was already in
- ▶ Threatened with the Inquisition
- ▶ Town started legal proceedings against her



**The Inquisition**, also referred to as the "Holy **Inquisition**", was a group of institutions within the Catholic Church whose aim was to combat heresy. Torture and violence were used by **Inquisition** to get confessions from heretics.

## **Teresa believed:**

- ▶ Spiritual life was an attitude of love.
- ▶ In work, not in begging
- ▶ In obedience to God more than in penance.
- ▶ If you do something wrong, don't punish yourself - change

May God  
protect  
me from  
gloomy  
saints



**A**t her convent St. Joseph,  
Teresa spent the first five  
years in seclusion writing about  
her life and in prayer.

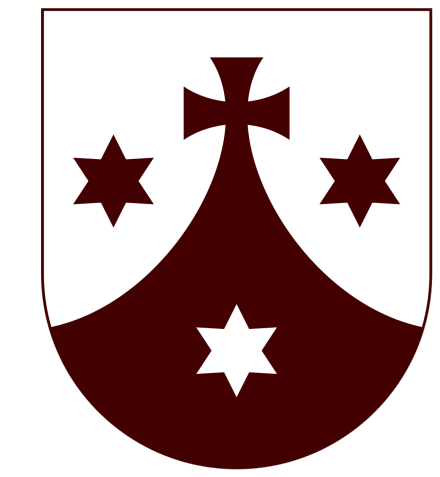
After writing a profound thought, she  
would add...

..... “ .....

But what do I  
know. I'm just a  
wretched woman



Convent of Saint Joseph, in Ávila, Spain



## Discalced Carmelites

- ▶ Teresa spreads her reform movement
- ▶ Set about founding more convents
- ▶ 2 Carmelite friars joined her:
  - John of the Cross & Father Anthony of Jesus
  - They founded the first monastery of Discalced Carmelite brothers in Nov. 1568
- ▶ Her former convent voted her in as prioress
- ▶ Opposed by other religious orders
- ▶ Often met with hostility when traveling.

### **gad·a·bout**

*/ˈɡadəˌbaʊt/*

a habitual pleasure-seeker.

..... “ .....  
...a restless  
disobedient  
gadabout who  
has gone about  
teaching as  
though she were  
a professor.

