

## **The Book of her Foundations**

by Teresa of Avila

### **Introduction**

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St. Teresa wrote her extraordinary story **The Book of Her Life** under obligation to her **confessors** and **spiritual directors** hopeful that they would come to **understand and enlighten** her about the path along which the Lord was leading her...

Her narration grew into something more than plain history and became **a witnessing to the realities of the interior life and their transforming power**. The story of Teresa's life **evolved into a story of God's mercy** ... and she became obsessed with a desire to **serve 'His Majesty'**...

In her **Foundations** she tells that she was **tormented** when the Franciscan missionary Alonzo Maldonado came to St. Joseph's. Recently returned from Mexico, he brought to the monastery grille his tale of the **millions** who had **never heard of Jesus Christ**. In Teresa's mind there could be no fate worse ... She thought that the **greatest service** one could render the Lord was to **bring souls to Him** ...

In 1567, the prior general of the Carmelites, Giovanni Baptista Rossi ... made his visitation of the Carmelite houses in Spain ... Teresa arranged to meet with him ... to explain ... her compelling desire ... The meeting turned out to be a happy one for both ... He wanted Teresa to found other similar monasteries and provided her with the official letters she would need ... This much consoled Teresa but she felt helpless: "Here I was, a poor discalced nun, without help from anywhere—only from the Lord ...

At the time of her death seventeen of her little Carmels **for women** had been founded:

**Medina del Campo** (1567);  
**Malagon and Valladolid** (1568);  
**Toledo and Pastrana** (1569)  
**Salamanca** (1570);  
**Alba De Tormes** (1571);  
**Segovia** (1574);

**Beas and Seville** (1575);

**Caravaca** (1576);

**Villanueva de la Jara and Palencia** (1580);

**Soria** (1581);

**Granada and Burgos** (1582).

**For men:**

**Durelo** (1568) and

**Pastrana** (1569).