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By

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Work in the Spirituality of Teresa of Avila

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This dissertation explores the theme of work in the life and writings of St. Teresa of Avila, the 16th-century Spanish Carmelite mystic and reformer. While much has been written about Teresa's mystical experiences, her writings on prayer, and her reform of the Carmelite Order, her contributions to the management of work within women's monasteries has not been as well-studied. This dissertation examines Teresa's approach to work in religious life during a time of global expansion, socio-economic change and religious reform in Spain, and it seeks to discover how Teresa's approach to work may be reconciled with contemplative Carmelite spirituality.

We approach the study of Teresa's work from two perspectives: 1) her life story within her context, and 2) her work of writing and establishing reformed foundations. Teresa's early life is brought to bear on her later work, especially in leadership and administration, and her middle years are examined as contributing a strong foundation for prayer and Carmelite spirituality. By the time she reached her later years Teresa's ideas were well-formed and her inner relationship to God had grown to a high degree of intensity, which culminated in her extremely productive and active later years, when she traveled throughout Spain, wrote most of her major works, and established many new monasteries.

This study of Teresa's approach to work sheds light on her innovations as a reformer and leader. Her innovations encouraged equality among nuns, which went against the existing culture

of aristocratic honor and a highly structured system of social classes, and she led from within, maintaining an intense life of prayer while engaging in a highly active life of reform and writing activities well into her later years.

In this dissertation, we first introduce Teresa's writings on work, followed by a description of her context, and then we examine the three major periods of her life to explore how her own development with respect to work led her to implement her reform and write her spiritual masterpieces with such courage, dedication and intensity.

This dissertation by Kristina R. Olsen fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Spirituality approved by Raymond Studzinski, Ph.D., as Director, and by Joshua Benson, Ph.D., Caroline R. Sherman, Ph.D., and Kieran Kavanaugh, S.T.L., as Readers.

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SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

Quotations in Teresa's original Spanish are from paleographic transcriptions of autograph manuscripts produced by Tomás Álvarez and published from 1999-2011 by Editorial Monte Carmelo, Burgos: *Libro de la Vida* (1999), *Libro de las Fundaciones* (2003), *Camino de Perfección*, (2010) and *Castillo Interior*, 2^a ed. (2011). The first three works are based on autographs held at the library of El Escorial, and the *Castillo Interior* transcription is based on the autograph held at the monastery of discalced Carmelite nuns in Seville. Additional quotations from the *Camino de Perfección* are included from a transcription of the autograph held at the monastery of Carmelite nuns in Valladolid, produced by Tomás Álvarez and Simeón Tomás and published in 1964-65 in Rome by L. Poliglota Vaticana.

Teresa herself revised the text of *Camino de Perfección* several times based on editorial corrections from various censors as well as her own ideas for improvement. Dominican censor García de Toledo, O.P., provided the most significant editorial changes, and the two versions censored by him are still extant. The earlier 1566 autograph is preserved at the library of El Escorial, and the revised autograph (probably written later that same year) is held at the Carmelite monastery of Valladolid.¹ The text of the El Escorial autograph was not divided into chapters, but Teresa did indicate where she felt chapter divisions should occur, and there are 72 chapter titles listed by her in the back of this version. In the later Valladolid autograph, which contains 42 chapters, some chapters from the earlier version were combined or increased in

¹ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Way of Perfection – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 2:16-19, 34-35.

length, and other material from the El Escorial autograph was suppressed. To further complicate matters, the Valladolid version was not always copied correctly, and two copies which Teresa herself reviewed and annotated currently reside at Carmelite monasteries in Salamanca and Madrid. These additional notations by Teresa have been taken into account differently by various scholars as they have redacted subsequent versions of this important work.² In this study we provide quotations in Teresa's original Spanish from transcriptions of the two primary autographs, those of El Escorial (*CaminoTR-E*) and Valladolid (*CaminoTR-V*). Chapter numbers correspond to those in Álvarez's *Obras Completas*, which follows the Valladolid manuscript, except for sections taken directly from *CaminoTR-E* which retain their own numbering.

Quotations in contemporary Spanish of Saint Teresa's writings, other than her letters, are from *Obras Completas*, 16th ed., edited by Tomás Álvarez (2011). Quotations in contemporary Spanish of her letters are from *Cartas*, 4^a ed., edited by Tomás Álvarez (1997).

Quotations in English of Teresa's writings, other than her letters, are from *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, vols. 1-3, translated by Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (1980-87). Quotations from the *Way of Perfection* in this edition are based on the Valladolid manuscript, with additions from the El Escorial manuscript provided in brackets.³ Quotations in English of Teresa's letters are from *The Collected Letters of St. Teresa of Avila*, vols. 1 and 2, translated by Kieran Kavanaugh (2001-07).

² See for example pp. 446-8 of the introduction to this work by Tomás Álvarez, and his first note to Capítulo 4 on p. 466 (Tomás Álvarez, "Camino de perfección, Introducción," in *Obras Completas*, 16th ed., edited by Tomás Álvarez (2011), 445-8.

³ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Way of Perfection – Introduction," 2:35.

Section, chapter and paragraph numbers are indicated by reference to the edition above followed by the work within the edition, if appropriate, and then by section and/or chapter number and paragraph number. Titles of works are given in the language corresponding to the edition quoted (Spanish or English), and when the section, chapter or paragraph numbers differ between the Spanish and the English (as in the *Constituciones*), or between two versions in the same language (as in *CaminoTR-E* and *CaminoTR-V*) each quotation retains its own numbers.

Abbreviations of Specific Editions

<i>CWST</i>	<i>The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila</i> . Translated by Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. 3 vols. Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1980-87.
<i>OC</i>	<i>Obras Completas</i> , 16 th ed. Edited by Tomás Álvarez. Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2011.
<i>Cartas</i> <i>Letters</i>	<i>Cartas</i> , 4 ^a ed. Edited by Tomás Álvarez. Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 1997. <i>The Collected Letters of Teresa of Avila</i> . Translated by Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. 2 vols. Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2001-07.
<i>VidaTR</i>	<i>Libro de la Vida: Autógrafo de la Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial</i> , transcripción paleográfica de Tomás Álvarez. 3 vols. Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 1999.
<i>FundTR</i>	<i>Libro de las Fundaciones: Autógrafo de la Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial</i> . Transcripción paleográfica de Tomás Álvarez. 2 vols. Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2003.
<i>CaminoTR-E</i>	<i>Camino de Perfección: Autógrafo de la Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial</i> . Transcripción paleográfica de Tomás Álvarez. 2 vols. Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2010.
<i>CaminoTR-V</i>	<i>Camino de Perfección: Autógrafo de Valladolid</i> . Transcripción paleográfica de Tomás Álvarez y Simeón Tomás. 2 vols. Roma: Poliglota Vaticana, 1964-65.
<i>CastilloTR</i>	<i>Castillo Interior</i> , 2 ^a ed. Transcripción paleográfica de Tomás Álvarez. 2 vols. Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2011.

Examples of References

<i>VidaTR</i> , 11.7	<i>Libro de la Vida: Autógrafo</i> , transcription by Tomás Álvarez, Chapter 11, Paragraph 7 (transcribed from Teresa's original hand-
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	written Spanish)
<i>OC, Vida</i> 11.7	<i>Obras Completas, Libro de la Vida</i> , Chapter 11, Paragraph 7 (in contemporary Spanish)
<i>CWST, Life</i> 11.7	<i>The Collected Works of St. Teresa, The Book of Her Life</i> , Chapter 11, Paragraph 7 (in English)
<i>Camino</i> TR-V, 5.4	<i>Camino de Perfección</i> , transcription of Teresa's original hand-written Spanish from the Valladolid manuscript, Chapter 5, Paragraph 4
<i>Cartas</i> 172.5	<i>Cartas</i> , Letter 172, Paragraph 5
<i>Letters</i> 172.5	<i>The Collected Letters of St. Teresa of Avila</i> , Letter 172, Paragraph 5
<i>OC, Const</i> II.8	<i>Obras Completas, Constituciones de 1567</i> , Section II, Article 8
<i>CWST, Const</i> 8	<i>The Collected Works of St. Teresa, Constitutions</i> , Article 8
<i>OC, Castillo</i> IV.1.2	<i>Obras Completas, Castillo Interior</i> , Fourth Dwelling Place, Chapter 1, Paragraph 2

Correspondence of Spanish Titles to English Titles

Below is a table of the correspondence of Spanish titles of Teresa's writings to those in English, with the abbreviations of titles used here:

Abbreviation	Spanish Title	Abbreviation	English Title
<i>Camino</i>	<i>Camino de Perfección</i>	<i>Way</i>	<i>The Way of Perfection</i>
<i>Cartas</i>	<i>Cartas</i>	<i>Letters</i>	<i>Letters</i>
<i>Castillo</i>	<i>Castillo Interior</i>	<i>IC</i>	<i>Interior Castle</i>
<i>Conceptos</i>	<i>Conceptos del Amor de Dios</i>	<i>Meditations</i>	<i>Meditations on the Song of Songs</i>
<i>Const</i>	<i>Constituciones</i>	<i>Const</i>	<i>The Constitutions</i>
<i>Exclamaciones</i>	<i>Exclamaciones del Alma a Dios</i>	<i>Soliloquies</i>	<i>Soliloquies</i>
<i>Fund</i>	<i>Las Fundaciones</i>	<i>Foundations</i>	<i>The Book of Her Foundations</i>
<i>Modo</i>	<i>Modo de Visitar los Conventos</i>	<i>Visitation</i>	<i>On Making the Visitation</i>
<i>Poesías</i>	<i>Poesías</i>	<i>Poetry</i>	<i>Poetry</i>
<i>Relaciones</i>	<i>Relaciones</i> (includes <i>Mercedes</i>)	<i>ST</i>	<i>Spiritual Testimonies</i> (includes <i>Favors</i>)
<i>Respuesta</i>	<i>Respuesta a un Desafío</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Response to a Spiritual Challenge</i>
<i>Vejamen</i>	<i>Vejamen</i>	<i>Critique</i>	<i>A Satirical Critique</i>
<i>Vida</i>	<i>Libro de la Vida</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>The Book of Her Life</i>

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INTRODUCTION

The image of Teresa at work contrasts with how we may usually picture her, constantly in a state of rapture as in the well-known Bernini sculpture, *The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, in Rome. Especially during her final years, Teresa was constantly at work and traveling in connection with establishing new foundations, and her writing, not only of books but also of many letters, took a great deal of time. Understanding Teresa's approach to work in 16th-century Spain offers us a window into the dynamic events of early modern Europe, when global business was expanding and the management of colonial holdings was becoming so important to Spanish economic, civil and ecclesial concerns. This was also a time of urbanization and social change, and issues associated with religion, family honor, wealth, land and aristocracy all influenced Teresa's approach to family life, religious life, prayer, her reform activities and her work activities.

The practice of work has long been associated with Christian religious life. Work for early Christians was rooted in the Old Testament view of work, in which work was service to God in light of his covenant relationship with the Hebrew people, and all work was done "in the pattern of the *divine work*," because it was creative and it was ultimately oriented toward the eternal Sabbath rest:⁴ "On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing; he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation (Gen. 2:1-3)."⁵

⁴ Edwin G. Kaiser, C.P.P.S., *Theology of Work* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1966), 48.

⁵ All biblical references are NABRE unless otherwise indicated.

In the New Testament, Jesus often referred to work in his sayings and parables (i.e., Matt 9:37-38; Matt 20:1-16) and he referred to the Father's work in connection with his own (John 5:17-36), which ties the Old Testament view of work to New Testament understanding and practices. Early Christian desert monks and nuns included work in their daily tasks in obedience to St. Paul's instruction: "In toil and drudgery, night and day we worked, so as not to burden any of you . . . We wanted to present ourselves as a model for you, so that you might imitate us. In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat (2 Thess. 3:8-10)." According to St. Jerome, who translated the rule of Pachomius which governed cenobitic monastic life among early Christians in Egypt, none of the monasteries there would accept anyone who refused to do "laborious work."⁶

Work is important in Christian religious life not only because it orients our activities toward God and contributes to the well-being of the community, but also because it develops recollection and virtue through tasks that require attention and keep us productively occupied (and away from sin). The forms of work in religious life have included manual labor, agricultural work and all of the necessary tasks associated with managing and running large monasteries, including the endeavors of "tailors, smiths, carpenters, dyers, tanners, shoemakers, gardeners, and even copyists and camel-drivers" in the early Egyptian desert communities.⁷ Pachomius (ca. 292-348) wrote one of the earliest rules for religious communities, and St. Basil (330-379), St.