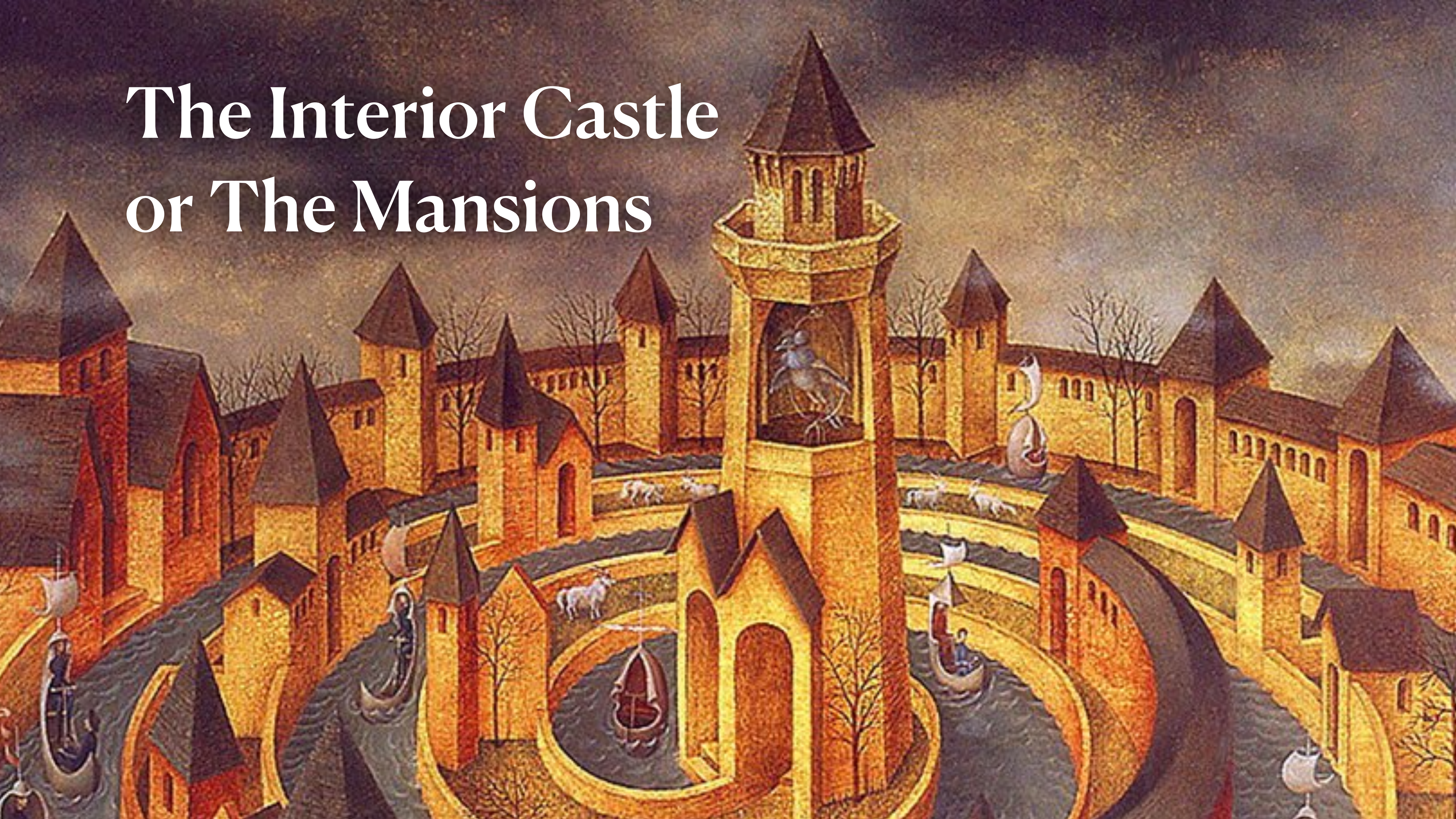
The Papal Nuncio



My Lord, it is time to move on. Well then, may your will be done. O my Lord and my Spouse, the hour that I have longed for has come. It is time to meet one another

Final Words of Teresa of Avila

# The Interior Castle or The Mansions



# Background

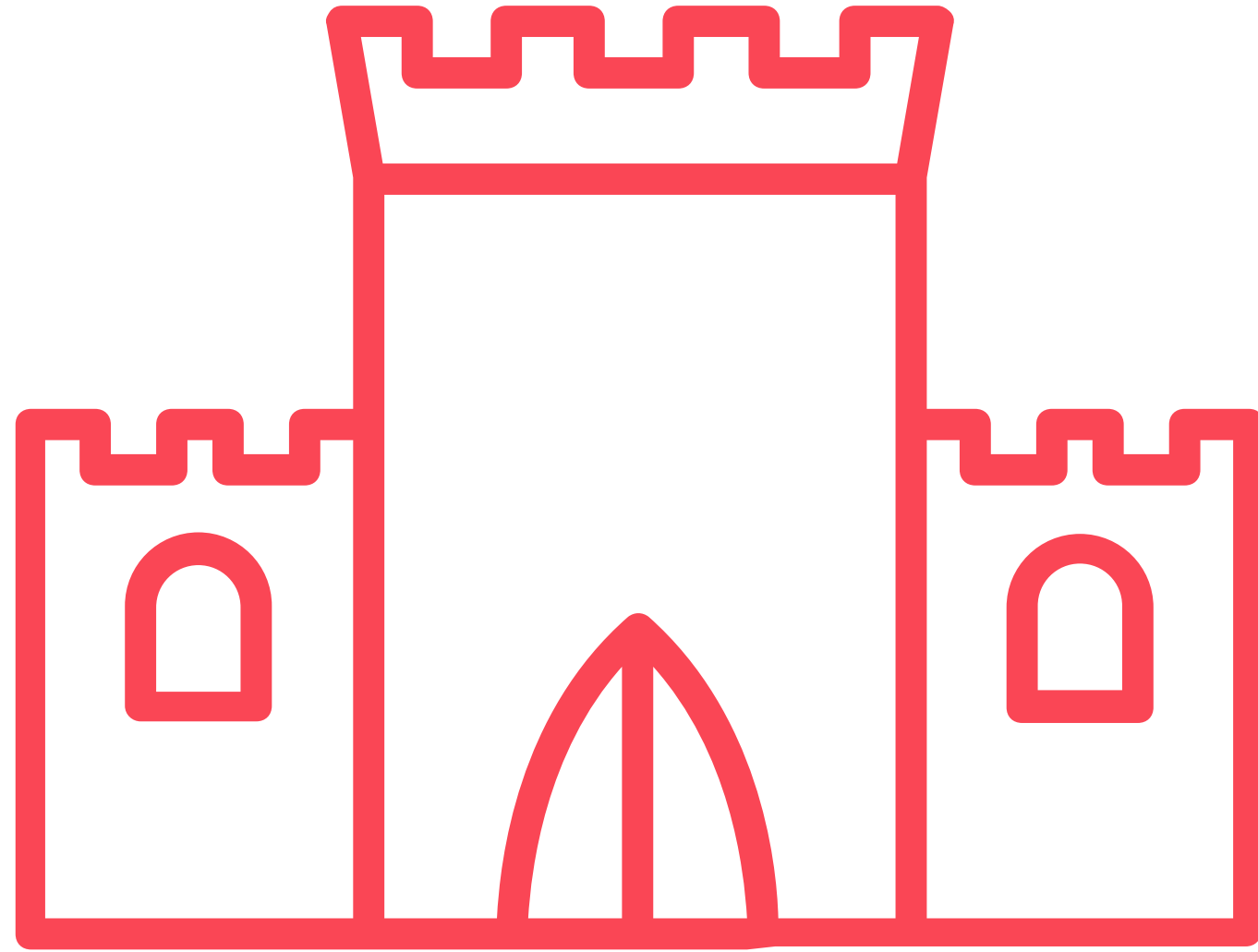
- ▶ St. Teresa never asked for permission to write anything but waited until she received a command from her superiors.
- ▶ St. Teresa began to write the Interior Castle on June 2, 1577
  - Completed it on the eve of St. Andrew, November 29<sup>th</sup> of the same year.
  - In August 1586, it was decided to print St. Teresa's works.
- ▶ This holy Mother desired to see the beauty of a soul in the state of grace, a thing greatly to be coveted both for the sake of seeing and of possessing it.
  - While this desire lasted, she was commanded to write a treatise on prayer.
- ▶ On the eve of the blessed Trinity, while considering what subject to choose for this treatise, God, Who disposes everything in due season, fulfilled her wish and inspired her wish and furnished a suitable subject.



