

9th Foundation: Segovia

(Ch.21)

The Book of her Foundations

by Teresa of Avila

Treats of the foundation in Segovia of the Carmel of the glorious St. Joseph. It was founded on the very feast of St. Joseph in 1574.

Before we had our house in Salamanca, Father Pedro Fernandez, from the apostolic commissary, ordered me to go to the Incarnation monastery in Avila for three years. I also mentioned before, that when he saw the need of the nuns in Salamanca for a house, he ordered me to go there so they could move into one belonging to them. One day while in Salamanca in prayer, our Lord told me to go to Segovia to make a foundation. This seemed impossible since I couldn't do that without being ordered to do so.

Father Fernandez had said that he didn't want me making anymore foundations. In addition, the three years I was to stay at the Incarnation were not yet over. While I was thinking about this, the Lord told me to tell Father Fernandez and that the Lord, Himself, would bring about the foundation.

2. From Salamanca, I wrote to Father Fernandez asking him for an order to found a monastery in Segovia that had been accepted by both the bishop and the city.

I truly believe His Majesty wanted it, because the apostolic commissary immediately said "yes" and gave me permission. I was amazed!

From Salamanca, I arranged to rent a house. I found it better to rent a house first. There were many reasons for this decision, but at this time, the main was that I didn't have a cent to buy one.

3. Dona Ana de Jimena had come to see me in Avila. She was a good servant of God whose calling was always to be a nun. Thus, both she and one of her daughters entered once the monastery when it was founded. The Lord took away the unhappiness she had experienced both while married and later as a widow.

4. This good lady acquired the house and provided for all we needed. As a result, I had little work to do. But, there is never a

foundation without **trial**. The trial came, and for the half a year I was there, I was always sick.

5. On the feast of St. Joseph, we reserved the Blessed Sacrament. Though we had permission, I wanted to enter on the eve of the feast, at night and in secret.

Much time had passed since I had received the permission from the bishop. I had only received it in word, but never in writing.

That was a mistake!

When the vicar general learned that the monastery had been founded, he came at once and was very angry. He did not allow mass to be said any more. He also wanted to take the one who said it, a discolored friar, and put him in jail.

6. Antonio Gaytan was from Alba. He had been called by the Lord while very much involved in the world. All he thought of now was how best to serve the Lord. He helped me much and did a great deal of work for me.

He was a man of deep prayer, and God has granted him many favors that others might consider a burden to carry but it was easy for him to accept.

It seemed that God called both he and Father Julian of Avila to help me. By giving me company like this, our Lord must have desired that all turn out well.

When travelling, Father Julian taught those who travelled with us or whom we met, thus he served His Majesty in every way.

7. It is only right, my daughters, that those of you who read these foundations should know what you owe to these two men. They labored much for the good you now enjoy in these monasteries. Recommend them to our Lord, for if you knew the bad nights and days they suffered, the trials on the roads, you would do so very willingly.

8. The vicar general felt it best to have a guard at the door of the church. I don't know why. As for me, I was never much bothered once possession of the foundation had taken place, all my fears came before.

The vicar general knew I had obtained permission from the bishop, but he felt we should have informed him. It is my belief that things would have gone much worse if we had told him in advance.

We finally got him to allow us to stay in the monastery, but he removed the Blessed Sacrament. We remained like this several

months until a house was bought. Along with the house, came many lawsuits.

9. What a trial it was to have to contend with many opinions. When one litigation seemed over, another would begin ... It was really a challenge to go through all of this.

10. Finally, after we gave much money, the lawsuit ended. There however remained one further suit. When the party found out we had moved to a new house in secrecy, they thought it good to settle for a sum of money. The greatest suffering with all of these obstacles was that in seven or eight days my three years as prioress at the Incarnation would end and I had to be there.

11. All ended well, no contention remained. Within two or three days, I was at the Incarnation Monastery in Avila. May His name be blessed who has always granted me so many favors. Amen.