

Contemplative Liturgy
Teresa of Avila

March 28, 1515 - October 4, 1582

Feast Day: October 15, 2020

Welcome and word about the Crystal

For the Altar: bring an object made of crystal or cut glass.

It came to me that the soul is like a castle made exclusively of diamond or some other very clear crystal. If this castle is the soul, you obviously cannot enter it, because it is inside yourself.

If a thick black cloth be placed over a crystal in the sunshine, however, it is clear that, although the sun may be shining upon it, its brightness will have no effect upon the crystal.

-Teresa of Avila March 28, 1515- October 4, 1582

*Lighting of Candle +
Bell 3X*

WELCOME

Saint Teresa of Avila

March 28, 1515 - October 4, 1582

Full name: Teresa Sánchez de Cepeda cepaida y Ahumada

Opening Chant The soul ever dwells in the presence of the Holy One.

Silence

Invitatory (a word about the reading, Mirabai Starr's Interior Castle) *We will now hear Mirabai Starr's modern interpretation of Teresa Interior Castle from her book The Interior Castle of St. Teresa of Avila*

There is a secret place. A radiant sanctuary. As real as your own kitchen. More real than that. Constructed of the purest elements. Overflowing with the ten thousand beautiful things. Worlds within worlds. Forests, rivers. Velvet coverlets thrown over featherbeds, fountains bubbling beneath a canopy of stars. Bountiful forests, universal libraries. A wine cellar offering an intoxication so sweet you will never be sober again. A clarity so complete you will never

again forget. This magnificent refuge is inside you.

Put away the incense and forget the incantations they taught you. Ask no permission from the authorities. Slip away. Close your eyes and follow your breath to the still place that leads to the invisible path that leads you home.

Be brave and walk through the country of your own wild heart. Be gentle and know that you know nothing. Be mindful and remember that every moment can be a prayer. Melting butter, scrambling eggs, lifting fork to mouth, praising God. Typing your daughter's first short story, praising God. Losing your temper and your dignity with someone you love, praising God. Balancing ecstasy with clear thinking, self-control with self-abandon. Be still. Listen. Keep walking.

Believe the incredible truth that the Beloved has chosen for his dwelling place the core of your own being because that is the single most beautiful place in all of creation. Waste no time. Enter the center of your soul.

Silence

INTRO to LECTIO

"The prayer, "Nada te Turbe" was found at the time of Teresa's death in her breviary written in her own hand.

Nada te turbe **Nothing can trouble**
nada te espante **nothing can frighten.**
Quien a Dios tiene **Those who seek God**
nada le falta **shall never go wanting**
Solo Dios basta. **God alone fills us.**

A LECTIO WALK THROUGH The Interior Castle. (Richard Rohr) Teresa believed that God is ever alluring and inviting us home and that our longing for God is the core motivation of our beings. Through contemplative prayer, the soul moves through seven mansions or dwellings of the interior castle, ever drawing closer to the center:

First Dwelling:

In the first dwelling, the soul becomes aware that there is a castle to be explored and discovers her own longing for God. Monstrous creatures distract and tempt. Teresa saw that the soul's only hope, as Mirabai Starr says, "is to cultivate a discipline of humility and self-knowledge . . .

to recognize her own limitations and praise the greatness of God” through the practice of prayer. The soul moves beyond rote prayer to intimate conversation with God.

Nada de turbe Taize

3 min Silence

Second Dwelling

In the second dwelling, the soul learns to recognize God’s quiet voice amid the noise of the world. God’s voice comes through the words of teachers, friends, and sacred texts.

Nada de turbe. Taize English

Silence 3 min

Third Dwelling

In the third dwelling prayer begins to feel dry and empty, a test of humility. Starr explains: “If the soul can quit trying to figure God out with her mind and concentrate on feeling God with her heart, if she can learn to surrender her personal will to the inscrutable will of the Beloved, she will progress to the fourth dwelling.”

Nada de turbe. Taize

Silence 3 min

Fourth Dwelling

In the fourth dwelling the senses and mind are stilled in what Teresa names the Prayer of Quiet. Up until now, the soul has been striving through conscious effort, but in the fourth dwelling, the soul begins to experience someone else as the Doer as God takes over.

Nada de turbe. Taize English

Silence 3 min

Fifth Dwelling

In the fifth dwelling, the soul and God become engaged to marry in what Teresa calls the Prayer of Union. Starr writes: “Here, the faculties are totally suspended. When the soul emerges from this state, she [knows] that ‘she was in God and God was in her.’” Teresa uses the metaphor of a silkworm, spinning a cocoon in which to die, to illustrate how it is only by dying to our False Self that we can be transformed and fly to God.

Nada de turbe. Taize

Silence 3 min

Sixth Dwelling

In the sixth dwelling God and soul fall more deeply in love and come to know each other through time together in solitude. This love is felt as a deep wound, an unbearable longing, physical ache, and even betrayal. Yet there is also joy and ecstasy, for the wounding comes from God.

Nada de turbe. Taize

Silence 3 min

Seventh Dwelling

The seventh dwelling at the center of the castle, the innermost dwelling, the soul finds union with the Beloved. Starr beautifully describes this experience: "Like rain falling into an infinite sea, all boundaries between the soul and God melt. Union, by definition, transcends the subject-object distinction. There is no longer any lover left to enjoy her Beloved. There is only love."

Nada de turbe. Taize

Silence 3 min

Chant: God empowers our powerlessness so we never despair.

The Prayers murmuring:

Let us now add our murmured prayers echo from the depths of your castle. You are invited to unmute yourself and in the 7 minutes of prayer voice the contents of your heart. Feel free to repeat prayers and silence is also a form of prayer.

Tones bell at 7 minutes.

Closing Blessing: Teresa of Avila

Soul, if by chance you forget where I am, do not rush around here and there. If you want to find me, seek me inside yourself.

Soul, you are my room, you are my house, you are my dwelling.
If, through your distracted ways, I ever find your door tightly closed, do not seek me
outside yourself.

To find me, it will be enough simply to call me, and I will come quickly.
Seek me inside yourself.

- Teresa of Avila from her poem collection 'The Interior Castle'

Closing Chant: seek yourself in me, seek me in yourself.

3XBell

Candles are extinguished