# The Vision







# Why a Castle?

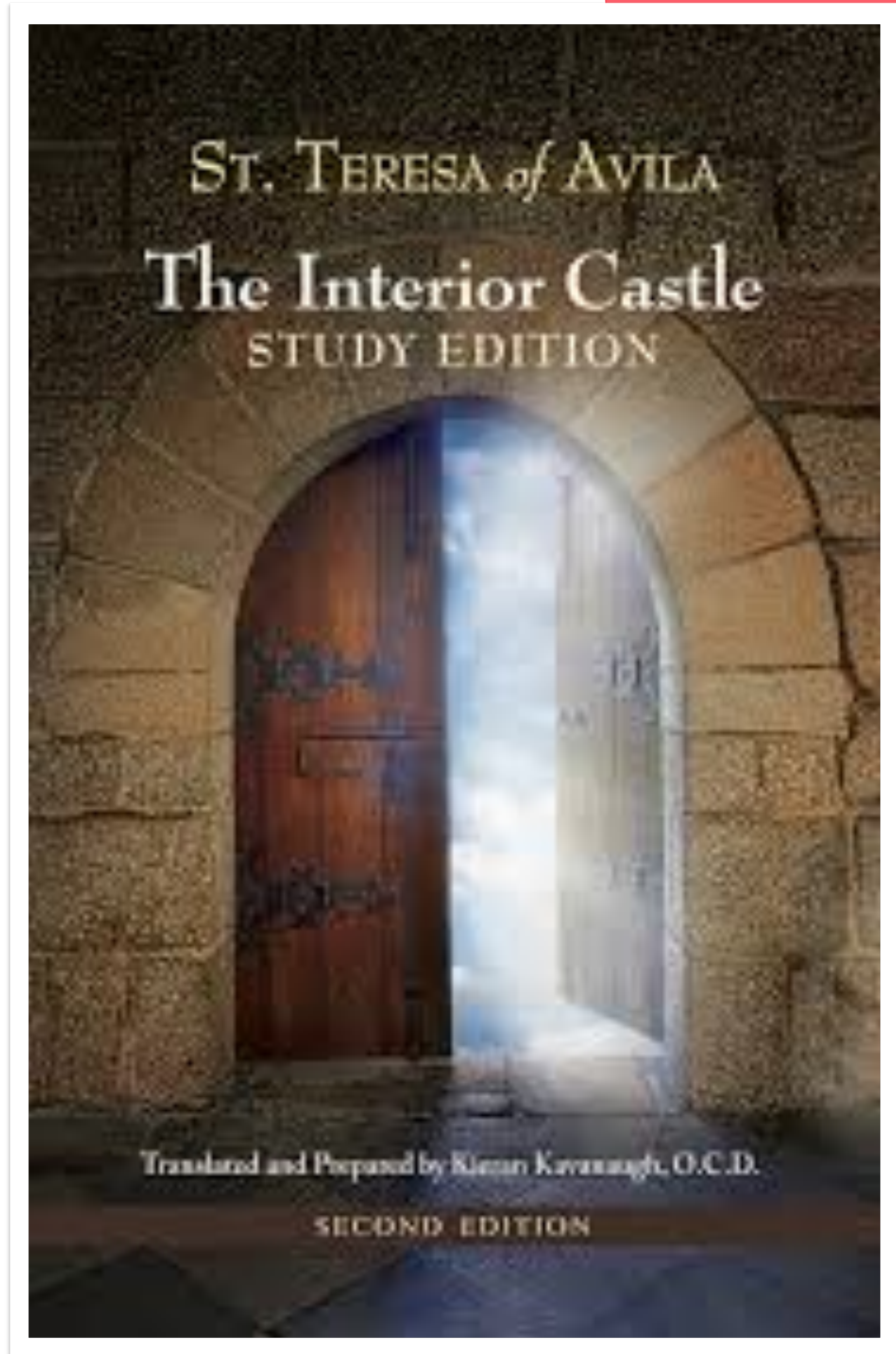
- ▶ Origin came after she received a vision from Christ, picturing the soul as if it were a castle made of a single diamond or of a very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms, just as in Heaven there are many mansions.”
- ▶ The closer we approach the center, the greater the light.

