

5th Foundation: Toledo

(Ch.16)

The Book of her Foundations

by Teresa of Avila

Treats of the things that have taken place in the honor and glory of God, in this monastery of St. Joseph's in Toledo.

Let me say something of what some of the nuns have **put into practice** so that those who follow may strive to **imitate** the good things done in the beginning.

Before the house in Toledo was purchased, a nun named Ana de la Madre de Dios entered at the age of forty. She had served His Majesty her whole life.

She lived alone and was well-to-do but decided rather for a life of poverty and submission. Her health was poor, but she was good and determined, so I admitted her. Following a **life of austerity and submission** rather than one of freedom and comfort, her **health improved**.

2. Before making her profession, she offered all she owned—and she was very rich—as alms to the house. I was not at all happy about this as she might change her mind about leaving the world or we might not want to admit her to profession.

Of course, we would not have let her go without returning her money But as it turned out, she lived very happily and with much better health.

3. The **mortification and obedience** practiced in this monastery was great. As a result, the prioress had to mind what she said. For even something said casually would be carried out at once ... It became necessary for learned men to restrain the nuns and explain to them the matters in which they were obliged to obey. Though they did do some imprudent things, their **good intentions** redeemed them...

4. Once while I was visiting, a nun was struck with a fatal illness. She received the **sacraments** and was **anointed**. Her joy was immeasurable.

A little before she died, I went to her room to find His Majesty at the head of her bed. He told me that I could be certain he would **protect her** and that I could be certain He would **protect all the nuns who die** in these monasteries and that they should not fear **temptation** at the moment of death. I was

left completely consoled and recollected. Within a short time she died like an angel.

5. I have noticed that some who have died since have done so with **quiet and calm** as if in rapture or in the prayer of quiet, with **no signs of temptation**.

In the goodness of God, I hope He will be merciful to us at the moment of death...

Let's strive to be true Carmelites, for soon the day's journey will end. If we were to know the affliction that many experience at the hour of death and the deceit of the devil's temptation, we would highly esteem this favor.

6. A great gambler believed that the purpose of confession at the hour of death was worth nothing. No one was able to get him to confess, though he was repentant of the evil life he had led. He was convinced he was condemned. His Dominican confessor was at his wits end as he was not able to get the man to change his mind about confession.

7. The man fell ill and it seemed the Lord had softened his heart as he told his confessor that he wanted to make his confession.

His testimony was recorded and the man made a solemn oath not to gamble anymore and to amend his life. From what we can understand from our faith, the man was **saved**.

Sisters, that we live our lives as true daughters of the blessed Virgin and keep our vows so that He may grant us the favor He has promised us. AMEN