

10th Foundation: Beas

(Ch.22)

The Book of her Foundations

by Teresa of Avila

Treats of the foundation named after the glorious St. Joseph of the Savior and made in the town of Beas on the feast of St. Matthias in the year 1575.

While in Salamanca, a messenger from Beas arrived with letters for me. The letters contained an offer of a stipend from the town of Beas and a request that I found a monastery there.

2. The notion of making a monastery there seemed foolish to me as it was very far away. In addition, I was under orders of Father Fernandez, the apostolic commissary, opposed to any future foundations.

I wanted to say that I was unable but I had received an order from Reverend Father General to not to fail to make foundations. It also seemed unwise to refuse without getting his opinion.

3. After he saw the letters, he told me to write telling them that once they had permission from the Order of Knights of the town, provisions could be made for a foundation.

Father Fernandez felt certain that the Order would not give permission, but he didn't want my answer to seem like a refusal. Sometimes when our Lord wants something though, it comes about without our being aware that we are the instruments of His work. In this case, Father Fernandez, the commissary, was the instrument. And so, when the town received permission from the council, he couldn't refuse.

4. This monastery of the blessed St. Joseph was founded in the town of Beas on the feast of St. Matthias in the year 1575. This is how it came about.

Sancho de Sandoval of noble lineage was married to Dona Catalina Godinez. They had two daughters who founded the monastery. The oldest was fourteen when our Lord called her to His service. Up until then, she had not been ready to leave the world.

5. One day she experienced a transformation when she read the inscription placed over the cross. At the time, she had been considering marriage ... but it seemed demeaning to be

subject to someone. She was confused by her pride, but the Lord had a remedy for it.

6. She described the moment she read the inscription above the cross as being like a **light** entered her soul allowing her to understand the **truth**.

She compared the road of the cross with the road of pride she was on. The Lord gave her a deep understanding of His own misery. She then wanted all to know His suffering.

She was filled with a desire to suffer for our Lord. She also experienced profound humiliation and self-abhorrence....wishing all would abhor her. She was filled with deep desires for penance that she implemented. She at once promised chastity and poverty.These virtues in her lasted making it clear that she had received a supernatural favor.

7. Lord within a moment You undo a soul and remake it.... Did the merit come from her Christian mother? ... How is it that her mother be able to see within her lifetime this great virtue in her daughter...

8. While she was in this state, Catalina heard a loud noise that came from the room above... She heard roars...Her father came and told her to go and stay with her mother so as not to be alone.

9. This indeed explains what the devil feels when a soul is loosed from his power. He understood that because of the riches left in the soul of Catalina, others would share in her gift. She was left with an even stronger desire to embrace religious life but parents would **not** give their consent.

10. Three years went by. She frequently sought permission from her parents to become a nun. On the feast of St. Joseph, she began to dress simply. Her parents remained opposed to her becoming a religious.

She only told her mother from whom it would have been easy to obtain permission but dared not ask her father.

She went to church simply dressed for all to see, to be sure her parents wouldn't be able to take her choice of clothing away from her. During those three years, she prayed the office and she mortified herself. She was also taught by Our Lord.

Yet, she was still being urged to marry by her parents.

11. Catalina no longer had any desire to give orders to anyone but she was in charge of her father's house. If she did give orders, she would kiss the feet of the servants while they

slept. During the day, she was busy with her parents, but would spend the night in prayer, supported by supernatural aid.

The penance and disciplines were many because she had no one to guide her, nor did she speak with anyone.

12. Catalina spent about four years in these exercises before she fell seriously ill. Her illnesses lasted for almost seventeen years. Five years after she fell ill, her father died. A year after she put on simple garb, her fourteen-year-old sister did the same thing. She too began to practice prayer.

Their mother supported their virtuous work—teaching needlework and reading--- which allowed them to teach girls about prayer and doctrine.

Their work was very fruitful but didn't last long; the devil caused the girls' parents to feel it not right that their daughters be taught free of charge. So, Dona ceased the work being also hampered by her illness.