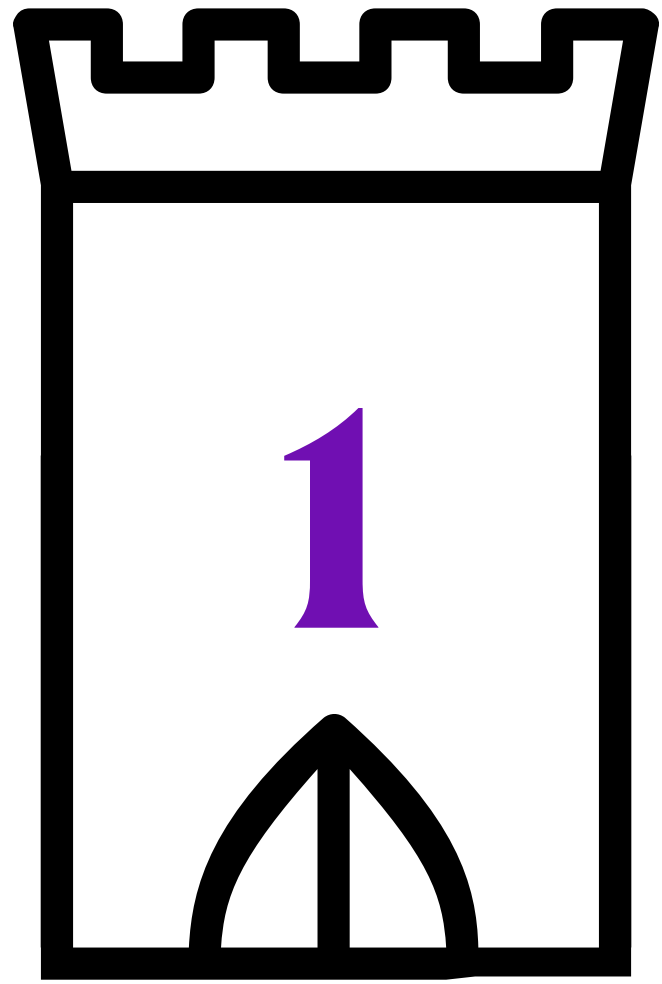
# How to Enter

- ▶ The gate by which to enter the castle is prayer and meditation.

# Two Reasons to study St. Teresa's Interior Castle

1. Self-knowledge. By knowing all of the stages of growth, we come to know almost automatically where we are on the journey-something St. Teresa insisted on. With this knowledge, we will know the best way to approach prayer (since we pray differently according to the stage one's prayer has reached).
2. Encouragement-When we understand the sacrifices and difficulties that are a normal part of the journey to our destination, we will not be surprised but rather encouraged to see our growth along the way.



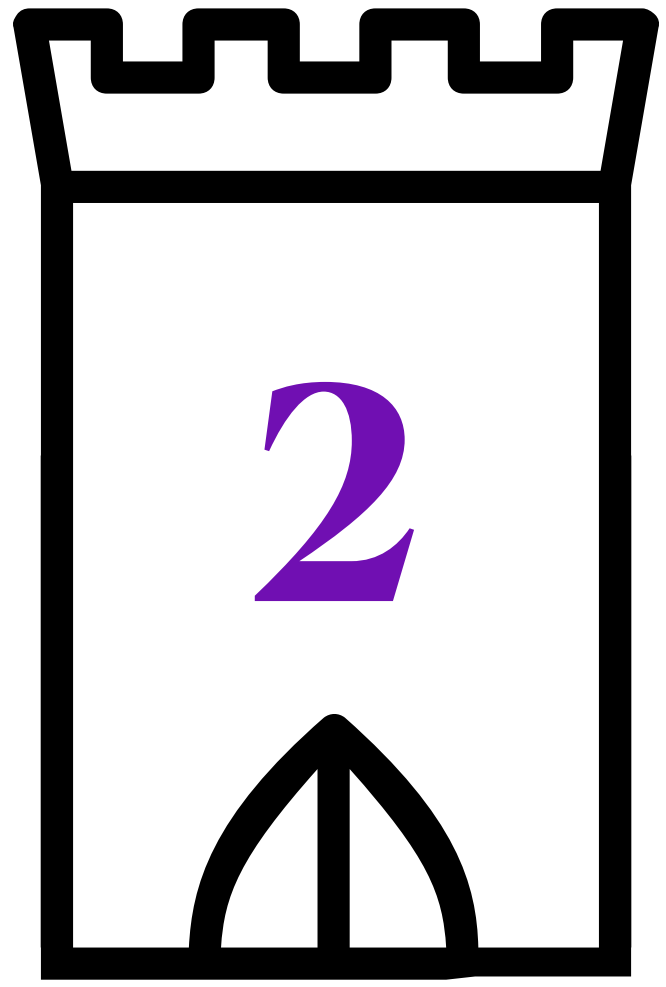


## 1<sup>ST</sup> MANSION



**T**he first mansion corresponds to St. Teresa's first way of **obtaining water**, that of drawing water up from a well by using a bucket which entails a great deal of human effort.