⁶ Kaiser, *Theology of Work*, 136.

⁷ Kaiser, *Theology of Work*, 137.

Jerome (347-420) and St. Augustine (354-430) also wrote guidelines for religious life, and all had something to say about work.⁸

As monastic rules were written down and developed, the structure of religious life became better defined. St. Benedict's 6th-century monastic rule specifies a balance among work, study and prayer. For Benedict (ca. 480-547), liturgical prayer was the monks' primary *opus Dei* (work of God), but other types of work were important, too: "Idleness is the enemy of the soul. Therefore, the brothers should have specified periods for manual labor as well as for prayerful reading."⁹ Benedict viewed work as "what is necessary, what has to be done, and it seems that he is essentially thinking of the chores of the community." Benedictine monasteries ultimately grew very large, but at the time he wrote the *Rule* "he had no idea that the monks should be entirely self-supporting, should till the fields or grow the wool . . . He was concerned to see that the jobs that had to be done were accomplished, and in the process a useful element of variety enter the monastic day."¹⁰ Throughout the Middle Ages, religious communities expanded upon this approach, and work in religious life came to include scholarly research, teaching, management and administration, as well as manual labor and everyday tasks.

This brief introduction is not meant to provide a complete history of work in religious life, but it sets the stage for the study of work in the life and writings of St. Teresa of Avila.

⁸ Christopher Brooke, *The Age of the Cloister: The Story of Monastic Life in the Middle Ages* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2003), 34-7.

⁹ Benedict, *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*, ed. Timothy Fry, O.S.B., et al. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1982), 68-9.

¹⁰ Brooke, *The Age of the Cloister*, 73.

Shining a spotlight on her use of work reveals new dimensions of St. Teresa, both as a person and in light of her contributions to spirituality, that might otherwise not be fully appreciated. Much has been written about Teresa's contemplative life and her writings on prayer, but exploring her approach to work adds depth to our understanding and introduces us to a more practical dimension of this great mystic. This dissertation explores the following questions: What is the relationship of active labor to the prayerful work of contemplation and the intellectual work of reading, writing and study? How much of a role does context play in one's approach to work in religious life, and how do early influences from one's family and culture influence that work later in life? In Teresa's case, how did the experience of socio-economic and religious change in 16th-century Spain influence her approach to work, especially with regard to her Jewish ancestry and her family's traditional approach to work? In her own development, what might account for the increase of intensity in Teresa's own work, both inwardly and outwardly, in her later years, and what methods or guidelines might we take from her insights and experiences for our own spiritual development and approach to contemplation and active work, especially in our later years? Finally, how were management, financial and administrative tasks handled in reformed Carmelite religious houses, and what lessons might we learn about managing people and the administration of complex organizations while remaining oriented toward God in prayer, as well as balancing the need for income and profit with reliance on providence and respect for poverty? Finally, how might we envision future research and practices based on insights gained from studying the work of Teresa, toward creating an

environment in our contemporary organizations which could foster spiritual growth as well as productive work?

In this study we will briefly look at Teresa's life vis-à-vis work, and then survey her writings with a special focus on the theme of work. Included in this overview are Teresa's writings on active/contemplative balance in the spiritual life, the type of work to be done by nuns, and examples of work in her writings which were used as illustrations for prayer. Some of Teresa's writings are legislative in nature, defining work for visitators as well as for leaders and members of Carmelite communities, and these are given special attention. Teresa established a number of innovations with regard to work in her reformed Carmelite houses: she introduced equality among workers of different social classes, and she provided instructions regarding the oversight of religious communities. She described the qualifications not only for entering religious life but also for serving as prioress or prior, and she emphasized letting go of aristocratic titles and special privileges in religious life, in a culture in which monasteries had maintained these distinctions. Teresa's own personal work included writing spiritual books, poetry, letters and other documents, initiating the reform of the Carmelite Order, and traveling throughout Spain to establish and manage reformed foundations. This tireless activity rooted in a life of contemplative prayer highlights a significant theme in this study, the relationship of contemplation to activity in religious life, which is addressed throughout the dissertation.

This dissertation primarily contributes to the literature on Carmelite spirituality and history. This group of authors includes those who have written on the history of the Carmelite Order (Smet, Steggink), its spirituality and way of life (Kavanaugh, Álvarez, Waaijman) and the

life and times of St. Teresa (Efren de la Madre de Dios, González, Miranda, Walsh). There are extensive writings on this dynamic period of socio-economic change and global expansion in 16th-century Spain (Kamen, Elliott). The writings on religious reform and the Council of Trent are important for situating Teresa's reform work within her religious context (O'Malley, Evennett). Recent authors have written on Teresa's economic concerns (Egido, Álvarez Vázquez), religious context (González y González), socio-economic context (Bilinkoff) and letter writing (Mujica). This study focuses on the theme work in the life and writings of St. Teresa primarily from a historical perspective within her religious and socio-economic context, and therefore it is situated within this set of literature.

In addition to the literature on Carmelite spirituality, there are two bodies of literature on spirituality and work which are relevant here. The first set approaches the theology of work systematically according to scriptural and doctrinal foundations and then applies these insights to the practice of work in religious life. Ancient authors in this group include those who have composed rules for monastic life and those who have written extensively about various practices in religious life, such as Augustine, Basil, Cassian and Benedict. The writings of more recent authors, such as Rembert Sorg, Miroslav Volf, Charles Cummings and M.D. Chenu, also relate theological considerations about work to contemporary practices in both religious and secular life.

A second set of emerging literature explores the importance of spirituality in the contemporary workplace. Authors such as Armand Larive, David Jensen, Darrell Cosden and Margaret Benefiel address spiritual growth and practices in today's corporations and large

organizations. This body of work has emerged from a recognition of the importance of acknowledging the spiritual dimension of the human person at work, including such perspectives as finding one's authentic self in order to provide better leadership (Benefiel, Hamilton) and aligning one's gifts with a sense of purpose and passion at work (Ferguson).

Because this dissertation focuses on the theme of work in the life and writings of Teresa of Avila in the context of her time, it contributes primarily to the first set of literature on Carmelite spirituality and history. However, a number of insights from this study also apply to the literature on the spirituality of work, especially in contemporary corporations and organizations, but the full treatment of this area is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Ideas for future research related to spirituality in the workplace are included in the Conclusion.

Our study contributes to the literature on Carmelite spirituality by expanding our understanding of Teresa's approach to work, prayer and religious life in the culture of her time, and it contributes to our contemporary understanding of the spirituality of work by addressing the integration of work and spirituality in the lives of individuals and communities whose members share a common vision and purpose, and in the management and administration of complex organizations. This study also sheds light on a number of innovations that Teresa established with regard to work in her reformed houses, including greater equality among workers and the recognition of individual accomplishments.

The development of Teresa's approach to work throughout her life may be seen by careful study of the three main stages of her life. We begin by providing an overview of Teresa's writings on work in Chapter 1, and in Chapter 2 we describe the socio-economic and religious

context of 16th-century Spain, along with the effects of ecclesial reform, economic and global expansion and the persecution of Jews on work, wealth, families and religious life. In Chapters 3, 4 and 5 we explore Teresa's early, middle and later years, respectively, in terms of how her life experiences at home, as a Carmelite nun, and as a keenly observant member of 16th-century Spanish society led to her approach to work in religious life, as well as to her highly productive work as an author, reformer, founder and administrator of reformed monasteries in her later years. At the end of the dissertation insights learned from this study and directions for future research are presented.

CHAPTER 1

TERESA'S BIOGRAPHY AND WRITINGS

Chapter Introduction

This chapter introduces us to Teresa's biographical background as well as to her writings on the theme of work. The study of Teresa's life and writings sheds light not only on her approach to work during her most active period - the last twenty years of her life - but it also shows how she developed into the strong leader and administrator she ultimately became. The seeds of work for her later life may be found in her early experiences of work in her family life, and during her middle years as a Carmelite nun she developed a rich and compelling interior life of prayer and formed her ideas about work and prayer in Carmelite religious life. In her later years Teresa synthesized the lessons learned from her early and middle years and became an effective writer, reformer and founder of new monasteries in the context of ecclesial reform and socio-economic change in 16th-century Spain, while continuing to develop her profound sense of connection with God in prayer.

Teresa's writings are important for the study of work because Teresa discusses the difficulty she had in getting permission to establish her foundations in poverty, which required the nuns to work in order to supplement what they got through alms, and which minimized or altogether eliminated the reliance on wealthy benefactors. This was radical in her day and required innovative planning and administration to determine the nature of work the nuns would

do, how to handle the income from the sale of items made by the nuns, and how to manage individual tasks as well as the social aspects of work in the monastery. This study also introduces us to aspects of management which would become important in later periods: the use of influence rather than power, the recognition of accomplishments as more important than financial reward, matching jobs to the gifts and talents of the workers, and treating workers as equals without regard to family connections or social status. Teresa's writings on leadership emerge as an important contribution to management, not only because she provides advice about the appointment and supervision of prioresses (and to a lesser extent, priors) of her foundations, but also because in her own writings she demonstrates a bold approach that was able to influence even those who ranked above her in the social, civil and ecclesial hierarchy of her time. After a short biographical overview, we introduce a selection of Teresa's writings on the theme of work from among her books, poetry, documents and letters.

Biographical Overview

There are various approaches to the analysis of Teresa's life story. The following is a brief outline of some key moments in her life, especially those turning points which are significant for a study of the role of work in her life and writings.

Teresa de Ahumada y Cepeda was born in 1515 in Avila, Spain.¹¹ Alonso Sánchez de Cepeda was her father; his father, Juan Sánchez, had been a Jewish merchant in Toledo, forced

¹¹ Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 109-12.

to convert to Catholicism in 1485. After his conversion, Juan moved the Sánchez family to Avila and opened a shop of woolens and silks. He established relationships with the wealthy and powerful people in Avila, and in 1500 he was granted a “pleito de hidalguía” which established him in the social status of *hidalgo* or gentleman, exempt from paying taxes.

Teresa’s mother, Doña Beatriz de Ahumada, was Alonso’s second wife and was from an “Old Christian” family. She passed on her love of reading to her daughter, Teresa. She died in 1528 when Teresa was 13. Teresa had eleven siblings and half-siblings (from Alonso’s first marriage). Her oldest sister married soon after her mother died, and shortly after that her father sent Teresa to live at an Augustinian convent, Nuestra Señora de Gracia. Teresa didn’t like the strict life there but she found an intelligent and kind role model in Doña María Briceño, the nun in charge of novices and lay students.

In 1535 Teresa entered the Carmelite monastery of the Incarnation. Shortly afterward, in 1538, she had to leave there due to illness, but the “treatments administered by the quack in Becedas” left her so weak that she returned first to her father’s house and then to the Incarnation, where she had a paralysis that lasted three years.¹² In 1540, two of her brothers, Lorenzo and Jerónimo, went on an expedition to the Americas.¹³ Her brother, Hernando, had gone to Peru in 1530, and Rodrigo, another brother, had left for Rio de la Plata in 1535, the same year that

¹² Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “A Teresian Chronology,” in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3: 83-94.

¹³ Efrén de la Madre de Dios, *Teresa de Jesús* (Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1981), 35.

Teresa entered the Incarnation.¹⁴ Teresa's father died in 1543, adding to her sense of loss. During this time Teresa was so distraught over a sense of her own corruption and unworthiness that she gave up mental prayer, although she continued to recite vocal prayer with the other nuns in choir.¹⁵ In 1544, after about a year, Teresa returned to the practice of silent, mental prayer and recollection, having attributed the temptation to give up mental prayer to a false sense of humility.¹⁶

From 1544 to 1554 Teresa's interior prayer life grew stronger. During Lent in 1554 she experienced a powerful conversion before a statue of Christ. She consulted many learned men about her visions, and in 1560 St. Peter of Alcántara arrived in Avila and assured her that "her spiritual favors are the work of God."¹⁷ In 1560 Teresa had a vision of her possible place in hell that frightened her, and it was after this that discussions of a new foundation began. She wrote an early account of her spiritual life in 1560, and in 1561, on August 12th, she had a vision of St. Clare, who promised to help her.

