

# An outline of the Life of St. Teresa

*(Abbreviations: F = Foundations; I.C. = Interior Castle; L = Life; LL = Letters; R = Relations. Roman numerals after F.I.C., L, R refer to chapters; Arabic numerals after LL, to the numbers of the Letters. The numerals in brackets after the names of the foundations record their chronological sequence.)*

1515 (March 28). Birth of Teresa de (Cepeda y) Ahumada at Avila.

1528. Teresa loses her mother.

1531. Enters Augustinian Convent of St. Mary of Grace, Avila, as a boarder. Stays there for eighteen months (L III).

1536 (November 2). Enters Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation, Avila, as a novice (cf. n. 79. "It is forty years since this nun took the habit," wrote St. Teresa in 1576: R IV, p. 319).

1537 (November 3). Professed at Convent of the Incarnation.

1538 (Autumn: "before two years had passed": L V). Health gives way. Goes ("when the winter began") to stay with her half-sister, Dona Maria de Cepeda de Barrientos, at the village of Castellanos de la Canada. On the way there, stays at Hortigosa with her uncle, Don Pedro de Cepeda, who gives her a copy of Osuna's Third Spiritual Alphabet.

1539 (April-July). Undergoes treatment at Becedas.

1539 (August 15). Attack of catalepsy, which leaves her helpless "for more than eight months" (L VI).

1540 (about Easter). Returns to Incarnation. An invalid till late in 1541: "This (illness) I suffered for three years" (L V). The effects of the paralysis remain till the summer of 1542 (L VI) and recur intermittently (L VII) till about 1554.

1543 (December 24). Death of her father, Don Alonso Sanchez de Cepeda.

1555-6. Begins to think she is "sometimes being addressed by interior voices and to see certain visions and experience revelations" (R IV).

1556-7. Final "conversion" (after "nearly twenty years on that stormy sea": L VIII: p. 108). Cf. pp. 78, 117, n. 3. First contact with the Society of Jesus ("after almost twenty years' experience of prayer": L XXIII).

(1557. Visit of St. Francis Borgia to Avila [L XXIV].)

1558. Experiences her first rapture (L XXIV) and perhaps (L XXVIII) an imaginary vision of Christ (usually dated January 25 or June 29-30, 1558. But a

likelier date is 1560: see pp. 235, 260, 268, 271). Discussions begin about the foundation in Avila of a convent for

Discalced nuns (R IV).

1559. P. Alvarez becomes her confessor. Transverberation of her heart (L XXIX).

1560. Makes a vow of greater perfection.

1561. P. Gaspar de Salazar comes to Avila (April). House for the first convent of the Reform bought in Avila (August).

1562-7. At St. Joseph's, Avila ("The most restful years of my life": F I).

1562

January-July. Stays with Dona Luisa de la Cerda at Toledo.

June. Finishes the first draft of the Life.

July. Brief (dated February) authorizing the foundation of St. Joseph's received from Rome on the night of her return to Avila. The Bishop is persuaded by St. Peter of Alcantara to sanction the foundation.

August 24. Foundation of Convent of St. Joseph, Avila (1).

August (to February 1563). "Commotion" in Avila (L XXXVI).

(After August). Is commanded to write an amplified account of her life.

1563

(About March). Goes to live at St. Joseph's, Avila.

July 3. Takes some further step (its exact nature not known) towards herself embracing the Reform.

August 22. Is granted a patent to transfer, with three companions, from the Incarnation to St. Joseph's.

1564

August 21. The Nuncio confirms the above-mentioned patent.

1565

(? December). Greater part of the second and final version of the Life written.

Completes the Life and sends it, at the end of the year, to P. Garcia de Toledo (LL 3).

At about this time, begins the Way of Perfection.

1566

(About August). Is visited by Fray Alonso Maldonado.

1567

February[43]. Visit to Castile of the Carmelite General, P. Rubeo (Rossi).