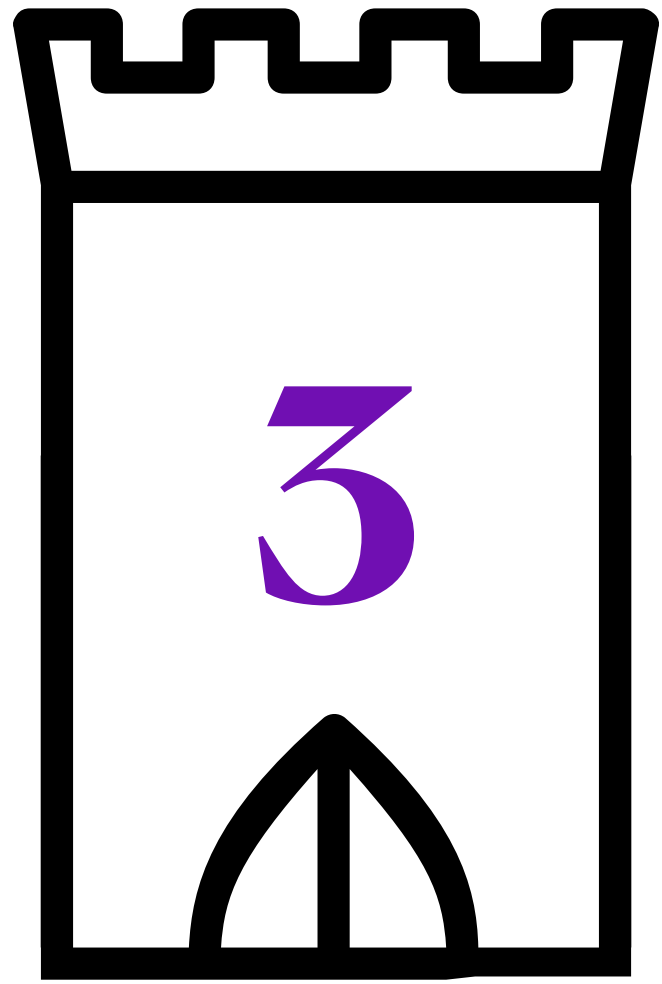
At length, they enter the first rooms in the **basement** of the castle accompanied by numerous **reptiles** which disturb their peace and prevent their seeing the beauty of the building. Still it is a great gain that these persons should have found their way in at all. These people are **free from serious sin** and want to **avoid offending God**, yet they are still immersed in **worldly matters and pleasures**, so they **scarcely see His light**.



## 2<sup>ND</sup> MANSION



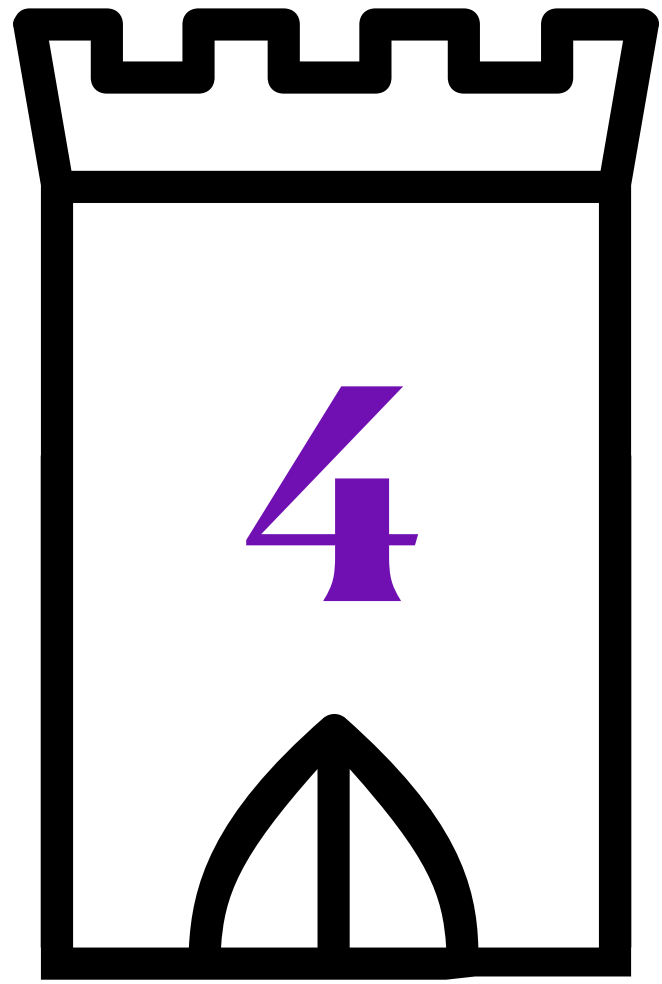
**T**hese people have experienced some growth for the 1st. Mansion yet they are in the midst of a tug-of-war battle. Earthly pleasures are very attractive, and God's messages makes the worldly message appear vain and love for Him more important. This is the Purgative life. In this part of the castle are found souls which have begun to practice prayer; they realize the importance of their not remaining in the first mansion, yet often lack the determination to quit their present condition by avoiding occasions of sin.



