

The Art of Teresian Prayer

Carmelite School of Prayer Advent 2020

I take a moment to meditate on all these things in my heart (Luke 2:19)

Through his spiritual journey, Saint John of the Cross invites us to practice detachment. He tells us to not become weighed down with things that take us away from God. He encourages us to go through the night to truly meet God. 'Where are you hidden, my beloved?' is the question St. John asks in his Spiritual Canticle.

Saint John of the Cross is not a die-hard, bleeding ascetic with sunken eyes, but rather the Poor, the Gentle, the Suffering, the Pure and the Misunderstood of the Beatitudes. Brother Bruno of Jesus-Marie

Snippet #17: Prayer & John of the Cross

Was it a coincidence or was it the providence of the calendar that we are celebrating Saint John of the Cross today, 14 December?

It is a blessing to have him with us on this path of prayer during this time of Advent because he is a true master in the spiritual life, in the life of prayer, and especially in the area of contemplative prayer.

Through his story, closely linked to his spiritual experience, he shows us how to gradually detach ourselves. He shows us how to gradually let go of everything that weighs us down. To illustrate, imagine a bird that wants to fly off but is attached by either an enormous chain, a chord or a little piece of string; he will not be able to fly.

The work of the spiritual life is to make ourselves available so that the Lord can help us make progress on the contemplative path. Our part is to 'lighten up' so to speak, to let go of everything that holds us back. In other words to let go of all that is not from God; all that we are attached to that could cause confusion or disorder in our lives. We are to seek to let go of our attachments and to truly turn our hearts towards God in order to be united to him. The more we are truly united to him, the more we will truly be able to love God and our neighbor. Amen

Prepared by the Discalced Carmelite Friars, Paris, France (translated from French)