April. The General arrives (April 11) at Avila and (April 27) visits St. Teresa, authorizing her to found further convents of the Reform, and later (August 14, from Barcelona) two monasteries.

August 15. Foundation of Convent at Medina del Campo (2).

September-November. Remains at Medina till early November. During her stay

there (? early in September) discusses with Antonio de Jesus and St. John of the Cross the foundation of the first monastery of the Reform (F III).

In November, goes to Madrid and stays for a fortnight with Dona Leonor de Mascarenas. Thence goes to Alcala de Henares, consults P. Banez and stays till February 1568.

1568

February. Visits Dona Luisa de la Cerda at Toledo.

March (late in). Leaves for Malagon.

April 11. Foundation of Convent at Malagon (3).

May 19. Leaves Malagon for Avila. On the way, stays at Toledo in Dona Luisa de la Cerda's house, during her absence: (LL 6). Visits the Marchioness of Villena at Escalona (LL 6).

June 2-30. At St. Joseph's, Avila. Rafael Mejia offers her a house at Duruelo for use as a monastery. She leaves for Medina and Valladolid, calling at Duruelo on the way.

August 10. Arrives at Valladolid. St. John of the Cross has accompanied her from Medina to Valladolid and stays there till September 30 (F XIII; LL 10).

August 15. Foundation of Convent at Valladolid (4).

October. The Valladolid nuns fall ill and go to stay with Dona Maria de Mendoza, who takes over their house and gives them a new one.

(November 28. First Mass said at the Discalced monastery, Duruelo.)

1569

February 3. The Valladolid nuns enter their new house.

February 21. Leaves Valladolid for Medina, Avila, Madrid and Toledo, revisiting Duruelo on the way (F XIV; cf. LL 13-15).

March 24. Arrives at Toledo (LL 19). (The King sends for her, believing her to be still in Madrid, after she has left for Toledo.)

May 14. Foundation of Convent at Toledo (5).

May 28. Receives a letter from the Princess of Eboli about a foundation at Pastrana.

May 30. Leaves Toledo. In Madrid, stays for a week at a Franciscan convent with Dona Leonor de Mascarenas. Refuses to found a convent in Madrid (LL 294).

July 9. Foundation of Convent at Pastrana (6). (A monastery founded there on July 13.)

July 21. Leaves for Toledo again. Stays there till August 1570.

NOTE. -- The date of the Exclamations of the Soul to God is probably

1569. Cf. Vol. II, p. 401.

1570

(? July). Visits Pastrana and (August-October) Avila. On October 31 arrives at Salamanca.

November 1. Foundation of Convent at Salamanca (7).

1571

January 25. Foundation of Convent at Alba de Tormes (8).

Mid February. Leaves Alba. Goes to stay for some days with the Count and Countess of Monterrey. On March 29, is at Salamanca (LL 25); in May, by order of the Provincial of the Observance, P. Alonso Gonzalez, at St. Joseph's; in June, at Medina del Campo; in mid-July, at Avila.

August-October. Prioress at Medina (LL 27).

October 6. Goes from Medina to Avila.

October 15 (to October 1574). Prioress of Convent of the Incarnation, Avila (LL 29 ff.).

1572

(Between May and September). St. John of the Cross becomes confessor to Convent of the Incarnation, Avila.

1573

June 11. Earliest extant letter (LL 45) written by St. Teresa to Philip II.

August. Visits the Salamanca Convent for the transference of the community there in September.

August 24. Begins to write the Foundations (at Salamanca: F VII). Writes about nine chapters: then stops on account of "numerous occupations".

1574

January. Leaves Salamanca. Spends some time at Alba de Tormes, staying for two days in the house of the Duke and Duchess of Alba. (I.C. VI, iv: Vol. II, p. 289.)

Goes on to Medina and Avila.

March. Travels to Segovia.

March 19. Foundation of Convent at Segovia (9).

Holy Week: April. Transfers Pastrana nuns to Segovia (F XVII). Remains there till September 30 (F XXI; LL 62).