..... 3<sup>RD</sup> MANSION .....

**T**hese people are extremely desirous of not offending His Majesty; who keep themselves from venial sin, are lovers of penance and of their hours of recollection and prayer; who spend their time well, and are exercised in works of charity towards their neighbor; who are very regular in their actions and managing their house. Nevertheless, human nature still remains an oppressive burden on the spirit and the person finds few spiritual joys.

The 3rd. and 4th. mansions are illuminative. In the 3rd. mansion the Lord never fails to repay our services both as a just and even as a merciful God who always bestows more than we deserve, giving us greater happiness than could be obtained from any earthly pleasures and amusements.



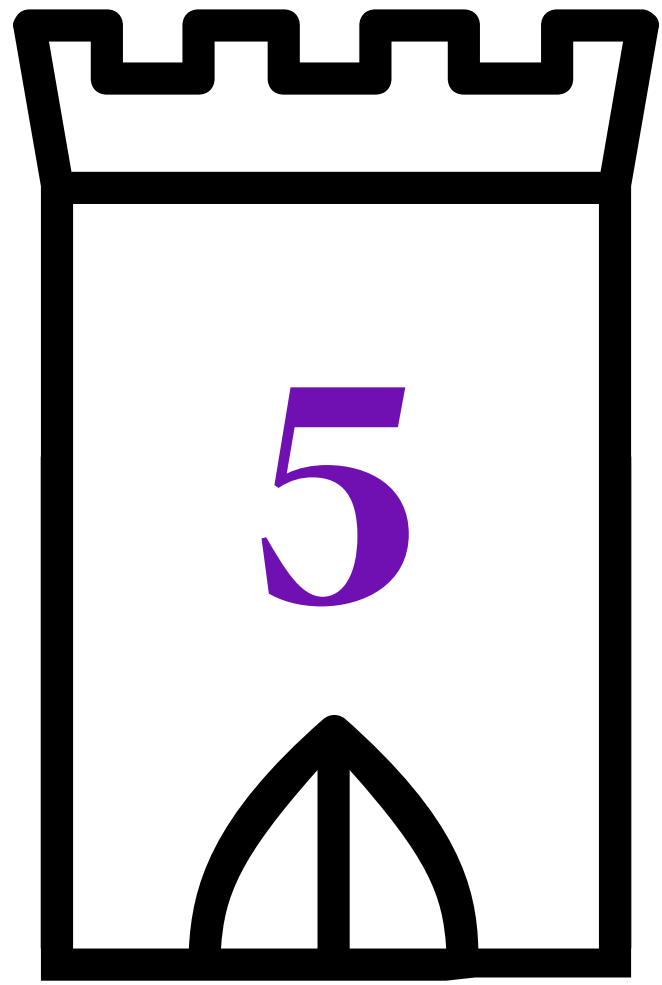
## 4<sup>TH</sup> MANSION

The 4th mansion corresponds to St. Teresa's second way of obtaining water, that is, cranking a water wheel and having the water run through an aqueduct, which involves less exertion and produces more water.

Having tasted divine delight and grown incomparably more in all the virtues than in the previous degrees of prayer, these persons experience great detachment and interior freedom, they lose cravings for all earthly things, and desire more severed penances out of love of God.

Two kinds of Infused Prayer:

1. Initial "recollection" which is an infused and gentle awareness given by God and not produced by human effort. This kind of prayer, being serenely drawn to be occupied with God, occurs before the prayer of quiet.
2. Prayer of quiet which is a state of prayer "which is a quiet, deep and peaceful happiness in the will" and yet one does not understand what it is. Distractions are possible.