In 1562 Teresa established her first foundation, the Monastery of St. Joseph in Avila. This foundation would follow an early version of the *Rule* of St. Albert, the rule written for hermits on Mt. Carmel in Palestine at the inception of the Carmelite Order in the 13th century.

¹⁴ Efen de la Madre de Dios, *Teresa de Jesús*, 35.

¹⁵ Efen de la Madre de Dios, *Teresa de Jesús*, 52-3.

¹⁶ "este fue el mas terrible engaño *que* el demonio me podia açer devajo de parecer vmildad *que* començe a temer de tener oraçion de verme tan perdida" *VidaTR*, 7.1. "Este fue el más terrible engaño que el demonio me podía hacer debajo de parecer humildad, que comencé a temer de tener oración, de verme tan perdida." *OC, Vida* 7.1. "This was the most terrible trick the devil could play on me, under the guise of humility: that seeing myself so corrupted I began to fear the practice of prayer." *CWST, Life* 7.1.

¹⁷ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 85.

Teresa moved to St. Joseph's with four nuns from the Incarnation, and she changed her name to Teresa of Jesús. "With them in all humility, endowed only with a straw pallet, a scourge, a hair shirt, and a threadbare old habit, came Doña Teresa de Ahumada. Leaving behind her shoes and her family pride – from this point on, she too would drop her surname, as well as the title of *doña* – the nun Teresa de Jesús entered the enclosure of San José."¹⁸ Also, in 1562 Teresa finished writing the first redaction of the *Libro de la Vida*.

In 1563 Teresa wrote the *Constituciones* for St. Joseph's, and in 1566 she finished the *Camino de Perfección*. Also in 1566, the Franciscan missionary to Mexico, Alonso Maldonado, visited St. Joseph's and inspired Teresa to work and pray for the salvation of souls in the New World. In 1567, the prior general of the Carmelite Order, Juan Bautista Rubeo (known in Italy as Giovanni Battista Rossi), visited Avila and authorized Teresa to begin founding other monasteries according to the primitive *Rule* and way of life she had established at St. Joseph's.

Teresa traveled to Medina del Campo in 1567 to establish her second foundation of nuns. While she was there she met the young Carmelite brother, Fray John of St. Matthias, who would later join Teresa's reform and take the name John of the Cross.¹⁹ He had been studying philosophy and theology at the University of Salamanca since 1564. At the time of their meeting, Teresa was 52 and John was 25. He was one of three brothers born to a poor family in Fontiveros. Although John's father had come from a wealthy family of silk merchants in Toledo,

¹⁸ Cathleen Medwick, *Teresa of Avila: The Progress of a Soul* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 89.

¹⁹ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "General Introduction," in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1991), 10-13.

he married a woman of a lower financial and social class, and no further support came from his father's family. John's father died when he was two years old, and his mother tried to make ends meet by working as a weaver in Fontiveros. However, after John's brother, Luis, died, "perhaps as a result of insufficient nourishment," John and his mother moved to Arévalo where they lived for several years, but things weren't much better for them there. Finally, they moved to Medina del Campo where John's mother resumed her work as a weaver in this "bustling market center of Castile."²⁰

John grew up poor and attended a school for poor children. He served as an acolyte in a monastery of Augustinian nuns, and he was chosen to assist with nursing duties and collecting alms for a hospital for the poor in Medina. The administrator of the hospital, Don Alonso Alvarez, took an interest in him and enrolled him in the local Jesuit school, where he studied grammar, rhetoric, Latin and Greek. At the end of his studies at that school, John could have become a priest and chaplain at the hospital, or he could have joined the Jesuits, but he chose to enter a Carmelite monastery in Medina at age 21 (in 1563), likely drawn to "Carmel's contemplative spirit and its devotion to Mary, the mother of God." After his novitiate year as a Carmelite friar, John went to Salamanca to study at the university there, where he was enrolled for three years.²¹

In 1567 John was ordained a priest, and he went to Medina to celebrate his first Mass. The timing coincided with Teresa's visit there to establish her second reformed foundation.

²⁰ Kavanaugh, "General Introduction," in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, 9.

²¹ Kavanaugh, "General Introduction," in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, 10.

Having been told about John, Teresa arranged a meeting with him and shared her vision for the reformed Carmelite way of life. At that time John had been considering joining the contemplative Carthusian Order for its greater opportunities for solitude and prayer, but after meeting with Teresa he was attracted to her approach to the Carmelite reform.²² He decided to join her, and the following year, in 1568, he traveled with her group to Valladolid, where she established her third foundation for discalced nuns.²³ As a result of living there and working closely with Teresa, John learned the methods, practices and way of life Teresa envisioned for the Carmelite houses of her reform. Together John and Teresa established the first house for discalced Carmelite friars at Duruelo in 1568.²⁴ With John's help, Teresa continued founding houses for both nuns and friars, and by the time of her death in 1582, seventeen discalced Carmelite foundations for nuns had been established, and two for friars.²⁵

In 1572, Teresa experienced the grace of spiritual marriage, and in 1573 she began to write the stories of *Las Fundaciones*, which are viewed as a continuation of the story of her life which she began in the *Vida*. In 1576, Teresa wrote *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* (instructions for oversight of the new monasteries), and in 1577 she wrote the entire *Castillo Interior*. Also in 1577, John of the Cross was imprisoned in Toledo by Carmelite friars who were against the

²² Kavanaugh, "General Introduction," in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, 10.

²³ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 92-93.

²⁴ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Foundations – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:4-5.

²⁵ Kavanaugh, "The Foundations – Introduction," 3:4-5.

reform, causing much stress both for him and for Teresa, and adding to the tensions involved in reforming the order. John escaped in 1578. Teresa continued to establish new discalced monasteries throughout Spain until her death in 1582. She was beatified in 1614, canonized in 1622, and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1970. Various scholars have proposed different views of the major periods in Teresa's life. Each view offers helpful insights into aspects of Teresa's development, character and personality. Several breakdowns are presented in the Appendix. A summary of those views is given in table form below, followed by the divisions most helpful for the study of the theme of work in Teresa's life and writings.

Overview of Teresa's Life for the Study of Work

The three views of Teresa's life as described by Kavanaugh, Álvarez and Miranda are as follows (see Appendix):

Table 1. Synopsis of Biographical Overviews (Kavanaugh, Álvarez and Miranda)

Key Dates	Major Events in Teresa's Life	Kavanaugh	Álvarez	Miranda
1515	Birth	1515-35: early years	1515-35: early years	1515-25: infancy
				1525-35: adolescence and early growth
1535	Entry into Carmelite religious life (Monastery of the Incarnation, Avila)	1535-44: Carmelite nun; illness	1535-1562: enters Carmelites 1535; establishes St. Joseph's 1562	1535-60: maturation

Key Dates	Major Events in Teresa's Life	Kavanaugh	Álvarez	Miranda
		1544-54: returns to prayer (4 th dwelling place)		
		1554-60: individual spiritual practices deepen (5 th dwelling place)		
		1560-72: prioress; visions (6 th dwelling place)		1560-62: mother, reformer
1562	Foundation of first Discalced Carmelite monastery (St. Joseph's of Avila)		1562-82: writer and founder; personal and spiritual fullness	1562-82: mother, founder
		1572-82: foundress; spiritual marriage (7 th dwelling place)		
1582	Death			

Three distinct approaches to work may be discerned in the three major phases of Teresa's life. For the study of work in Teresa's life and writings, the following breakdown will be used:

1. 1515 to 1535: Teresa's Early Years

Teresa's early years established a strong paradigm for work early in her life. This period culminated for Teresa in a leadership role in the family by age 20. Her first twenty years encompass Teresa's introduction to work as practiced by her mother, father, siblings and household servants. The loss of her grandmother (at age 10) and mother (at age 13), and the absence of her older sister (marriage) and brothers (travel to America), launched Teresa into a leadership role in her household early in life, and established for

her both the importance and the characteristics of effective work on a large sixteenth-century Spanish estate. Chapter 3 will cover this period of Teresa's life in greater depth.

2. 1535 to 1560: Teresa's Middle Years

During Teresa's middle years, her work centered largely on her interior life, due to long periods of incapacitating illness and very little control of her surroundings. Teresa entered the Incarnation in 1535 to begin her life there as a Carmelite nun. She observed work as practiced in the monastery, both the work of prayer and that of practical matters such as cooking, cleaning, sewing and managing funds. She continued to have contact with her family, and she was in touch with the economic and legal activities of her brothers as they became involved in expeditions to the Americas. Her views of the social aspects of living and working together in community were formed during this period, and what she learned would ultimately come to fruition in the reform of the order and in those of her writings that deal with the governance of discalced monasteries.

Also, Teresa was very ill during her middle years, leading to an extended period of paralysis and nearly to her death. During this period, Teresa could do no external work, but she applied her keen imagination and earlier paradigm for work to her interior life of prayer, leading to fruitful metaphors which would emerge in her writings on prayer and the interior life. Key events in this period include her severe illness, the death of her father in 1543, her return to prayer in 1544, her major conversion and vision of Christ in

1554, and spiritual betrothal in 1556.²⁶ This period of Teresa's life will be covered in greater depth in Chapter 4.

3. 1560 to 1582: Teresa's Later Years

In her later years, the lessons learned from Teresa's middle years were brought into alignment with her work paradigm from youth and she emerged as a powerful leader, writer and reformer, with clear ideas about how to institute work in her reformed houses and how to manage her own life of work and prayer, always with God at the center of her thinking.

The year 1560 is chosen as a turning point because this is when Teresa's vocation as a founder emerged after there were significant events in her interior life and she found support for her ideas among close friends, colleagues and advisors. During this year, Teresa began to have visions of the risen Christ, and her vision of hell moved her deeply and passionately to want to save souls (*Vida*, 32.1-6). Discussions about the new foundation began during this year, and St. Peter of Alcántara arrived in Avila and assured Teresa and others that her visions were "the work of God."²⁷

Teresa's work activities during her later years included the writing of all of her major writings, the establishment of her many foundations for both nuns and friars, and much travel throughout Spain, along with the writing of quite likely thousands of letters. Also during this period, a Franciscan missionary to Mexico, Alonso Maldonado, visited

²⁶ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 83-86.

²⁷ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 85.

St. Joseph's Monastery (in 1566), inspiring Teresa to want to help save the many souls he described as being lost in the New World (*Fund* 1.7). This visit was instrumental in launching Teresa's journey to establish many new foundations, in which prayer for the salvation of souls would comprise a large part of the work of nuns and friars. The need for proper protocol and delicacy in Teresa's personal and ecclesial relationships did not diminish her authority or strength, and a demanding writing schedule did not hinder her leadership capabilities nor the foundation of seventeen new monastic houses throughout Spain by the time of her death in 1582.²⁸

This third period offers a model for integrating inner spiritual intensity and a life of prayer with outward work activities in a fruitful and productive way. Teresa's writings during this period – especially the *Constituciones* (1563) and *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* (1576), offer much insight into her vision of work for those in the new foundations. The role of work in Teresa's later years is studied in greater depth in Chapter 5.

²⁸ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 92-93.