October 6 (about). Returns to St. Joseph's, Avila, as Prioress.

December (to January 1575). Visits Valladolid (LL 66-70).

1575

February. Travels from Avila, via Toledo, Malagon and Almodovar, to Beas.

February 24. Foundation of Convent at Beas (10).

March 10. Agreement for the Caravaca convent signed (F XXVII).

Before May 11 (LL 71). First meeting with Gracian (F XXIV, R XXXIX).

Makes vow of obedience to Gracian (R XL, XLI).

May 18-26. Journey to Seville (Leaves, May 18; at Ecija, May 23: R XL; arrives at Seville, May 26: F XXIV).

May 29. Foundation of Convent at Seville (11).

June 9. New licence for the Caravaca convent granted by Philip II (F XXVII).

(May-June. Chapter-General of the Order, held at Piacenza, adopts harsh measures towards the Discalced Reform.)

July 19. Writes from Seville to Philip II (LL 77) on behalf of the plan for dividing the Order and asking that P. Gracian be made Provincial of the Discalced.

August. Arrival of her brothers Lorenzo and Pedro from Spanish America (F XXV, R XLVI, LL 87, P. Silverio, IX, 246).

(Shortly before Christmas). Receives a written order from the General to leave Andalusia and to go to reside in a Castilian convent. P. Gracian authorizes her to stay at Seville till the summer (LL 87, 91).

1576

(From June 1576 to June 1580 St. Teresa is mainly at Toledo and Avila. Strife within the Order holds up the foundations.)

January 1. Foundation of Convent at Caravaca (12) during her stay in Seville (LL 92).

(March. P. Jeronimo Tostado arrives in Spain armed with powers from P. Rubeo to suppress certain Discalced foundations and to take other measures against the Reform.)

April 5. Agreement for the new house at Seville signed.

(May 12. Provincial Chapter of the Observance, held at La Moraleja, takes stern measures against the Reform.)

May 28. Ceremony of the inauguration of the new house at Seville.

June 4. Leaves Seville for Toledo, via Almodovar del Campo and Malagon.

Arrives at Malagon on June 11 (LL 95) and stays for at least a week (LL 96). Is in Toledo before June 30 (LL 97).

(August 8. P. Gracian meets the Superiors of the Reform at Almodovar: they refuse to accept the decisions of the Moraleja Chapter.)

June-November. Continues Foundations.

November 14. Completes Chapter XXVII of Foundations (See penultimate paragraph of that chapter).

1577

June 2. Begins Interior Castle.

(June 18. Death of the Nuncio Ormaneto.)

July. Goes from Toledo to Avila to arrange for the transference of St. Joseph's from the jurisdiction of the Ordinary to that of the Carmelite Order.

Interruption of her work on Interior Castle (I.C. V, iv).

(August 30. Arrival in Spain of the new Nuncio, Segua.)

September 18. Writes to Philip II on behalf of P. Gracian and of the Reform (LL 195).

October. Violent scenes at the election of a Prioress at the Incarnation, Avila. Nuns voting for St. Teresa are excommunicated. Ana de Toledo chosen (LL 197-8, cf. 205-7).

(November 5. Royal Council opposes the policy of Tostado, who leaves for Rome.)

November 29. Finishes Interior Castle.

December 3. St. John of the Cross and a companion are carried off and imprisoned, at Toledo and La Moraleja respectively, by the friars of the Observance (LL 204, 219, 246-7).

December 4.[44] St. Teresa complains of this act to Philip II (LL 204).

December 24. Falls and breaks her left arm.

1578

(Persecution of the Reform continues throughout this year: LL 237 ff. St. Teresa is in Avila.)

(September 4. Death of P. Rubeo at Rome: LL 253.)

(October 9. Chapter-General of the Discalced held at Almodovar.)

(October 16. Segá puts the Discalced under the jurisdiction of the Observance.)

1579

(April 1. Discalced removed from jurisdiction of the Observance: P. Angel de Salazar becomes their Superior.)