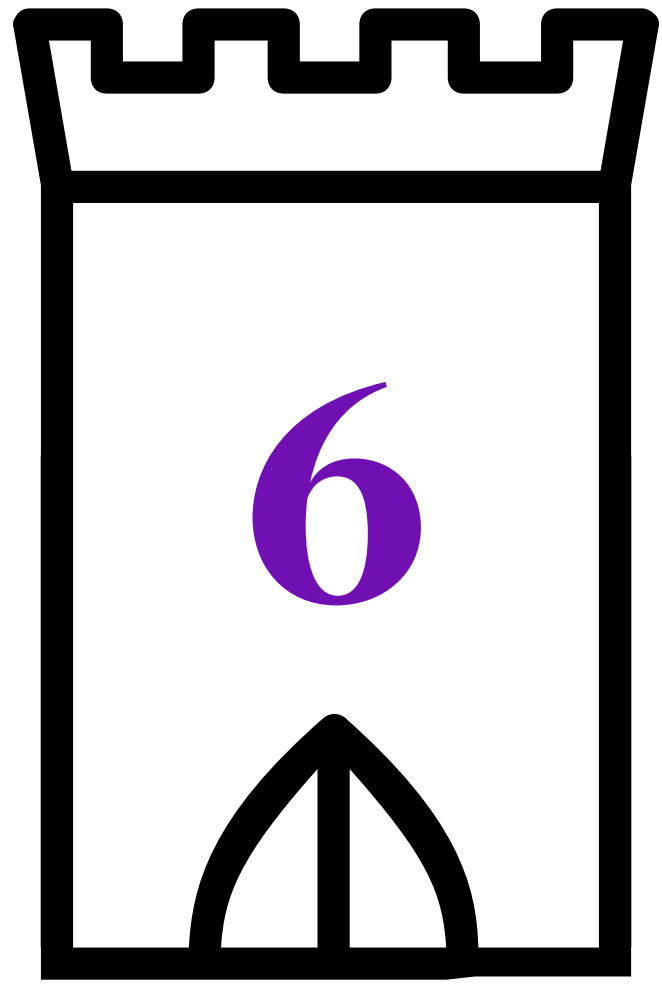


..... 5<sup>TH</sup> MANSION .....

**T**he 5th. mansion corresponds to St. Teresa's third way of obtaining water, that is, having the water run into the garden by an effluence of a river or stream (entails far less effort).

These people are completely forgetful of self, excessively desire solitude, painfully desire to die a thousand deaths and undergo sever penance for His glory to make him known, are disgusted at earthly things. Their experiences of full union with God, although they are unaware of the gift, are indelible and cannot be forgotten.

These people are introduced into spiritual betrothal, a full union where all of one's faculties (the will, imagination, memory, intellect) are in union with the indwelling of the Trinity. They are ALMOST totally united with God but not absorbed as not to function.

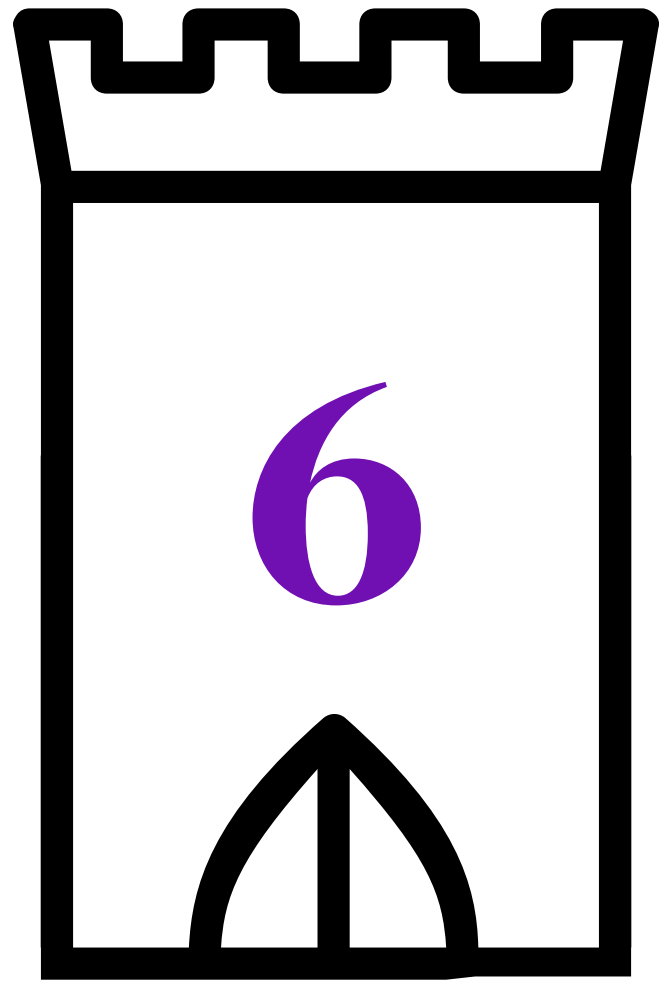


..... 6<sup>TH</sup> MANSION .....

**T**he 6th. mansion corresponds to St. Teresa's fourth way of obtaining water, that is, by a gentile but abundant rainfall in which the soul does not have to work at all (the best way).

These people continue to deepen living the Gospel and experience numerous advanced forms of prayer union with God. All consciousness and speech become centered on God. They have no attachments to anything created and no pleasure in any worldly things. In fact, life on earth becomes burdensome.