The Theme of Work in the Writings of Teresa

Introduction to Teresa's Writings

Teresa used primarily three terms to describe work: *trabajar*, *obrar* and *laborar*.²⁹ While there are some distinctions in the Spanish meanings of these words, Teresa often spoke about her work-related activities by describing the specific activity itself, such as to sweep (*barrer*, *Vida* 4.2) or to spin (*hilar*, *Vida* 10.7). *Trabajar* and *laborar* both refer to work in the sense of employment or working at specific jobs, but words derived from *trabajar* are used much more often than those derived from *laborar* in Teresa's writings. One difficulty in studying Teresa's use of *trabajar* is that *trabajos*, the plural noun form, most often refers to "trials" in the sense of

²⁹ *Complete Works of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross*, Version 2.0, CD-ROM (Carmel Clarion Communications, n.d.). Percentages are approximate, based on total word counts in MS Word. An initial count of these terms and their derivatives in her writings yields the following results:

Table 2: Words for "Work" in the Writings of Teresa

Teresa's writings:	search for <i>trabaj</i> to find words related to <i>trabajar</i>		search for <i>obra</i> to find words related to <i>obrar</i>		search for <i>labor</i> to find words related to <i>laborar</i>		search for <i>hech</i> to find words related to <i>hecho(s)</i>	
	no. of words found	% of total words	no. of words found	% of total words	no. of words found	% of total words	no. of words found	% of total words
<i>Vida</i>	206	0.18 %	122	0.11 %	3	0.00 %	169	0.15 %
<i>Fund</i>	140	0.18	83	0.11	4	0.00	116	0.15
<i>Camino</i>	102	0.19	45	0.08	2	0.00	47	0.09
<i>Castillo</i>	96	0.16	73	0.12	1	0.00	63	0.10
<i>Const</i> (1567)	8	0.11	1	0.01	6	0.08	7	0.09
<i>Modo</i>	7	0.11	0	0.00	4	0.06	5	0.08

difficulties and tribulations, and does not relate to work in the sense studied here. *Obrar* may be translated “to act,” and an *obra* is a “work,” such as a work of art.³⁰ *Hecho* is the past participle of *hacer*, “to build or make,” and it may be translated as “deed,” in the sense of some activity that has been accomplished. *Tarea*, or “task,” is found occasionally in Teresa’s writings; this term is discussed more fully in Chapter 5 because it is found in the *Constituciones*, where Teresa discusses the types of work the nuns should do in the new foundations. Because Teresa discusses her work activities using so many different terms and descriptive phrases, to approach her writings about work from the perspective of addressing the specific words used for “work” provides only limited help.

In this study we consider primarily those examples of work in her writings which shed light on Teresa’s development with respect to the role of work in her life and in the reform of the Carmelite order. A chronological approach is used to examine work during the three major periods of her life, and various themes emerge during these phases. Teresa’s early observations of work and her early formation of a paradigm for work established a foundation for her understanding of work as applied to her inner life, especially when she couldn’t do active work outwardly, and she grew in her understanding of work throughout her life such that she was actively managing multiple locations of Carmelite foundations later in life while successfully writing her masterpieces of spiritual understanding and maintaining a fruitful life of prayer. The themes related to work that run throughout her life include attentive observation of work, workers and supervisors; personal practices such as sweeping, cooking and writing; metaphors

³⁰ *Oxford Spanish Desk Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

about work as applied to prayer; group work practices (especially in religious life); management of people and tasks; overall administrative organization; and the importance of well-constructed and persuasive communication. Through correlating her writings with the activities in her life, we can observe significant development in Teresa's approach to work throughout her life.

To integrate chronological and thematic considerations, several organizational elements are used as guides. First, the relevant writings about the time period under study are used for each period of Teresa's life. Thus, even though the *Vida* was written when she was 60, it refers to events in her early and middle years, and the relevant portions are therefore presented during those phases. Second, the life duties and activities associated with each of the three major periods of Teresa's life are kept in mind in conjunction with her development of ideas about the practices of work, with special attention to transitional periods. Third, the development of Teresa's own work is traced through the various themes in her writings and within the context of sixteenth-century Spain. Finally, Teresa's deepening relationship with God in her interior life is kept in focus along with the changes in her views of work throughout her life and her own external practices of work.

Libro de la Vida and Las Fundaciones

The *Libro de la Vida* and *Las Fundaciones* are often viewed as together as the story of Teresa's life, and they both contain many examples of work. *Vida* was begun around 1562 (first

version) and was finished in 1565. The final redaction currently resides at the Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, near Madrid.³¹

Teresa writes about her mother's household duties in Chapter 1, and in Chapters 32 and 33 she describes the founding of the first discalced monastery of nuns, St. Joseph's, in Avila. In the *Vida*, perhaps the most well-known example of work is in her section on prayer, Chapters 11-22. This section has been called a "treatise on the degrees of prayer" within the larger story of her life.³² In Chapter 11, Teresa likens prayer to the work of watering a garden. The earlier stages of prayer require much *trabajo* to carry water to the garden, but the more advanced one becomes, the more God helps the soul, and less work is required:

pues veamos aora de la manera *que* se uede rregar *para que* entendamos lo *que* emos de açer y el trabajo *que* nos a de costar si es mayor *que* la ganancia v/asta *que* tanto tienpo se a de tener /pareçeme a mi *que* se puede rregar de quatro maneras v con sacar el agua de vn poço *que* es a nuestro gran trabajo v con noria y arcaduços *que* se saca con vn torno yo lo e sacado algunas veçes es a menos trabajo *que* estotro y sacase mas agua v de vn rrio v arroyo esto se riega muy mijor *que* *queda* mas arta la tierra de agua y no se a menester rregar tan a menudo y es a menos trabajo mucho del ortolano /v con /llover mucho *que* lo rriega el señor sin trabajo ninguno nuestro y es muy sin conparaçion mijor *que* todo lo *que* *queda* dicho³³

³¹ Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús," *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 607-9.

³² Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Book of Her Life – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, 2nd ed., trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1987), 1:43.

³³ *VidaTR*, 11.7. Álvarez uses italics for letters which Teresa left out of her writing, but which were intended to be part of the word. Teresa usually indicated these by some other mark, such as a line over or under the preceding letter or letters. For example, "q̄" signifies the word, "que," for Teresa. The slashes ("/") are marks present in the autograph and often indicate a new sentence or paragraph. "Pues veamos ahora de la manera que se puede regar, para que entendamos lo que hemos de hacer y el trabajo que nos ha de costar, si es mayor que la ganancia, o hasta qué tanto tiempo se ha de tener. Paréceme a mí que se puede regar de cuatro maneras: o con sacar el agua de un pozo, que es a nuestro gran trabajo; o con noria y arcaduces, que se saca con un torno; yo lo he sacado algunas veces: es a menos trabajo que estotro y sácase más agua; o de un río o arroyo: esto se riega muy mejor, que queda más harta la tierra de agua y no se ha menester regar tan a menudo y es a menos trabajo mucho del hortelano; o con llover mucho, que

Las Fundaciones describes the establishment of new discalced Carmelite houses from 1562 to 1582, the year of Teresa's death. It was written from 1573 to 1582 and it may be seen as a continuation of the story of Teresa's life in the *Vida*. These later years of Teresa's life have been called a "período de plenitud humana y espiritual" for her.³⁴ She was determined to serve God and embrace the work he had given her to do. We continue to see the intimate interplay between God and her soul, and during this period God may be viewed as "the protagonist in her work."³⁵ In establishing the first foundation for discalced friars in 1568, Teresa refers to the role of God in removing obstacles and guiding the work. She frequently refers to God as "His Majesty" (*su Majestad*):

‘o valame dios *que* de cosas e visto *en* estos negoçios *que* parecían ynposibles y quan façil a sido a su *magestad* allanarlas y *que* confusion mia es viendo lo *que* e visto no ser mejor de lo *que* soy *que* aora *que* lo voy escribiendo me estoy espantando y eseando *que* nuestro señor de a entender a todos como *en* estas fundaciones no es casi nada lo *que*

lo riega el Señor sin trabajo ninguno nuestro, y es muy sin comparación mejor que todo lo que queda dicho." *OC, Vida* 11.7. "But let us see now how it must be watered so that we may understand what we have to do, the labor this will cost us, whether the labor is greater than the gain, and for how long it must last. It seems to me the garden can be watered in four ways. You may draw water from a well (which is for us a lot of work). Or you may get it by means of a water wheel and aqueducts in such a way that it is obtained by turning the crank of the water wheel. (I have drawn it this way sometimes - the method involves less work than the other, and you get more water). Or it may flow from a river or a stream. (The garden is watered much better by this means because the ground is more fully soaked, and there is no need to water so frequently -- and much less work for the gardener). Or the water may be provided by a great deal of rain. (For the Lord waters the garden without any work on our part -- and this way is incomparably better than all the others mentioned)." *CWST, Life* 11.7.

³⁴ Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús," *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 608.

³⁵ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Foundations – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:9.

emos echo las criaturas todo lo a ordenado el señor por vnos principios tan bajos *que* solo su magestad lo podia levantar *en lo que* aora esta sea por sienpre bendito amen³⁶

The stories in *Fund* allow us to observe Teresa's work in action, and her running commentary makes this process enjoyable and entertaining, and also allows us to glimpse her intimate relationship with God in everyday matters. Here also is her famous saying about the Lord walking among the pots and pans, in which she encourages the sisters not to worry about leaving prayer for everyday tasks:

pues ea yjas mias no aya desconsuelo quando la obediencia os trajere enpleadas *en* cosas exteriores *entended que* si es en la coçina *entre* los pucheros *anda* el señor ayvdandoos en lo ynterior y exterior³⁷

Teresa's personality traits that make her an effective leader shine through these stories, including courage, tact, strength and determination. Also, her administrative leadership skills are clearly documented in *Fund*, including managing workers, handling schedules, negotiating contracts, dealing with the unexpected (especially during travel), and practicing effective

³⁶ *FundTR*, 13.7. "¡Oh, válgame Dios, qué de cosas he visto en estos negocios, que parecían imposibles y cuán fácil ha sido a Su Majestad allanarlas! ¡Y qué confusión mía es, viendo lo que he visto, no ser mejor de lo que soy! Que ahora que lo voy escribiendo, me estoy espantando y deseando que nuestro Señor dé a entender a todos cómo en estas fundaciones no es casi nada lo que hemos hecho las criaturas. Todo lo ha ordenado el Señor por unos principios tan bajos, que sólo Su Majestad lo podía levantar en lo que ahora está. Sea por siempre bendito, amén." *OC, Fund* 13.7. "Oh, God help me, how many obstacles I have seen in these business matters that seemed impossible to overcome, and how easy it was for His Majesty to remove them. And how ashamed I am not to be better after seeing what I have seen. For now as I am writing, I am growing fearful and want our Lord to make known to everyone how in these foundations we creatures have done next to nothing. The Lord has directed all by means of such lowly beginnings that only His Majesty could have raised the work to what it now is. May He be always blessed, amen." *CWST, Foundations* 13.7.

³⁷ *FundTR*, 5.8. "Pues ¡ea, hijas mías!, no haya desconsuelo cuando la obediencia os trajere empleadas en cosas exteriores; entended que si es en la cocina, entre los pucheros anda el Señor ayudándoos en lo interior y exterior." *OC, Fund* 5.8. "Well, come now, my daughters, don't be sad when obedience draws you to involvement in exterior matters. Know that if it is in the kitchen, the Lord walks among the pots and pans helping you both interiorly and exteriorly." *CWST, Foundations* 5.8.

communication. Many examples of practical work may be seen in *Fund*, and as in her other writings, Teresa keeps a strong focus on God, who leads the work. These themes will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter 5.

Camino de Perfección and Castillo Interior

The *Camino de Perfección* and the *Castillo Interior* contain Teresa's instructions on prayer, and they (along with parts of the *Vida*) contain some discussion of work oriented toward prayer and the interior life. They have fewer practical examples of exterior work than her other writings, but they demonstrate the importance of the strong sense of union with God that Teresa feels is required for doing good works, and they shed light on her view of the active/contemplative balance in religious life.

The *Camino* was written in 1566 and 1567 as an instruction book on prayer for contemplative nuns.³⁸ Although this writing is primarily about contemplative prayer and the interior life, the nuns were expected to maintain a certain exterior orientation. In the Prologue to Chapter 3, for example, Teresa encourages the sisters always to pray for those who labor (*trabajan*) for the Church. In Chapter 18, Teresa discusses active/contemplative balance and the distribution of duties according to each one's strength. In Chapter 32 Teresa emphasizes the importance of deeds as well as words. These themes will be studied more thoroughly in Chapters 4 and 5.

³⁸ Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús," *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 609.

