

Soliloquies

Introduction (Summary)

One of the **distinctive traits** of St. Teresa is the **spontaneous prayer** to God that flows easily and frequently from her pen. There are many instances throughout her works where she shares her prayer with the reader. This **collection of seventeen prayers** allows us to participate in the prayer of Teresa and contemplate her passion.

She laments over the absence of God, over the time she lost in living apart from Him, over a life that is an obstacle to perfect union. She praises God's mercy and grandeur, the adorable humanity of Christ who suffers and seeks souls and whose delight is to be with the children of men.

These writings have a **meditative** and **prayerful quality** described in the long title—peculiar to the times-- given to the collection by Fray Luis de Leon in the first edition of the Saint's works published in Salamanca in 1588:

Meditations or exclamations of the soul to God written by Mother Teresa of Jesus in the year 1569 on different days according to the spirit our Lord gave her after Communion.

The **style** of these meditations greatly resembles that found in the soliloquies under the name of St. Augustine.

The *Soliloquies* and the *Meditations* (now know as **pseudo-Augustinian works**), were available in Spanish in sixteenth-century Spain and bound together in one volume. They were probably read and reflected on by Teresa.

Because of the **possible influence** of that volume by pseudo-Augustine on these Teresian writings but more so because of the similarity of the literary genre, we have given them the simple title *Soliloquies*.

This collection, a complement to the *Life*, contains **thirty-six scriptural quotations**,

mainly from the Gospels, with **Teresa's personal insights** and **interpretations**.

The original work (or autograph) has not been preserved. A complete copy by Ribera is the one Fray Luis de Leon probably used and the one followed in this translation.

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