

Foundations: Epilogue
The Book of her Foundations
by Teresa of Avila

It has occurred to me to record here how the nuns of the first monastery that was founded, St. Joseph's in Avila about which I wrote in another work transferred their obedience to the order after having first professed it to the bishop.

2. When the monastery was founded, Don Alvaro de Mendoza was bishop, the one who is now bishop of Palencia. All the time he was in Avila he was extremely helpful to the nuns. And with regard to our giving obedience to the bishop, I heard from our Lord that it would be expedient to give it to him. We found great support in him. Never did he allow any priest to make a visitation nor did he do anything more in that monastery than what I asked him. This arrangement lasted approximately seventeen years.

3. When those years were over, the bishop of Avila was transferred to the diocese of Palencia. At that time I was in the monastery of Toledo, and our Lord told me that it was fitting for the nuns of St. Joseph's to give their obedience to the order, that I should try to bring this about because in not doing this there would soon be a relaxation of observance in that house.

Since I had heard in a former locution that it was good to give it to the bishop, it seemed the Lord was contradicting Himself. I didn't know what to do. I told my confessor who is now bishop of Osma and a very learned man. He told me that there was no contradiction, that formerly the one way was necessary and that now another was and that he thought it would be better if the monastery in Avila were united with these others than to stand alone; and that this was true has been clearly seen in many ways.

4. He made me go to Avila to discuss the matter. I found the bishop of a completely different opinion, for in no way would he agree to this. But since I told him some of the reasons for the harm that could come to the nuns, and he loved them very much and has very good intelligence, and God helped, he thought of some other weightier reasons than the ones I had given him and decided to allow the transfer of jurisdiction. Even

though some priests told him that this was not a good thing to do, he did not change his mind.

5. It was necessary to submit the matter to the vote of the nuns. For some of them the change was a very painful one to make. But since they respected me, they accepted my reasons, especially when they realized that now that the bishop, to whom the order owed so much and whom I love, was gone, they could no longer have me with them. This made a strong impression on them, and thus this important matter was concluded. All the friars and nuns have seen clearly how lost that house would have been in doing the contrary. Blessed be the Lord who so carefully looks after the affairs of His servants! May He be blessed forever, amen.