The *Castillo Interior* is widely regarded as Teresa's masterpiece of the spiritual life. It represents her highest state of union with God. This writing is especially interesting for the study of work in Teresa's life and writings because during the period of greatest spiritual depth in Teresa's own inner life, when "her contemplative life increased in intensity with a multiplicity of forms," she was also engaged in "a bluster of activities and obligations" associated with establishing new foundations and managing existing ones.³⁹ She began writing the *Castillo* on June 2, 1577, when she was in Toledo; after a number of interruptions, she finished the book on November 29, 1577, in Avila, less than six months later.⁴⁰

In *Castillo*, Teresa begins by telling her readers that we are not to place a limit on God's works: "dios . . . es muy amigo de q̄ no pōgā tasa a sus obras."⁴¹ The soul must constantly be in communication with God, in order to work well. A soul in mortal sin cannot do good works, because virtue proceeds from God:

//ātes q̄ pase adelāte os quiero deçir q̄ considereys q̄ sera ver este castillo tan rresplandeciēte y ermoso esta perla oriētal este arvol de vida q̄ esta plantado ē las mesmas aguas bivas de la vida q̄ es dios quando cay ē vn pecado mortal no ay tinieblas mas tenebrosas ni cosa tan oscura y negra q̄ no lo este mucho mas . . . ninguna cosa le aprovecha y de aqui viene q̄ todas las buenas obras q̄ yçiere estando āsi ē pecado mortal son de ningun fruto pa alcāçar gloria porq̄ no proçediēdo de aq̄l prinçipio q̄ es dios de donde nuestra virtud es virtud y apartādonos de el no puede ser agradable a sus ojos⁴²

³⁹ Kavanaugh, "Introduction," *Way of Prayer*, 16-19.

⁴⁰ Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús," *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 613-14.

⁴¹ *CastilloTR*, I.1.4. Chapter and paragraph numbers for *Castillo Interior* are preceded by a number which indicates one of the seven *moradas* or dwelling places, corresponding to the seven main sections into which this book is divided. "Dios . . . es muy amigo de que no pongan tasa a sus obras." *OC*, *Castillo* I.1.4. "God doesn't like us to put a limit on his works." *CWST*, IC I.1.4.

⁴² *CastilloTR*, I.2.1. "Antes que pase adelante, os quiero decir que consideréis qué será ver este castillo tan resplandeciente y hermoso, esta perla oriental, este árbol de vida que está plantado en las mismas aguas vivas de la vida, que es Dios, cuando cae en un pecado mortal: no hay tinieblas más

Teresa emphasizes the importance of staying rooted in Christ in order to do works in his service. Here she focuses on the humanity of Christ, consideration of the Passion, and the need to unite one's works to His merits through faith: "pues si nunca le miramos ni consideramos lo q̄ le devemos y la muerte q̄ paso por nosotros no se como le podemos conoçer ni açer obras ē su serviçio porq̄ la fe sin ellas y sin yr llegadas al valor de los mereçimiētos de jesucristo biē nuestro q̄ valor pueden tener."⁴³ Teresa's writings on the interior life do not omit the need for work. On the contrary, in the final chapter of the seventh dwelling place of *Castillo* she states that the birth of good works is the purpose of prayer and the result of spiritual marriage:

(o [sic] hermanas mias q̄ olvidado deve tener su descāso y q̄ poco se le deve de dar de ōrra y q̄ fuera deve estar de q̄rer ser tenida en nada el alma adonde esta el señor tan particularmēte porq̄ si ella esta mucho con el como es rraçon poco se deve de acordar de si toda la memoria se le va ē como mas contētarle y ē q̄ v por donde mostrara el amor q̄ le tiene /pa esto es la oraçiō yjas mias de esto sierve este matrimonio espiritual de q̄ nazcan siēpre obras (obras [sic])⁴⁴

tenebrosas, ni cosa tan oscura y negra, que no lo esté mucho más . . . Ninguna cosa le aprovecha; y de aquí viene que todas las buenas obras que hiciere, estando así en pecado mortal, son de ningún fruto para alcanzar gloria; porque no procediendo de aquel principio, que es Dios, de donde nuestra virtud es virtud, y apartándonos de El, no puede ser agradable a sus ojos." *OC, Castillo* I.2.1. "Before going on I want to say that you should consider what it would mean to this so brilliantly shining and beautiful castle, this pearl from the Orient, this tree of life planted in the very living waters of life -- that is, in God -- to fall into mortal sin; there's no darker darkness nor anything more obscure and black . . . Nothing helps such a soul; and as a result all the good works it might do while in mortal sin are fruitless for the attainment of glory. Since these works do not proceed from that principle, which is God, who is the cause of our virtue being really virtue, and are separated from Him, they cannot be pleasing in His sight." *CWST, IC* I.2.1.

⁴³ *CastilloTR*, II.1.11. "Pues si nunca le miramos ni consideramos lo que le debemos y la muerte que pasó por nosotros, no sé cómo le podemos conocer ni hacer obras en su servicio; porque la fe sin ellas y sin ir llegadas al valor de los merecimientos de Jesucristo, bien nuestro, ¿qué valor pueden tener?" *OC, Castillo* II.1.11. "Well, if we never look at Him or reflect on what we owe Him and the death He suffered for us, I don't know how we'll be able to know Him or do works in His service. And what value can faith have without works and without joining them to the merits of Jesus Christ, our Good?" *CWST, IC* II.1.11.

⁴⁴ *CastilloTR*, VII.4.6. "¡Oh hermanas mías, qué olvidado debe tener su descanso, y qué poco se le debe de dar de honra, y qué fuera debe estar de querer ser tenida en nada el alma adonde está el Señor

Constituciones and Modo de Visitar los Conventos

The *Constituciones* and *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* are documents which describe the ordering of life and work in the newly established discalced Carmelite monasteries, and they provide details on what work was done in them, and how the work was managed. The text of the *Constituciones* has a long and complex history. In 1562, Teresa received the authority from Rome not only to establish the new St. Joseph's monastery in Avila, but also to legislate suitable "statutes and ordinances in conformity with canon law."⁴⁵ At the time, there were no constitutions within the Carmelite Order that would have been suitable for nuns following a strict observance of the *Rule* of St. Albert. In her first draft of the *Camino* in 1566 Teresa refers to *Const* (in 4.1 and 4.4), and in 1567 she showed them to the prior general of the order, Rubeo, who approved them and granted Teresa permission to begin founding other monasteries.⁴⁶ The actual text shown to Rubeo has not been preserved, but the record of the approval comes from the records of the provincial of the Carmelites in Castile at that time, Angel de Salazar.

tan particularmente! Porque si ella está mucho con Él, como es razón, poco se debe de acordar de sí; toda la memoria se le va en cómo más contentarle, y en qué o por dónde mostrará el amor que le tiene. Para esto es la oración, hijas mías; de esto sirve este matrimonio espiritual: de que nazcan siempre obras, obras." *OC, Castillo* VII.4.6. "O my Sisters! How forgetful this soul, in which the Lord dwells in so particular a way, should be of its own rest, how little it should care for its honor, and how far it should be from wanting esteem in anything! For if it is with Him very much, as is right, it should think little about itself. All its concern is taken up with how to please Him more and how or where it will show Him the love it bears Him. This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works." *CWST, IC* VII.4.6.

⁴⁵ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Constitutions – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:311-18.

⁴⁶ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 87.

As new discalced Carmelite monasteries were established, additional copies of *Const* were made, and changes began to creep into the text. Also, beginning in 1569, apostolic visitators to the convents began to make additional regulations (*actas*). The Council of Trent required that monasteries enact certain rules to enforce the enclaustration of nuns. These new requirements and changes resulted in different versions of *Const* for different houses. The visitations also alerted Teresa to a need for separate guidelines for apostolic visitators, who, she complained in a letter to Jerónimo Gracián in 1576, “no piensan es visitar si no hacen actas.”⁴⁷ Teresa wrote *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* in 1576 to accommodate this need (discussed below).

In 1580 the discalced Carmelite nuns and friars received permission to form a separate order in the papal brief, *Pia consideratione*.⁴⁸ A chapter meeting was held in Alcalá in 1581, and Jerónimo Gracián was elected the first provincial of the discalced Carmelites. At the same chapter, new *Constituciones* were written that totaled about 49 pages, much longer than Teresa’s original 13-page document for St. Joseph’s. The additions, assembled from different sources, largely concerned the details of punishment for infractions of the rules. These 1581 Alcalá *Constituciones* remained in effect until 1592, when a revision was made by the new Spanish vicar general of the discalced Carmelites, Nicolás Doria, which was approved by Pope Gregory XIV.

⁴⁷ *Cartas* 150.1. “. . . think they haven’t made a visitation unless they have set down some decrees.” *Letters* 150.1.

⁴⁸ Kavanaugh, “A Teresian Chronology,” 90.

The text of the *Constituciones* used here is the earlier 1567 version originally chosen by Padre Silverio in his 1919 edition of Teresa's complete writings. It is based on an early copy made for the Portuguese congregation of a Madrid autograph which has since been lost (*Constitutions for the Sisters of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel of the First Rule Without Relaxation, Given by the Most Reverend General of the said Order Fray Juan Bautista Rubeo*). Tomás Álvarez used this version in his *Obras Completas*, and Kavanaugh and Rodriguez also used it as the basis for their English translation.⁴⁹

The guidelines in Teresa's *Constituciones* describe a life of balance, "an interweaving of eremitism and cenobitism, of work and contemplation, of liturgical and extra-liturgical prayer," of apostolic and contemplative dimensions, and "the practice of asceticism and enclosure . . . tempered by a family spirit and by gardens and pleasant views."⁵⁰ For the study of work, the *Constituciones* are a valuable resource, because they describe what work is expected of the nuns and explain Teresa's views on the type of work that is consistent with a life of contemplative prayer for enclosed nuns. Instructions regarding how nuns should handle payment for work, and how to structure the day around work, are also included.

Work was prescribed in the 13th-century Carmelite *Rule* of St. Albert (discussed in Chapter 2), and Teresa expands upon this in *Const*: "Todo el tiempo que no anduvieren con la comunidad o en oficios de ella, se esté cada una por sí, en las celdas o ermitas que la priora las

⁴⁹ Kavanaugh, "The Constitutions – Introduction," 3:318. The paragraph numbering in the Álvarez edition is different from the Kavanaugh-Rodriguez English edition; Álvarez re-starts the numbering with 1 for each new section, while the English edition does not.

⁵⁰ Kavanaugh, "The Constitutions – Introduction," 3:314.

señalare; en fin, en el lugar de su recogimiento, haciendo algo los días que no fueren de fiesta; llegándonos en este apartamiento a lo que manda la Regla, de que esté cada una por sí.”⁵¹

Teresa wanted her discalced monasteries to be supported by the work of their hands, without the income derived from the rental of endowed properties, or *rentas*, because the management of those properties took a great deal of time and led to nuns leaving the cloister. Also, benefactors often demanded prayers and other spiritual favors in return for their gifts.

Const describes what work the nuns should do and reminds them that God will take care of them:

Hase de vivir de limosna siempre, sin ninguna renta. Y mientras se pudiere sufrir, no haya demanda; mucha sea la necesidad que les haga traer demanda; sino ayúdense con la labor de sus manos, como hacía san Pablo, que el Señor las proveerá de lo necesario. Como no quieran más y se contenten sin regalo, no les faltará para poder sustentarla vida. Si con todas sus fuerzas procuraren contentar al Señor, Su Majestad tendrá cuidado que no les falte su ganancia.

No sea en labor curiosa, sino hilar o coser, o en cosas que no sean tan primas, que ocupen el pensamiento para no le tener en Nuestro Señor. No cosas de oro ni plata. Ni se porfíe en lo que han de dar por ello, sino que buenamente tomen lo que les dieren; y si ven que no les conviene, no hagan aquella labor.⁵²

⁵¹ *OC, Const* II.8. “All of that time not taken up with community life and duties should be spent by each Sister in the cell or hermitage designated by the prioress; in sum, in a place where she can be recollected and, on those days that are not feast days, occupied in doing some work. By withdrawing into solitude in this way, we fulfill what the rule commands: that each one should be alone.” *CWST, Const* 8.