13. Five years after the father died, the mother died. Dona Catalina had always felt called to be a nun but never was able to obtain her parent's consent. She now decided to pursue her desire.

Her relatives counselled her to found a monastery in Beas which would be a great service to the Lord. Permission from the Order of the Knights of Santiago was needed.

14. For four years permission was sought to found the monastery, even petitioning the king, himself. Nothing proved helpful. Her relatives told her to abandon the idea all together, especially because she spent so much time in bed. For almost eight years now she had hardly moved from her bed due to the severity of her different and varied illnesses.

15. On the eve of the feast of St. Sebastian, Dona Catalina was **restored to complete health.** It was hard for her to hide the miracle. She was now able to attend to the business of the monastery which filled her with joy.

When God called her initially, He gave her an abhorrence of self and a desire to suffer for Him in every way.

16. During the eight years, she was bled more than five hundred times in addition to the cuppings. Salt was poured in her wounds more than twenty times. What is amazing is her longing to suffer these treatments to

prove whether her longings for martyrdom were authentic.

17. The news of her sudden cure, spread throughout the town. The attempt to hide the miracle was of little benefit.

18. She told me that several months before, she begged the Lord to take away her desire to be a nun and to found a monastery or give her the means to do both. She was assured that she would be well in time to go during Lent to obtain the license. Though her health was very poor, she never lost hope that she would die a nun.

When Dona Catalina presented her petition to the king and he learned that it was for the discalced Carmelites nuns, he ordered that it be given at once!

19. When it was time to found the monastery, it was obvious that she had obtained this from God, for the superiors accepted it even though the town was so far away and the income small.

What His Majesty desires cannot be put aside. The nuns arrived in Beas in the beginning of Lent 1575. They were received with a solemn procession and great joy. The monastery was founded under the patronage of St. Joseph of the Savior on the feast of St. Matthias.

20. On this same day, the two sisters received the habit with much joy. Dona Catalina's health continued to improve. Her humility, obedience, and wish to be despised showed her genuine vocation. May He be glorified forever and ever, amen.

21. This Sister told me that twenty years before, she had gone to bed one night longing to find the most perfect religious order on earth.

She began to dream that she was walking along a very straight and narrow road, very dangerous in that one could fall into some deep ravines. She met a discalced friar who said to her, "**Come with me, sister,**" and he brought her to a house with other nuns. There was no other light but that of the candles they were carrying. When she asked their order, she met with silence. They lifted their veils to reveal their joyous faces. They were laughing.

She declared that the faces she saw in her dream are those she now sees. The prioress took her by the hand and said : "**Daughter, I want you here,**" and showed her the **constitutions** and the **rule.**

Awakening from that dream, she felt a happiness that made her think she had been in heaven. She wrote down what she remembered from the **rule**.

This happened a while ago. She told no one of this dream; no one knew anything about this religious order.

22. When a Father from the Society came to Beas, she showed him the paper and told him she would like to enter this order if he learned of it.

He knew of these monasteries and told her that what she had written was taken from the rule of the order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Thus, she arranged to send me a message.

23. When she received the reply, she was still very ill. Distressed she said to our Lord:” My Lord and my God, I know through faith that You are He who can do all things; well, then, Life of my soul, either take away these desires or give me the means to carry them out.” She also begged our Lady to intercede for her.

She heard a voice within say to her: “**Believe and hope for I am He who can do all things; you will be healthy, for He who has power ...will take them away.**”

These words came with force and certitude Her doubt left her.

24. Though weak, she is now healthy enough to keep the rule. She has a very happy disposition and is humble.

The inheritance of both daughters was given the order with no conditions at all. The detachment she has from relatives and property is great.

Though filled with a desire to move far away, her obedience is great and so is willing to remain in Beas. It is in this spirit that she received the white veil. She didn't want to become a choir sister nor a lay Sister.

I wrote to her and scolded her for wanting something other than the will of the Father Provincial. I spoke to her harshly which gave her great pleasure. She submitted, against her will, to become a choir Sister.

May it please His Majesty to keep her in His hands and increase the grace and virtues He has given her for His greater service and honor. Amen.

