

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Foundation: Valladolid.**

(Ch.11)

#### **The Book of her Foundations**

by Teresa of Avila

Continues the subject that was begun about how Dona Casilda de Padilla attained her holy desire to enter religious life.

At this time, I would like to mention the vocation of a lay Sister who received the habit in this monastery of the Immaculate Conception. Although she was a peasant girl, she was very virtuous, the result of the great favors God had granted her.

Her name was Dona Casilda. She went with her grandmother, her fiancé's mother, to a lay Sister's reception of the habit. She felt intensely drawn to this monastery thinking that since it was small and the nuns few, they could better serve the Lord. She, however, had not yet made the decision to leave her fiancé.

**2.** Before she was engaged, she would spend periods of time in prayer. Her mother had brought her up this way and had only one desire for her children that was that they belong to God alone. She begged God to take them out of this world...

On the contrary, those parents who did not bring their children up as children of God will find themselves, together with their children, in hell. They will experience much despair.

**3.** Dona Casilda was now even reluctant to recite the rosary and feared things getting worse. She clearly saw that by coming to this house her salvation would be assured. And thus, she made a firm decision.

One morning she came to the monastery with her mother and sister. Once inside the monastery, she refused to leave.

But, both the mother and the prioress, feeling her but a child, felt she needed more testing. They sent for a Dominican friar who at once saw that it was the Spirit of the Lord calling this soul. He promised to help her return another day.

**4.** She ended up leaving after much persuasion, but her desires continued to increase.

The mother informed the relatives who felt it but a whim as she was only twelve years old. Yet, they did not find her too young to marry and be left to the world.

**5.** The matter could no longer be kept a secret from her fiancé who needed to consent to her entering religious life.

On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, she obtained permission from her grandmother to go the country to relax. She arranged to have her fiancé waiting for her at the entrance to the monastery with a few bundles of twigs.

She told the servants to have the nuns come to the door to get the twigs. When the door opened, she went inside and embraced the statue of our Lady, weeping and begging the prioress not to throw her out.

In the street, the servants protested loudly. She told them from the grill that in no way would she come out and that they should tell her mother ...

**6.** In sum, no family member was able to get her to change her mind ... She told them she was obliged to seek her salvation and could not be saved amid worldly occasions of sin. She told her fiancé that he should not complain as she was leaving him for God alone ... When she saw though that no argument satisfied her fiancé, she got up and left him there.

**7.** She felt totally displeased with him. When God enlightens a soul with truth, the devil's stumbling blocks help it more. For it is now His Majesty who fights for the soul. She clearly saw that it was not she who was speaking.

**8.** Since the family saw how little impact they had with words, they turned to force. They obtained a court order to remove her from the monastery. She was finally removed by the family on the feast of the Holy Innocents. But, up until that point she remained in the monastery without receiving the habit but following all the religious observances as if she had.

She was taken to a gentleman's house, though protesting and saying it would be to no avail. Many tried to persuade her to accept the married state but she got out of all the arguments. She left them all astonished by the things she said.

**9.** They saw they were getting nowhere and so placed her at her mother's house to detain her. Her mother, bothered by all the disturbance, did nothing to help her. Perhaps she was testing her. In addition, the girl's confessor was very opposed. As a result, she

only had God and one of her mother's maids in whom she confided.

She underwent much hardship until she was twelve. The plan was to bring her to the monastery where her sister was as the austerity was not as severe there.

**10.** Learning of this plan, she strove by all means to go ahead with her own plan. And thus, one day at Mass with her mother, she asked her governess, while her mother was in confession, to ask a priest to say a Mass. In the absence of her governess, she hastened to the monastery. Once inside the first gate, she closed it, and began to shout. She was at once given the habit and so fulfilled the good inspirations the Lord had placed within her. The Lord began very shortly to repay her with spiritual favors, and she to serve Him with the greatest happiness, humility and detachment from all.

**11.** Through the rough, woolen dress of the poor He gives pleasure to one who was so attached to very costly and elegant clothes; although the dress of the poor played no part in hiding her beauty. For the Lord had blessed her with natural as well as spiritual graces: a temperament and intelligence so agreeable as to awaken all to praise His Majesty. May it please Him that there be many who will thus answer His call.

AMEN