

BRINGING THE CARMELITE SAINTS ALIVE

TWENTY FIRST EDITION 2025



IN THIS MONTH OF DECEMBER, WE WILL BE HIGHLIGHTING ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS
WHOSE FEAST DAY IS ON DECEMBER 14TH



“SEEK IN READING AND YOU WILL FIND IN MEDITATION;
KNOCK IN PRAYER AND IT WILL BE OPENED TO YOU IN CONTEMPLATION”.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS AND LECTIO DIVINA

There is a phrase in St. John of the Cross that expresses the content of lectio divina” “Seek in reading and you will find in meditation; knock in prayer and it will be opened to you in contemplation”. The practice of lectio divina is connected with the tradition that preceded him...During his captivity in Toledo, he found no other spiritual nourishment. His first poems give witness to this. The two Romances, Song of the soul that rejoices in knowing God through faith and The Spiritual Canticle are all songs of one steeped in the Bible.

“For John, Scripture is a source of infinite richness. Seemingly infinite are the treasures hidden in Christ, the sole Word of the Father. John’s own word, that of a mystic, is the mature fruit of this encounter with Scripture...In John, prayerful reading of the Bible is the very source of all his richness and the beginning of gospel radicalism: ‘If you desire to discover peace and consolation for your soul and to serve God truly, do not find your satisfaction in what you have left behind because, in that which now concerns you, you may be as impeded as you were before, or even more. But leave as well all these other things and attend to one thing alone that brings all these with it (namely, holy solitude, together with prayer and spiritual and divine reading).

When we look at the writings and experience of St. John of the Cross we see they are deeply rooted in Scripture, not alone because they are in harmony with it, nor for the abundance of quotations from Scripture. There is a divine and mysterious light, which abounds in what he has to say, that resists all attempts to classify it. It is the word of a mystic, of someone who knows it by “science and experience’. According to those who knew him, the Bible had an almost exclusive place in his reading. The fervor gained from Scripture led to the birth of a new John of the Cross, a new man who recreated in his words the fruit of an ineffable experience...

As Carmelites we are called to ‘re-create’ the Word, accompanied by John of the Cross and the reading of Scripture in the light of the new experience of God in reality, which is also the word of God, a true grace experienced through faith. Lectio divina is a prayerful action connatural with our charism...Assisted by John of the Cross, whose writings allow us to understand the wealth of the Bible and reality, lectio divina is changed into a deep spiritual experience, always new and creative. It is reading that is contemplative, intimately tied to our prophetic vocation, receptive to God in history”.

This is only a brief piece of St. John of the Cross. If you want to know more about him you can refer to Bringing the Carmelite Saints Alive – December 2024 where I wrote about his Love for Our Lady. Take the time to get to know him and his beautiful works. I promise you will grow even more deeper into your Carmelite vocation. St. John of the Cross, pray for us!

OUR CARMELITE MISSION

MAY WE EMBRACE MARY'S PURITY OF HEART (PURITAS CORDIAS), AS SHE HELPS US TO PONDER THE LAW OF THE LORD DAY AND NIGHT ASSISTING US TO BE CONTEMPLATIVES AND TEACHING US TO LISTEN. AS WE WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF OUR FATHER AND LEADER ST. ELIJAH; WITH HIS FLAMING ZEAL AND COURAGE WHICH ALLOWED HIM TO COMBAT THE EVILS OF HIS DAY. MAY WE PRAY THAT HIS PROPHETIC SPIRIT BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR CARMELITE LIFE."

MAY OUR LADY'S MANTLE WRAP YOU ALL WITH HER PRECIOUS LOVE. ALL THROUGH THE IMMACULATE & SORROWFUL HEART & TEARS OF MARY, ALL THROUGH THE PURE AND CHASTE HEART OF ST. JOSEPH, ALL IN UNION WITH THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

YOUR SISTER IN CARMEL,

LINDA