(May. PP. Juan de Jesus [Roca] and Diego de la Trinidad leave for Rome, to attempt to effect the division of the Order: LL 273, 275.) P. Salazar authorizes St. Teresa to resume the visitation of her convents.

June 25. Leaves Avila, with B. Ana de San Bartolome, for Medina (stays 3-4 days), Valladolid (July 3-30), Salamanca (about 2 1/2 months) and Alba (a week).

July. Sends the Way of perfection to the Archbishop of Evora (LL 285).

November (early). Returns to Avila.

November. Goes to Toledo (mid-November: LL 291) and Malagon; arrives at Malagon, November 25; is there when (December 8) the community moves into its new house (LL 295). Stays till February 1580.

1580

February 13. Leaves Malagon for Villanueva de la Jara (LL 307-8, 313), arriving there February 21, after making stops at Toledo and La Roda.

February 21. Foundation of Convent at Villanueva de la Jara (13).

March 20. Leaves Villanueva de la Jara.

March 26. Arrives at Toledo. On March 31 (LL 314) has a paralytic stroke. Asks the Archbishop of Toledo for a licence to make a foundation in Madrid: the request is not granted (LL 323).

June 7. Though still unwell, leaves for Madrid and Segovia. Reaches Segovia on June 15. While there, learns of the death (June 26) of her brother Lorenzo (LL 325-

6, 342). Goes (July 6) from Segovia to Avila, to settle his business affairs (LL 328). At Segovia, revises the Interior Castle in collaboration with P. Gracian and P. Yanguas. (Vole II, p. 194.)

(June 22. The Discalced Reform is recognized as a separate province by a Bull of Gregory XIII.)

August (early). Goes on from Avila to Medina del Campo and (August 8) Valladolid where she is to see the Bishop about the projected foundation in his diocese. At Valladolid has a recurrence of the Toledo complaint and becomes dangerously ill (LL 336).

December 28. Leaves Valladolid for Palencia (LL 344).

December 29. Foundation of Convent at Palencia (14) (LL 344).

1581

(March 3. Separation of Calced and Discalced Carmelites becomes operative at Chapter of Alcala de Henares: cf. LL 350-4. P. Gracian appointed Provincial of the Discalced.)

June 2. Arrives at Soria, after spending the night of May at Burgo de Osma (F XXX).

(June 1. The Palencia community moves to its new house.)

June 14. Foundation of Convent at Soria (15). (Cf. F XXX, Vol. III, p. 180, n.3.)

August 16. Leaves for St. Joseph's, Avila, via Burgo de Osma, Segovia (August 23-30: LL 376), Villacastin (September 4: LL 377).

September 5. Arrives at Avila (LL 378).

September 10. Elected Prioress of St. Joseph's, Avila.

1582

January 2. Leaves for Burgos, via Medina del Campo (January 4-9), Valladolid (staying four days through illness: LL 404) and Palencia (arrives January 16), arriving at Burgos on January 26.

January 20. Foundation of Convent at Granada (16) in St. Teresa's absence.

April 19. Foundation of Convent at Burgos (17).

(July) Completes Foundations (F XXXI was being written at "the end of June": Vol. III, p. 191, n. 2).

July 26. Leaves Burgos for Avila, with B. Ana de San Bartolome and her niece Teresita. Visits Palencia (in August), Valladolid (again ill: leaves on September 15), Medina del Campo (September 16) and villages near Penaranda. Though ill, goes to Alba de Tormes at the command of the Provincial, Fray Antonio de Jesus, to visit the Duchess of Alba.

September 20. Arrives at Alba de Tormes.

October 4. Dies at Alba de Tormes.

1614. April 24. Beatified by Paul V.

1617. Spanish Cortes votes her patroness of Spain. The vote not confirmed.

1622. March 12. Canonized by Gregory XV with SS. Isidro, Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier.

1726. Benedict XIII institutes the Feast of the Transverberation of her Heart.

1970. Pope Paul VI names her Doctor of the Church.