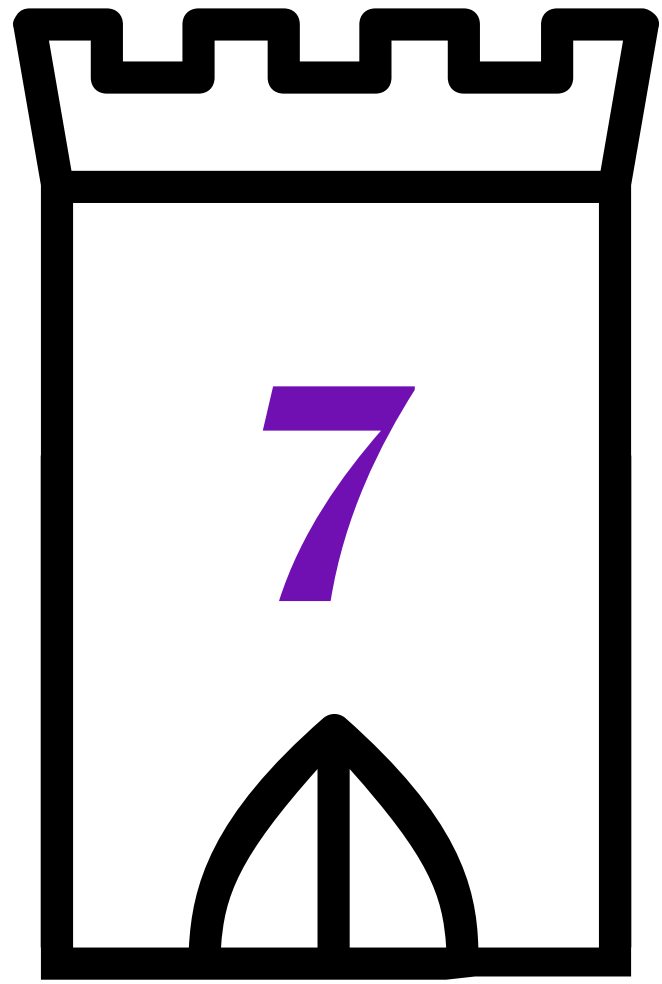




## 6<sup>TH</sup> MANSION

In the 6th. mansion, a number of advanced experiences of God occur.

1. **Ecstasy/ Rapture:** One loses—either gradually or suddenly, sense perception of the outer world due to an intense experience of deep union with God. These raptures can occur often, even continually, since they are readily triggered by anything holy.
2. **Transport/Flight of the Spirit:** “The spirit seems to be hurried away with a violent speed” ...“ the soul seems to go out of the body” ...an imaginary vision” in which “great secrets are revealed to her”. There are three main benefits: knowledge of God, knowledge of self, contempt for all earthly things.
3. **Levitation:** God can take body along with the soul sometimes
4. **Impulse:** A sudden and unexpected knowledge, “a certain intellectual vision”, that one is separated from God, bringing inconsolable grief.
5. **Wounding:** The soul feels as though an arrow has been thrust into its heart, causing a wondrously delightful and fiery spiritual pain.
6. **Spiritual betrothal:** God and other experience some intense union and some separation in one’s conscious experience.



## 7<sup>TH</sup> MANSION



**O**ur Lord brings people into the 7th. mansion by an intellectual vision of the Blessed Trinity. These people have gone from spiritual espousals (6th. mansion) to spiritual marriage (7th. mansion) and have reached the relative perfection of the Christian life: complete self-forgetfulness, extreme desire to do God's will and seek His glory.

In the soul's deepest center, an instantaneous, transformative, and permanent union with the Trinity occurs, just as water falling into a pond cannot afterwards be separated or divided. In the 7th. mansion, the soul begins to see and understand the favors God has bestowed upon the soul—an intellectual vision of union occurs. In this life of pilgrimage, permanent absorptions are not possible. Nevertheless, a person can attend to the indwelling Trinity while carrying on daily activities-both Martha (active) and Mary (contemplative).

ישוע בן צדוק נאזריט  
ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΝΑΖΟΙΟΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΩΝ  
IESVS NAZARENVS REX IYDAEORVM



..... “ .....  
He must increase;  
I must decrease.

John 3:30



***Saint Teresa Of Ávila  
(03/28/1515 – 10/04/1582)***

***Was a prominent Spanish  
mystic, Roman Catholic saint,  
Carmelite nun and author of the  
Counter Reformation and  
theologian of contemplative life  
through mental prayer.***

***She was a reformer of the  
Carmelite Order and is  
considered to be a founder of the  
Discalced Carmelites along with  
John of the Cross.***

**St. Teresa's Prayer** John Michael Talbot

<https://youtu.be/tF7Yb9fobCg>

St. Teresa of Ávila: Women of Faith under Quarantine

# More Resources

## ▶ St. Teresa of Avila – Teresa of Jesus

- <https://pilgrimcenterofhope.org/st-teresa-of-avila-teresa-of-jesus/>
- [https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=208](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=208)

## ▶ History of Discalced Carmelites

<https://www.carmelitaniscalzi.com/en/who-we-are/storia/history-of-discalced-carmelites/>

## ▶ Summary of Interior Castle by St. Teresa of Avila

<https://deaconconlin.com/2018/06/05/summary-of-interior-castle-by-st-teresa-of-avila/>

## ▶ Books

- The Book of Her Life: <https://ccel.org/ccel/teresa/life>
  - Audiobook: <https://youtu.be/gKXOFOSM4zo>
- The Way of Perfection: <https://ccel.org/ccel/teresa/way>
  - Audiobook: <https://youtu.be/P2t8VSF9nNw>
- Interior Castle: <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/teresa/castle2.html>
  - Audiobook: <https://youtu.be/J63e3XNA9WA>
- The Book of her Foundations: <http://www.carmelitemonks.org/Vocation/TheBookOfTheFoundations.pdf>
- More Carmolite Books: <http://www.carmelitemonks.org/Vocation/CarmeliteWritings.php>