

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

(Ch.12)

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

by Teresa of Avila

Tells about the life and death of a religious, Beatriz de la Encarnacion, whom our Lord brought to this same house. Her life was one of high perfection, and her death was of a kind that makes it fitting for us to remember her.

A few years, before a young girl, Dona Beatriz, a distant relative of Dona Casilda, entered this monastery to become a nun. She amazed everyone when they saw the great virtues the Lord was forming in her.

Both the nuns and the prioress affirmed that they had never noticed anything in her life that could be considered an imperfection. Nor had they seen any expression on her face other than a modest happiness that revealed the inner joy of her soul.

With an untroubled quiet, she kept strict silence perfectly. Never was she known to have spoken a reprehensible word, nor was any obstinacy seen in her, nor did she ever make an excuse.

To test her, the prioress blamed her for something she had not done. Never did she complain of anything or of any Sister. Nor by her expression or word, did she in the office she held give displeasure to anyone. In all events, her interior and exterior composure was unusual and came from her keeping eternity and the reason God created us very much in mind; she always bore the praises of God on her lips and the greatest spirit of gratitude. In short, hers was perpetual prayer.

**2.** In matters of obedience, she showed perfection and joyfulness in all she was ordered to do. She also practiced great charity towards her neighbor, striving that none would be lost and that all would find joy in Jesus Christ.

Her trials were severe. She suffered terrible illness with great pain and all with willingness and happiness.

Our Lord must have given her spiritual favors and delights, or it would have been impossible to bear her illnesses as cheerfully as she did.

**3.** At one point, there were men in Valladolid that were to be burned for their crimes. With

much anguish, she went to our Lord and begged Him earnestly for the salvation of these souls. And, in exchange for what they deserved, she promised to give her whole life, all the trials and sufferings she could bear.

That same night the first fever struck her and until her death she continually suffered. The condemned men, in turn, died well; hence, it seems that God heard her prayer.

**4.** Next, she was afflicted with an intestinal abscess causing her much suffering. She endured this trial with much patience and no medicine was of any use. It had to come to a head on its own and drain.

With the desire for suffering given to her, she was unable to be satisfied with little. Once while listening to a sermon on the feast of the Cross, her desire to suffer so increased that when the sermon was over, she threw herself on her bed in tears. She explained when asked, that the others should pray that she be given many trials and then she would be content.

**5.** She discussed these interior matters with the prioress which brought her comfort. During her entire illness, she never gave anyone the least trouble.

It is very common for those who practice prayer to desire trials. And when, in the midst of such trials, they rejoice.

Once when suffering from a throat abscess that caused her much pain, she told her Sisters that she had no pain and would not trade places with any one of them who was well.

She strove to keep the Lord before her and to cover up any pain she might have been suffering at the time. And so, unless the pain was intense, she complained very little.

**6.** Her humility was also great. She rejoiced in speaking of the virtues of others. In mortification, she was persistent... It didn't even seem that she lived or conversed with creatures, so little did she care about anything. Whatever was going on around her, she bore with peace. She was always composed ... One Sister told her that she seemed to be like a person of nobility, so proud that they would rather die from hunger than let anyone know about it.

**7.** She used to tell her Sisters that the smallest thing done for the love of God was priceless. She felt that we should set our eyes on the goal of love and on pleasing Him.

She never meddled in anyone's affairs and thus found fault with no one but herself. She was careful not to speak well of others in their presence so as not to cause them pain.

She never sought consolation from sufferings for she felt it would be rude to seek relief from the trials given her by our Lord. She never asked for anything but got along with what was given her. She also said it would be a cross to find consolation in anything that was not God.

It was the opinion of those in the house that she was someone of great perfection.

**8.** When her time came to leave this world, her sufferings increased. Others went to visit her to observe the happiness with which she bore her trials.

The chaplain, a true servant of God, had a great desire to be present at her death. He considered her a saint.

One night she was in a lot of pain, and although already anointed, he was called. A little before nine, she raised her eyes, and a happiness like a shining light came over her countenance. She remained as would someone gazing on an object that gives profound joy. She smiled twice.

All who were there received much spiritual delight and happiness that it seemed to them they were in heaven.

So, it was with great happiness, her eyes fixed on heaven, that she died looking like an angel. We can believe that the Lord brought her to rest in payment for the many things she had desired to suffer for Him.

**9.** The chaplain affirms that at the time of her burial he perceived an extremely sweet fragrance coming from her body. And the sacristan affirms that despite all the candles that burned at the funeral and burial, not one of them grew smaller in size. One of her confessors said he was not surprised for he knew our Lord communicated often with her.

**10.** May we know how to profit from such good companionship and from those whom our Lord gives us in these houses... May we all praise the Lord who allows His Magnificent riches to show forth in the weak creatures that we are. AMEN