

4th Foundation: Durelo

(Ch.13)

The Book of her Foundations

by Teresa of Avila

Treats of how and by whom in the year 1568 the first house for the observance of the primitive rule by disalced Carmelite friars was founded.

I had already agreed with both Fray Antonio de Jesus and Fray John of the Cross that they would be the first to enter a monastery of the primitive rule for disalced friars.

I had no resources for acquiring a house and so I commended the matter to the Lord.

The Lord had indeed exercised Fray Antonio in trials during the year since I had spoken with him. He suffered with them with much perfection.

As for Fray John no trial was necessary. He had always lived a life of great perfection and religious observance.

The Lord had given me the chief requirement, the friars, He was now pleased to arrange the rest.

2. Don Rafael from Avila found out about my desire to make a foundation but I really don't know how, as I had never spoken to him. He offered me a little house he owned in a little town. It was on the direct road to Medina del Campo, so I could see it on my way to Valladolid ... and that is exactly what I did.

3. Though we left Avila in the morning, we got lost, so needless to say, our travelling that day was very trying and the sun was hot. We finally arrived before nightfall.

The house was in such a state that we dared not stay there that night. It was very dirty and full of vermin.

It had a good entrance way, a room double in size, a loft, and a small kitchen. It seemed that the entrance could serve as the chapel, the loft as the choir and the room for sleeping.

My companion, very fond of penance, couldn't imagine me founding a monastery there. The Father with me, agreed with my companion, but didn't oppose me. We ended up spending the night in the church because we were completely exhausted.

4. When we arrived in Medina, we told Fray Antonio of our adventure in Durelo and asked him if he would have the courage to

stay there awhile. I told him I felt God would provide a remedy and that the important thing was to begin.

---At this writing, there are now ten monasteries of disalced friars, so God did provide!! ---

I told him that the provincial would never give his consent if we were seen living in a well established house.

God had given him more courage than he had given me. He told me not only would he be willing to live there, but that he'd live in a **pigsty!** Fray John felt the same way.

5. All that was left now was to obtain the permission of the two priests in authority. I encouraged Fray Antonio to prepare to enter the house and took Fray John with me to Valladolid in order to teach him about our way of life — mortification, community life and recreation.

The recreation is taken with such moderation that it only serves to reveal the Sister's faults and to provide a little relief so that the rule may be kept in its strictness. He was so good that I could have learned much from him. I taught him about the lifestyle of the Sisters.

6. It just so happened that the provincial, Fray Alonso was in Valladolid! He was elderly and good natured. I reminded him of the account he would have to give if he hindered a work as good as this one when asked by God to carry it out.

When Dona Maria and her brother, the bishop of Avila, arrived in Medina, they succeeded in convincing both the provincial and Fray Angel, the previous provincial, the one from whom I feared much difficulty. The latter, Fray Angel, just happened to owe a favor to Dona Maria. But, even if this opportunity did not exist, our Lord would have moved the provincial's heart just as He did the heart of the Father General who was initially categorically opposed to the idea.

7. How many obstacles have I seen in these business matters that seemed impossible to overcome and how easy it was for His Majesty to remove them.

Yet, I am ashamed to say that I am once again growing fearful and want our Lord to make known to everyone how in these foundations we creatures have done next to nothing. The Lord has directed all by means of such lowly beginnings that only He could have raised the work to what it is now. May He be always blessed, amen.