⁵² *OC, Const* III.1-2. “Let them live always on alms and without any income, but insofar as possible let there be no begging. Great must be the need that makes them resort to begging. Rather, they should help themselves with the work of their hands, as St. Paul did; the Lord will provide what they need. Provided they want no more than this and are content to live simply, they will have what is necessary to sustain life. If they strive with all their might to please the Lord, His Majesty will keep them from want. Their earnings must not come from work requiring careful attention to fine details but from spinning and sewing or other unrefined labor that does not so occupy the mind as to keep it from the Lord. Nor should they do work with gold or silver. Neither should there be any haggling over what is offered for their work. They should graciously accept what is given. If they see that the amount offered is insufficient, they should not take on the work.” *CWST, Const* 9.

Although Teresa was a master at negotiation, having managed workmen in the many cities in which new houses were purchased and renovated for her foundations, she exhorts the sisters not to haggle over what is offered for their own work. This instruction, and others like it (i.e., the nuns were not to have a common workroom), describe those practices regarding work and income which Teresa felt were harmonious with a life of prayer and peace according to the *Rule* of St. Albert. *Const* is studied further in Chapter 5, in connection with Teresa's later years.

The *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* was written in the summer of 1576 in Toledo.⁵³ She wrote it to instruct apostolic visitators and to protect the new foundations from “lo que temo en mis monjas: que han de venir algunos prelados pesados que las abrumen, y cargar mucho es no hacer nada.”⁵⁴ *Modo* provides instructions for apostolic visitators as they make their rounds to the various discalced Carmelite houses. The original autograph was among those requested by Philip II to reside at the library in El Escorial, where it is conserved today.⁵⁵ The *Modo* is important for the study of work because it contains Teresa's principles for the management not only of nuns and their prioresses (*Modo* 19), but also of the visitators themselves (*Modo* 3), as well as chaplains and confessors (*Modo* 16). Teresa demonstrates in this document her command of administrative and managerial skills by advising leaders how to have the greatest beneficial

⁵³ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “On Making the Visitation – Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:335-36.

⁵⁴ *Cartas* 150.1. “. . . what my nuns fear, that some burdensome prelates will come along and crush them. Laying on heavy burdens accomplishes nothing.” *Letters* 150.1. According to Kavanaugh, these instructions probably refer to the foundations described in Chapters 20-27 of *Fund*.

⁵⁵ An electronic copy of the original autograph manuscript was obtained by the author during a visit there in December, 2012, through the kindness of the Dr. José Luis del Valle Merino, Director de la Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de El Escorial.

effect on the practical and spiritual lives of the nuns in her foundations. The nuns' work is directly discussed: the visitators should take note of the work the nuns are doing, and encourage and thank them for their work (*Modo* 12).

The *Modo* also demonstrates Teresa's profound understanding of human nature. It contains recommendations regarding the transfer of nuns (*Modo* 18), the acceptance of new nuns and lay sisters, and problematic friendships in the convents (*Modo* 25-27). This document contains a wealth of management and administration details which could benefit any leader of people who encounters similar issues, and it was written after Teresa had had about 15 years of experience managing new foundations. It will be covered in greater depth in Chapter 5.

*Conceptos del Amor de Dios (Meditation on the Song of Songs)
and Relaciones (Spiritual Testimonies)*

Conceptos, in its final form, was probably written between 1572 and 1575.⁵⁶ The autograph was destroyed by Teresa herself, in obedience to Dominican theologian Fr. Diego de Yanguas, who was Teresa's confessor at the time. The book had been written originally with the approval of a previous confessor, but Fr. de Yanguas felt it wasn't proper for women to teach on the *Song of Songs*, citing Paul's exhortation that women should be silent in the Church (1 Cor. 14:34). The discalced nuns at Alba de Tormes had made a copy of the writing, which was given to the Duchess of Alba for safekeeping when Fr. de Yanguas ordered all copies at the monastery

⁵⁶ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Meditations on the Song of Songs – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 2:207-14.

burned. Four copies of the manuscript are still extant; they currently reside in the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid.

In *Conceptos*, Teresa has a number of references to work. There are occasional references to the work of the soul, and how little work is necessary when God is present in prayer (*Conceptos* 5.4). In Chapter 1, Teresa discusses reading, the study of languages and the intellectual work of theologians. She makes a distinction between the hard work of those who explain the Scriptures and defend the truth through their learning, and the simple acceptance of whatever the Lord provides for meditation:

Cuando el Señor quiere darlo a entender, Su Majestad lo hace sin trabajo nuestro. A mujeres digo esto, y a los hombres que no han de sustentar con sus letras la verdad; que a los que el Señor tiene para declarárnoslas a nosotras, ya se entiende que lo han de trabajar y lo que en ello ganan. Mas nosotras con llaneza tomar lo que el Señor nos diere; y lo que no, no nos cansar, sino alegrarnos de considerar qué tan gran Dios y Señor tenemos que una palabra suya tendrá en sí mil misterios, y así su principio no entendemos nosotras . . . Así que siempre os guardad de gastar el pensamiento con estas cosas ni cansaros, que mujeres no han menester más que para su entendimiento bastare. Con esto las hará Dios merced. Cuando Su Majestad quisiere dárnoslo, sin cuidado ni trabajo nuestro lo hallaremos sabido.⁵⁷

In Chapter 7, Teresa gives us the key to her own way of working in the world, while absorbed in profound prayer and love of God:

⁵⁷ *OC, Conceptos* 1.2. “When the Lord desires to give understanding, His Majesty does so without our effort. I am saying this to women, and also to men who aren’t obliged to defend the truth through their learning. For those whom the Lord has called to explain the Scriptures to us must understandably work, and they will gain much from their work. But we should accept with simplicity whatever the Lord gives us; and what He doesn’t we shouldn’t tire ourselves over, but rejoice in considering what a great Lord and God we have. For one word of His will contain within itself a thousand mysteries, and thus our understanding is only very elementary . . . Thus always guard against wasting your thoughts on these things or tiring yourselves, for women have need of no more than what is sufficient for their meditations. With this, God will favor them. When His Majesty desires to give us understanding of the words, without worry or work on our part, we shall surely find it.” *CWST, Meditations* 1.2.

Aquí el alma no querría salir de allí, ni le sería penoso, sino grande contentamiento, que eso es lo que desea . . . ella ve no lo podrá su natural flaco sufrir si mucho dura aquel bien, y pídele otro bien para salir de aquel tan grandísimo, y así dice: *Sostenedme con flores* . . . Entiendo yo aquí que pide hacer grandes obras en servicio de nuestro Señor y del prójimo . . . aunque es vida más activa que contemplativa y parece perderá si le concede esta petición, cuando el alma está en este estado, nunca dejan de obrar casi juntas Marta y María; porque en lo activo y que parece exterior, obra lo interior, y cuando las obras activas salen de esta raíz, son admirables y olorosas flores; porque proceden de este árbol de amor de Dios y por sólo El, sin ningún interés propio, y extiéndese el olor de estas flores para aprovechar a muchos, y es olor que dura, no pasa presto, sino que hace gran operación.⁵⁸

The soul would love to remain enveloped in the delight of contemplative prayer, but its weakness prevents it from staying there long, because the Lord's light is too much for it. The soul requests something different, an active task for the Lord, and the smell of the heavenly flowers – the love of God – continues to permeate its active work undertaken for the Lord, while the soul remains rooted in prayer.

After this passage Teresa expands upon her thoughts about self-interest which she began in the previous passage, and she offers some examples of how the lack of detachment from personal benefit tarnishes one's work, even if the original intent was to benefit others (*Conceptos*, 7.4). She sketches a portrait of these servants, who "aprovechan mucho," but whose

⁵⁸ OC, *Conceptos* 7.3. "In this suspension the soul would not want to come out of this sleep, nor would death be painful to it but great happiness, for this is what it desires . . . However, the soul sees that its natural weakness will not be able to suffer that good for long if the delight lasts, and begs Him for another good so as to escape from that one that is so extraordinary, and thus it says: *sustain me with flowers* . . . I understand by these words that the soul is asking to perform great works in the service of our Lord and of its neighbor . . . Although a person's life will become more active than contemplative, and one will seemingly lose if the petition is granted, Martha and Mary never fail to work almost together when the soul is in this state. For in the active -- and seemingly exterior -- work the soul is working interiorly. And when the active works rise from this interior root, they become lovely and very fragrant flowers. For they proceed from this tree of God's love and are done for Him alone, without any self-interest. The fragrance from these flowers spreads to the benefit of many. It is a fragrance that lasts, not passing quickly, but having great effect." CWST, *Meditations* 7.3.

work lacks that special scent of heavenly flowers. She then follows this with a portrait of the selfless servant who works while thinking of God alone:

Estos servirán a Su Majestad y aprovechan mucho; mas no son así las obras que pide la Esposa, a mi parecer, y las flores, sino un mirar a sola honra y gloria de Dios en todo. Que verdaderamente a las almas que el Señor llega aquí, según he entendido de algunas, creo no se acuerdan más de sí que si no fuesen para ver si perderán o ganarán; sólo miran al servir y contentar al Señor. Y porque saben el amor que tiene a sus criados, gustan de dejar su sabor y bien, por contentarle en servirlos y decirlas las verdades, para que se aprovechen sus almas, por el mejor término que pueden; ni se acuerdan, como digo, si perderán ellos, la ganancia de sus prójimos tienen presente, no más. Por contentar más a Dios, se olvidan a sí por ellos, y pierden las idas en la demanda, como hicieron muchos mártires, y envueltas sus palabras en este tan subido amor de Dios, emborrachadas de aquel vino celestial, no se acuerdan; y si se acuerdan, no se les da nada descontentar a los hombres. Estos tales aprovechan mucho.⁵⁹

Teresa's *Relaciones* (*Spiritual Testimonies*) consists of six long accounts and many short accounts of her spiritual state at various moments in her life, from 1560 to 1581.⁶⁰ For our study of the theme of work, two testimonies are particularly interesting. The long account of her life written in Seville at the end of 1575 or early in 1576 (*OC, Relaciones* 4a-4b; *CWST, ST* 58) describes her education and development in the context of her advisors and the *letrados* or

⁵⁹ *OC, Conceptos* 7.5. "These persons will serve His Majesty, and they profit much. But, in my opinion, such are not the works and flowers asked for by the bride; she looks only for the honor and glory of God in everything. Truly, I don't believe that souls brought to this state by the Lord, from what I have understood of some, think of themselves, and of whether they will lose or gain, any more than if they did not exist. They look only at serving and pleasing the Lord. And because they know the love He has for His servants, they like to leave aside their own satisfaction and good so as to please Him and serve and tell souls beneficial truths by the best means they can. Nor do they, as I say, think about whether or not they will themselves lose. They keep before their minds the benefit of their neighbor, nothing else. So as to please God more, they forget themselves for their neighbor's sake, and they lose their lives in the challenge, as did many martyrs. They are not aware of the words they say while enveloped in so sublime a love of God, in their inebriation from that heavenly wine. And if they are aware, they don't care if they displease men. These souls do much good." *CWST, Meditations* 7.5.

⁶⁰ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Spiritual Testimonies – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 1:369-71.

learned men she consulted, and it shows how brilliantly she expressed herself toward her superiors in the context of her time.

Another account (*OC, Relaciones* 5; *CWST, ST* 59) applies to the relationship between contemplation and activity: sometimes during prayer, when the will is fully occupied in God, it cannot do any other work, even though the other faculties can serve God by doing exterior works. In this account, Teresa first discusses a type of recollection from which interior peace flows: “De este recogimiento viene algunas veces una *quietud y paz interior* muy regalada, que está el alma que no le parece le falta nada.”⁶¹ Then she describes how activity emerges from this prayer, and “*andan juntas Marta y María*”:

De esta oración suele proceder un *sueño* que llaman *de las potencias*, que ni están absortas ni tan suspensas, que se pueda llamar arrobamiento. Aunque no es del todo unión, alguna vez y aun muchas, entiende el alma que está unida sola la voluntad, y se entiende muy claro; digo claro, a lo que parece. Está empleada toda en Dios, y que ve el alma la falta de poder estar ni obrar en otra cosa; y las otras dos potencias están libres para negocios y obras del servicio de Dios. En fin, andan juntas Marta y María. Yo pregunté al Padre Francisco si sería engaño esto, porque me traía boba, y me dijo que muchas veces acaecía.⁶²

The *Relaciones* will be brought into the discussion of Teresa’s later years in Chapter 5.

