

16th Foundation: Burgos

(Ch.31)

The Book of her Foundations

by Teresa of Avila

Begins to treat in this chapter of the foundation of the glorious St. Joseph of Saint Anne in the city of Burgos. The first Mass was said April 19, the octave of Easter, in 1582.

For over six years, members of the Society of Jesus, told me that our Lord would be greatly served if a house of our order were founded in Burgos. The reasons they gave, made me begin to desire it. On account of the many trials within the order, there had been no opportunity to attempt a foundation in Burgos.

2. In 1580, while I was in Valladolid, the Archbishop of Burgos passed through. I asked the bishop of Palencia to ask him permission to make a foundation in Burgos.

3. The archbishop granted **permission** because he knew how our Lord was served in them. The bishop of Palencia told me that the **license** needed could be considered as granted.

4. I don't know the reason for feeling so much **repugnance** as I then did. After I saw what was to take place, the cause seemed to be the devil. Each time there was a trial, the Lord has helped me with **locutions** and **deeds**. In this situation, He immediately began to encourage me. The Lord told me to not fail to make these two foundations (Palencia & Burgos). All hesitation left me.

5. It seemed better to make the foundation in Palencia first since Burgos was so cold. But then a request for a foundation in Soria came and it seemed better to go there first and then to Burgos.

The bishop of Palencia thought an account should be given to the archbishop in Burgos of what was taking place, and I begged him to do so. The archbishop wrote to me saying that the people of Burgos had to give their consent in order to make the foundation.

6. In short, his conclusion was that I should go to Burgos to discuss the matter with the city. If they said no, he would override them and give his permission as he was not going to let them tie his hands. He, most of all, wanted to avoid the turmoil and opposition that had taken place in Avila over the

foundation of the monastery. He felt it not suitable to found a monastery unless with an **income** or the **consent** of the city.

7. The bishop of Palencia considered that the deed was as good as done and the archbishop of Burgos had sent word for me to come. Yet I felt he lacked enthusiasm. I felt it best to obtain permission from the city although I knew it would be difficult. I felt it best to let the matter rest for now as winter approached, so I headed to Avila.

Part 2 Catalina de Tolosa

8. There lived in Burgos a holy widow, Catalina de Tolosa. She had given two of her daughters as nuns to our monastery of the Conception in Valladolid and two others to Palencia.

9. Her daughters seemed to be no less than angels. She gave them good dowries for she was very generous as well as rich. She came to Palencia and so we were certain of the **permission** and asked her to look for a **house** for us to **rent**. The thought never occurred to me that she would spend as needed for her own, but only lend to me. She desired the foundation so much that she was sad to see it delayed.

And so, I returned to Avila, as I have said. I was very relaxed and unconcerned about the foundation, but she wasn't. Thinking all we needed was **permission** from the city, she began to try to get it from the city.

10. She had two neighbors, a mother and a daughter, who wanted the foundation as well. The mother asked her son, a magistrate, to seek permission from the city council. He asked about the **financial backing**, saying that without it, they wouldn't give permission.

Catalina de Tolosa stated that she would **provide a house** and **ensure the food**.

The son then succeeded in obtaining **permission** from the magistrates and from the archbishop and brought Catalina the **license in writing**.

She then wrote me that she had begun negotiating the foundation. I thought she was joking as I know how difficult it is to obtain permission for a monastery founded in poverty. She neglected to mention that she had obligated herself to pay for it.

Part 3 The Lord's Words

11. I felt the foundation could be made if the license could be obtained. I couldn't bear the thought of going to a place as cold as Burgos maybe the prioress of Palencia could go in my place.... as all was in order and there was nothing left to do.

While I was thinking about this, determined not to go, the Lord said the following words:

Don't pay attention to the cold weather for I am the true warmth. The devil uses all his strength to hinder that foundation; use yours with my help so that it may be realized and do not fail to go in person, for great good will be done.

12. With these words, I changed my mind again. Although my human nature finds these trials distasteful, my desire to suffer for this great God does not lessen.

There was cold weather and snow at that time. It was my lack of health that daunted me more than the cold, for when I have my health all seems easy.

Part 4 Opposition

13. Within a few days, I had the **license**, along with **letters** from Catalina de Tolosa and her friend Dona Catalina, urging me to hurry. There were many other orders seeking to make foundations there too. The charity of the city was seen as all obtained licenses too. The archbishop opposed these other foundations thinking that they would be harmful to the orders founded in poverty. Yet, God brings about great blessings wherever there are many monasteries, that He has no trouble sustaining.

14. The **locution** I had heard implied that there would be much **opposition**. I could not understand from where it would come for we had a **house** and the **city** was in accord along with the **archbishop**. I never doubted though the words heard from God.

15. In short, Father Provincial asked me if I had obtained the archbishop's permission **in writing**. I wrote about this to Burgos. They answered that he was pleased about the permission and so it didn't seem that there was any reason to doubt.....