

Prologue (Summary)
The Interior Castle
Saint Teresa of Avila

Teresa of Jesus, a nun of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, wrote this treatise for her Sisters and daughters, the Discalced Carmelite nuns.

JHS

(Prologue)

Not many things that I have been ordered to do under **obedience** have been as difficult for me as this present task of writing about **prayer**. First, it doesn't seem the Lord is giving me either the spirit of the desire to undertake the work. Second, I have been experiencing ... such great noise ... in my head that I've found it a hardship even to write concerning necessary business matters. But ... **obedience** usually lessens the **difficulty** of things that seem impossible... The Lord hasn't given me so much **virtue** that my nature in the midst of its struggle with continual sickness and duties... doesn't feel strong **aversion** toward such a task. May He, in whose mercy I trust... do this work for me.

2. Indeed, I don't think I have much more to say than what I have said in other things ... I'm literally, just like the **parrots** that are taught to speak ... If the Lord wants me to say something new, His Majesty will **provide** ... My **memory** is so poor that I would be glad if I could repeat, in case they've been lost, some of the things which I was told were well said. If the Lord doesn't make me remember, I will gain just by tiring myself and getting a worse headache for the sake of obedience...

3. And so I'm beginning to comply today, the feast of the most Blessed Trinity, in the year 1577, in this Carmelite monastery of St. Joseph in Toledo ... If I should say

something that isn't in conformity with what the holy Roman Catholic Church holds, it will be through ignorance and not malice ... through to goodness of God I always am, and will be, and have been subject to her. May He be always blessed and glorified,

Amen.

4. The one who ordered me to write told me that the nuns in these monasteries of our Lady of Mount Carmel need someone to answer their questions about prayer... He thought they would better understand the language used among women and that because of the love they bore me they would pay more attention to what I would tell them... So I shall be speaking to them while I write; it's nonsense to think that what I could say could matter to other persons. Our Lord will be granting me favor enough if some of these nuns benefit by praising Him a little more ... And it should be clear that if I manage to say something well the Sisters would understand that this does not come from me ... unless the Lord gave it to me ...

Amen