⁶¹ *OC, Relaciones* 5.4. “A very pleasing *interior quiet and peace* sometimes flow from this recollection, so that it doesn’t seem to the soul it is lacking anything.” *CWST, ST*, 59.4.

⁶² *OC, Relaciones* 5.5. “From this prayer there usually proceeds what is called a *sleep of the faculties*, for they are neither absorbed nor so suspended that the prayer can be called a rapture. Although this prayer is not complete union, the soul sometimes, and even often, understands that the will alone is united, and this is known very clearly; I mean it is clear in the soul’s opinion. The will is completely occupied in God, and it sees it lacks the power to be engaged in any other work. The other two faculties are free for business and works of service of God. In sum, Martha and Mary walk together. I asked Father Francis if this experience could be deceiving because it puzzled me, and he told me that the experience is a frequent one.” *CWST, ST* 59.5.

Cartas (Letters)

Various scholars and editors have estimated the total number of letters Teresa was likely to have written as 1,200 (Vicente de la Fuente), 5,000 (Silverio), 15,000 (Efrén and Steggink) and 25,000 (Rodríguez and Egido).⁶³ Tomás Álvarez, whose collection is used here, has located and published 468 letters. The extant letters are primarily from the last twenty years of Teresa's life. They deal with buying and selling, civil and ecclesial jurisdiction, family concerns, legal issues and income for the foundations. She wrote to her advisors (sometimes in code to escape the prying eyes of religious adversaries), to her family members, to her religious sisters and brothers and even to King Philip II. The letters provide a rich set of material from which to discern the role of work in Teresa's later years.

One area of interest with regard to work is the management of workers who built or renovated houses for the new foundations. In a letter from Salamanca in 1573, Teresa tells her sister, Juana, that she would attend to the construction at a new foundation there once the authorization arrived from Madrid (it never did), and she laments that God must want her to remain in Salamanca "porque no queda en casa quien entienda de obras ni de negocios."⁶⁴ Teresa was the primary authority on matters of business and management in the monastery. In a letter from Toledo written in 1577, Teresa writes to María de San Jose, Prioress in Seville, "No piense

⁶³ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Introduction," in *The Collected Letters of St. Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2001) 1:15.

⁶⁴ *Cartas* 57.2. "There is no one in the house who understands construction or business matters." *Letters* 57.2.

que es menester poco para la buena de la obra, que se ofrecen mil cosas con los oficiales.”⁶⁵ And in a letter to Gracián from Avila in 1578, she addresses the complication that workmen need permission to enter the nuns’ private cloister (*Cartas* 254.11).

Bárbara Mujica has pointed out that as a young girl, Teresa’s world was “filled with legal and business communications. Simply by watching her father, she would have learned the importance of letter-writing.”⁶⁶ In her family’s history of persecution as Jewish *converso* merchants, her father and brothers defended themselves “with the pen” by means of lawsuits and business dealings, in order to secure their family a place in the intolerant Catholic society of 16th century Spain.

Teresa’s letters provide a fascinating glimpse into her day-to-day world during a particularly active period of her life of work. She writes about her own writing, her management style and the area of administration we would today call human resources. As in *Modo*, we find in Teresa’s letters instructions for handling nuns, prioresses and others, but in the letters there is a greater spontaneity and directness in Teresa’s language. Since most of these letters were written in her later years and were about the affairs of that period of her life, they will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

⁶⁵ *Cartas* 188.2. “Don’t think it takes little effort to keep the construction work going well, for there are a thousand things that have to be attended to with the workmen.” *Letters* 188.2.

⁶⁶ Bárbara Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009), 25.

Poesías and Other Writings

The total number of poems Teresa wrote is not known, because many of them have been lost.⁶⁷ Álvarez published 31 of Teresa's poems in *OC*, all of which have been translated in *CWST*. She wrote lyrical-mystical, didactic and devotional poetry, and she used her own poetry in the spiritual formation of her nuns. One poem particularly interests us here, *Vuestra soy, para Vos nací*, which ends with a surrender to the Lord in whatever work or rest He would have her do:

¿Qué mandáis, pues, buen Señor, que haga tan vil criado?
 ¿Cuál oficio le habéis dado
 a este esclavo pecador?
 Veisme aquí, mi dulce Amor,
 amor dulce, veisme aquí:
 ¿qué mandáis hacer de mí?

. . .

Si queréis que esté holgando,
 quiero por amor holgar
 Si me mandáis trabajar,
 morir quiero trabajando.
 Decid, ¿dónde, cómo y cuándo?
 Decid, dulce Amor, decid:
 ¿qué mandáis hacer de mí?⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Poetry – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:371-73.

⁶⁸ *OC*, *Poesías* 2.4, 2.10. "Good Lord, what do you want of me, / What is this wretch to do? / What work is this, / This sinful slave, to do? / Look at me, Sweet Love, / Sweet Love, look at me, / *What do You want of me?* . . . If You want me to rest, / I desire it for love; / If to labor, / I will die working: / Sweet Love say / Where, how and when. / *What do You want of me?*" *CWST*, *Poetry*, 2.4, 2.10.

Throughout this 14-stanza poem, Teresa contrasts different experiences, such as the suffering of Mt. Calvary against the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor, being silent or speaking, and being sorrowful or exulting. The soul should serve God in whatever circumstances, in whatever state, and doing whatever the Lord wishes of her. Teresa could work (*trabajar*) or rest (*holgar*) for the Lord, according to His will for her. The act of working was for Teresa an expression of her love for God and her desire to do His will.

Álvarez includes two other minor writings by Teresa in *OC, Vejamen* (CWST, *A Satirical Critique*) and *Respuesta a un Desafío* (CWST, *Response to a Spiritual Challenge*), as well as *Pensamientos, Apuntes, Memoriales* (short sayings, payments of bills, and other miscellaneous documents which are not included in CWST). These writings are not covered in this dissertation because they are relatively minor and they do not represent a significant contribution to her view of work beyond what we find in her other writings.

Teresa's Writings on the Theme of Rest

In addition to the theme of work, Teresa discusses the theme of rest in a number of her writings. The discussion below is not an exhaustive study of her comments on rest, but it is included here as a counterpoint to work, in order to provide contrast and perspective.

Teresa uses different words to describe rest, including *descansar* (to rest or to relax), *reposar* (to repose), *holgar* (to rest, or to be idle or free from business) and *sosegar* (to rest or to be calm). In the following excerpt, Teresa uses *sosegar* to refer to the rest one has in prayer when

the intellect is less active and the soul is alone with God in silence: “ē este templo de dios ē esta morada suya solo el y el alma se goçan con grandi/simo [sic] silençio no ay pa q bullir ni buscar nada el etendimiēto q el señor q le crio le quiere sosegar aqui.”⁶⁹ In prayer, the soul may rest in the shadow of the beloved, as described in the Song of Songs: “Pues estando ya la Esposa descansada debajo de sombra tan deseada.”⁷⁰ Mystical states such as raptures may cease in advanced prayer, perhaps because the soul has finally found its repose: “yo lo estoy de ver q ē llegando aqui el alma todos los arrobamiētos se le quitan . . . /aora /v /es q allo su rreposito . . .”⁷¹

However, a soul may make greater spiritual progress through suffering and trials than through a life of ease and rest: “q a el alma q dios llega a si en oraçion tā subida . . . mucha mas pena le da la onrra q la desonrra y el mucho olgar con descanso q los trabajos porq . . . a ya visto por espiriençia la gran ganança q le viene y lo q se adelanta vn alma en padeçer por dios.”⁷²

⁶⁹ *CastilloTR*, VII.3.11. “En este templo de Dios, en esta morada suya, sólo El y el alma se gozan con grandísimo silencio. No hay para qué bullir ni buscar nada el entendimiento, que el Señor que le crió le quiere sosegar aquí.” *OC*, *Castillo* VII.3.11. “In this temple of God, in this His dwelling place, He alone and the soul rejoice together in the deepest silence. There is no reason for the intellect to stir or seek anything, for the Lord who created it wishes to give it repose here.” *CWST*, *IC* VII.3.11.

⁷⁰ *OC*, *Conceptos* 6.1. “Well, now that the soul is resting under the longed-for shadow.” Kavanaugh’s note on this passage points out that this refers to Song 2:3: “Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my lover among men. In his shadow I delight to sit, and his fruit is sweet to my taste.” *CWST*, *Meditations* 6.1.

⁷¹ *CastilloTR*, VII.3.12. “Yo lo estoy de ver que en llegando aquí el alma todos los arrobamientos se le quitan, . . . Ahora, o es que halló su reposo . . .” *OC*, *Castillo* VII.3.12. “I am amazed as well to see that when the soul arrives here all raptures are taken away. . . . Now the reason could be that in this dwelling place either the soul has found its repose . . .” *CWST*, *IC* VII.3.12.

⁷² *CaminoTR-V*, 36.8. “Que al alma que Dios llega a Sí en oración tan subida . . . mucha más pena le da la honra que la deshonra, y el mucho holgar con descanso que los trabajos. Porque . . . ha ya visto por experiencia la gran ganancia que le viene y lo que se adelanta un alma en padecer por Dios.” *OC*, *Camino* 36.8. “For the soul God brings to Himself in so sublime a contemplation . . . is much more

Teresa highlights the life of St. Paul as an example. She observes that he could have hidden (*ascondiose*) in the delights of contemplation and in his visions from Christ, but he suffered many trials and had no rest even at night, because that was when he earned his living. She implies that it was due to his closeness to Christ that he was able to endure such great trials. This seems like it could be a model for Teresa's life in her later years, when she found great repose in prayer, but not much rest in her external activities, including travel, illness and the many challenges of establishing new foundations:

siēpre emos visto q̄ los q̄ mas çercanos āduvieron a cristo nuestro señor fuerō los de mayores trabajos miremos los q̄ paso su gloriosa madre y los gloriosos apostoles como pēsays q̄ pudiera sufrir san pablo tā grandisimos trabajos por el podemos ver q̄ efetos açen las verdaderas visiones y contenplaçiō quando es de nuestro señor y no ymajinaçiō v ēgaño del demonio por ventura ascondiose con ellas pa goçar de aq̄llos rregalos y no ētender ē otra cosa ya lo veys q̄ no tuvo dia de descāso a lo q̄ podemos ētēder y tanpoco le devia tener de noche pues ē ella ganava lo q̄ avia de comer⁷³

The calm that spiritually advanced souls experience is interior, and this gives them a certain freedom from exterior concerns: “pareçeros a q̄ ablo con los q̄ comiēçan y q̄ despues pueden ya

afflicted by honor than by dishonor and by a lot of ease and rest than by trials. For . . . it has already seen through experience the great gain and progress that comes to it by suffering for God.” *CWST, Way* 36.8.

⁷³ *CastilloTR*, VII.4.5. “Siempre hemos visto que los que más cercanos anduvieron a Cristo nuestro Señor fueron los de mayores trabajos: miremos los que pasó su gloriosa Madre y los gloriosos apóstoles. ¿Cómo pensáis que pudiera sufrir San Pablo tan grandísimos trabajos? Por él podemos ver qué efectos hacen las verdaderas visiones y contemplación, cuando es de nuestro Señor y no imaginación o engaño del demonio. ¿Por ventura escondióse con ellas para gozar de aquellos regalos y no entender en otra cosa? Ya lo veis, que no tuvo día de descanso, a lo que podemos entender, y tampoco le debía tener de noche, pues en ella ganaba lo que había de comer.” *OC, Castillo* VII.4.5. “We have always seen that these who were closer to Christ our Lord were those with the greatest trials. Let us look at what His glorious Mother suffered and the glorious apostles. How do you think St. Paul could have suffered such very great trials? Through him we can see the effects visions and contemplation produce when from our Lord, and not from the imagination or the devil's deceit. Did St. Paul by chance hide himself in the enjoyment of these delights and not engage in anything else? You already see that he didn't have a day of rest, from what we can understand, and neither did he have any rest at night since it was then that he earned his livelihood.” *CWST, IC* VII.4.5.

descansar ya os e dicho q̄ el sosiego q̄ tienen estas almas ē lo ȳterior es pa tenerle muy menos ni q̄rer tenerle ē lo exterior.”⁷⁴

Ultimately we may find rest in all things, Teresa says, even those that require a great deal of work, because we have experienced the joy found in the interior castle, and we can return to it whenever we wish. Teresa calls attention to this relationship between work and rest in the closing paragraphs of *Castillo*: “vna vez mostradas a goçar de este castillo ē todas las cosas allareys descanso aq̄ seā de mucho trabajo con esperança de tornar a el y q̄ no os lo puede quitar nayde.”⁷⁵

Nada te turbe, perhaps Teresa’s most famous poem, brings the reader a sense of peace and calm, resting in God:

Nada te turbe,
nada te espante,
todo se pasa,
Dios no se muda,
la paciencia
todo lo alcanza.
Quien a Dios tiene
nada le falta.

⁷⁴ *CastilloTR*, VII.4.10. “Pareceros ha que hablo con los que comienzan, y que después pueden ya descansar. Ya os he dicho que el sosiego que tienen estas almas en lo interior, es para tenerle muy menos, ni querer tenerle, en lo exterior.” *OC, Castillo* VII.4.10. “It will seem to you that I am speaking with those who are beginning and that after this beginner’s stage souls can rest. I have already told you that the calm these souls have interiorly is for the sake of their having much less calm exteriorly and much less desire to have exterior calm.” *CWST, IC* VII.4.10.

⁷⁵ *CastilloTR*, Epílogo.2. “Una vez mostradas a gozar de este castillo, en todas las cosas hallaréis descanso, aunque sean de mucho trabajo, con esperanza de tornar a él, y que no os lo puede quitar nadie.” *OC, Castillo* Epílogo.2. “Once you get used to enjoying this castle, you will find rest in all things, even those involving much labor, for you will have the hope of returning to the castle which no one can take from you.” *CWST, IC* Epilog.2.

Sólo Dios basta.⁷⁶

Chapter Summary

In this chapter we have presented an overview of Teresa's life with a special focus on the theme of work. Teresa's writings were introduced in order to shed light on her views of work in the spiritual life, and to begin to see the outline of her own work-related development as she assumed roles of greater leadership in the Carmelite Order. Some of the themes in her writings included the active/contemplative balance in religious life, work as inspiration for prayer and the work of administration in leading communities of nuns and friars.

In the next chapter we will continue to examine Teresa's approach to work in the context of 16th-century Spain, in light of the socio-economic culture, global expansion, and the Council of Trent. Also, monastic influences on Teresa's thought regarding work will be examined, especially through various religious authors whose writings she read and recommended for her monasteries. This will help us to situate her approach to work within monastic history and establish her unique contributions to the practice of work in religious life.

⁷⁶ *OC, Poesías* 9. "Let nothing trouble you, / Let nothing scare you, / All is fleeting, / God alone is unchanging. / Patience / Everything obtains. / Who possesses God / Nothing wants. / God alone suffices." *CWST, Poetry* 9.

CHAPTER 2

TERESA'S BIOGRAPHY AND WRITINGS

Chapter Introduction

In this chapter we outline the socio-economic conditions of 16th-century Spain in order to establish the context in which Teresa developed her approach to work. Work in both secular and religious life is discussed, amid the rapidly changing political, social, economic and religious climate of Spain's Golden Age. Finally, the advisors who most strongly influenced Teresa with respect to work are presented, along with the writings she read and recommended to her nuns, in order to situate Teresa's approach to work within the historical monastic tradition of work in religious life.

The Socio-economic and Political Context of 16th-Century Spain

To study work in 16th-century Spain, we need to know something about the economy at that time and population movements, the way labor was viewed and practiced, and the way one's living was earned or otherwise secured. We also need to be aware of the role of the aristocracy in government and the economy, and the influence of humanism, especially with regard to labor and human rights. Finally, the importance of the Spanish involvement in war, and the need to

fund this effort, was extremely important for the economy, and it led to various financial outcomes which influenced changes in both wealth and work in early modern Spanish society.

In 16th-century Europe, the trend was toward urbanization. The former feudal system was fading away and people were moving to cities and learning trades. The importance of money as a means of exchange increased. Craft guilds were formed to regulate and establish standards among workers and craftspeople.

Despite the increasing emphasis on working and trading wares in an urban marketplace, in the aristocratic culture of 16th-century Spain earning money through work was considered less honorable than trade, and both work and trade were less noble than inheriting wealth: “The Ferrarese noble Sardo observed that ‘inherited wealth is more honest than earned wealth, in view of the vile gain needed to obtain the latter’. This was part of the sixteenth-century reaction in favour of principles of heredity and lineage and against the ascent of rich self-made men into the nobility.”⁷⁷

The aristocracy primarily maintained its wealth through inheritance and ownership of land. “They owned estates, forests, coastlines and sections of rivers. Their economic power was very great, but at the same time they tended to look down on those who were earning new wealth and rising up the social ladder.”⁷⁸ The Crown contributed to the preservation of land within noble families by legislation, such as that passed at the Cortes of Toro in 1505, to provide for “*mayorazgos* or entails, by which a great house could ensure that its possessions remained vested

⁷⁷ Henry Kamen, *Early Modern European Society* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 77.

⁷⁸ Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 77.

in it in perpetuity, passing undivided and intact from one heir to the next.” The Crown also did not prevent “matrimonial alliances” between great families in Castile, which “further helped to consolidate great blocs of land into the hands of a powerful few.”⁷⁹

At the same time, the Spanish Crown needed to procure ever-increasing resources, including cash, in order to fund its numerous wars:

The reign of Philip II (1556-98) was the high-water mark of Spanish fortunes, but the problems of empire were also menacing. From his father Philip inherited rivalry with France, distrust of the Papacy, and hostility to Islam and Protestantism; in the course of his reign he also had to deal with a revolt in the Netherlands. These commitments meant that he was obliged to wage war against most other powers at some time during his reign . . . Spain was accordingly obliged to utilize all the resources of the peninsula and the overseas empire in an unflagging struggle to maintain its place in Europe.⁸⁰

The aversion to work and an emphasis on procuring wealth through inheritance led to problems when the economy began to fail due to the overextension of resources by the Spanish monarchy in order to finance its many wars. “It proved from the first quite impossible to meet the Government’s rapidly increasing expenses out of the ordinary sources of revenue. The Crown’s net income for 1534, for example, was estimated at some 420,000 ducats, whereas its anticipated expenditure was 1,000,000.”⁸¹

The Spanish Crown borrowed from its citizens in order to fund its wars – a practice begun in Italy in during the rivalry between city-states in the 14th century. As in Italy, “there was

⁷⁹ J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1963), 102.

⁸⁰ Henry Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain* (New York: Scribner, 1973), 83-84.

⁸¹ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 197.

a limit to how many more or less unproductive wars could be waged in this way.”⁸² As the number and expenses of wars increased, more bonds were issued, which increased the debt of the city or state and raised the likelihood that the government might default on its obligations.

Until the middle of the 16th century, Spain was expanding in power and trade, but from then on the economic situation became increasingly dire:

After these years the descent from greatness was so inexorable that historians have become fascinated with it. Imperial difficulties were only one, but certainly the major, cause of the crisis. By committing itself too extensively, the Spanish war machine was doomed to repeated bankruptcies. First in 1557, and thereafter roughly every twenty years, the state repudiated its debts.⁸³

In addition to selling bonds, the Spanish Crown also imposed taxes on the people to try to bolster its flagging economy. The defeat of the Spanish Armada by England occurred in 1588, and “to defray the expenses of this disaster a new tax was imposed on Castile: this, the *millones*, was to become the most hated of all the taxes levied on an already heavily burdened population.”⁸⁴

Spain was rapidly becoming poorer, and Kamen likens its economy to that of a colony, dependent on and supported by foreign interests. The key attribute of a colony is its dependence on others, and the expansion of the wool trade in the 16th century led to increasing dependence on foreign markets and financiers:

⁸² Niall Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money: A Financial History of the World* (New York, Penguin Press, 2008), 70-2.

⁸³ Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 83-84. “The Spanish crown became a serial defaulter in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, wholly or partially suspending payments to creditors in 1557, 1560, 1575, 1596, 1607, 1627, 1647, 1652 and 1662.” Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, 74.

⁸⁴ Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 85.

Spain passed through various systems of dependence between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries . . . The first major cycle was that of the wool trade, which Ferdinand and Isabella attempted to organize on a national basis and which reached its height in the early sixteenth century, stimulating financial activity in northern Castile and its commercial capital Burgos.⁸⁵

The wool trade in Spain came to be dominated by foreign markets, especially Flanders, Italy, France and the Netherlands. “The development of the Castilian wool trade had made the economies of Castile and the Low Countries mutually interdependent: indeed, by the middle of the sixteenth century nearly half of Spain’s export trade was with the Netherlands.”⁸⁶ The foreign capital led to problems which Castilian wool producers could not control. Italian financiers manipulated the terms of trade in southern Spain, and in Castile terms were dictated by northern markets. “Thus the epoch of the Catholic Monarchs and Charles V, which seemed to exhibit most of the signs of a developing economy, was in fact the era when Spain began to adopt the classical aspects of a colonial market.”⁸⁷ The country began falling into decline as it became ever more dependent on foreign trade. “As the foreign obligations multiplied, the internal deficit grew: such was the unhappy logic of imperialism when operated by an essentially poor country.”⁸⁸

The discovery of the New World with all of its silver and gold didn’t help matters for the Spanish economy, because foreign markets laid claim to the American goods. Spain ended up

⁸⁵ Henry Kamen, *Crisis and Change in Early Modern Spain* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 1993), III.41.

⁸⁶ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 127-8.

⁸⁷ Kamen, *Crisis and Change in Early Modern Spain*, III.41-2.

⁸⁸ Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 85.

acting only as a warehouse or trading station for foreign powers which wanted goods from America but which exerted control over Spanish markets in order to minimize Spanish profits:

The foreign markets and their agents now extended their operations to America, so that Spain in its relations with the New World found itself acting largely as an entrepôt for foreign goods. Seville rose to become the wonder of the world, but its rise was a function of dependence. The early years of boom gave way to disillusion . . . The fact is that where discovery should have led to America becoming dependent on Spain, it led to the latter becoming dependent on foreign countries with a trading interest in America. The peninsula became colonized through its Indies. ‘Spain has become an Indies for the foreigner,’ to cite a phrase that originated in the Cortes of Valladolid in 1548 but was echoed by many others.⁸⁹

The Spanish conquistadors brought in convoys of ships to Seville – “up to a hundred at a time – which transported 170 tons of silver a year across the Atlantic.”⁹⁰ This replenished the wealth of the Castilian monarchy and provided economic stimulus to Spain and Europe.

However, “All the silver of the New World,” according to Niall Ferguson, financial historian, “could not bring the rebellious Dutch Republic to heel; could not secure England for the Spanish crown; could not save Spain from an inexorable economic and imperial decline.”⁹¹ Ferguson blames the value of the silver itself for this decline, due to its having been imported in such large quantities for use as currency. “They dug up so much silver to pay for their wars of conquest that the metal itself dramatically declined in value – that is to say, in its purchasing power with respect to other goods.”⁹²

⁸⁹ Kamen, *Crisis and Change in Early Modern Spain*, III.42-3.

⁹⁰ Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, 25.

⁹¹ Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, 26.

⁹² Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, 26.

So much precious metal was imported from the New World that its relative value declined, and Spain was no better off than before! In addition, along with the practice of living off the state by investing in *juros* and *censos*, Spanish citizens were discouraged from working because “the abundance of silver also acted as a ‘resource curse’ . . . removing the incentives for more productive economic activity, while at the same time strengthening rent-seeking autocrats.”⁹³

This economic situation is important for our understanding of the decrease in emphasis on work in trades in 16th-century Spain, and the increase in emphasis on obtaining one’s living by means of various financial investments, especially for the noble classes. It’s also important for our understanding of Teresa’s family and its influence on her approach to work, because her ancestors were involved in the wool industry and became members of the nobility at the beginning of the 16th century.

To offset the national debt, the Spanish government sold various types of financial instruments as bonds. The interest from bonds could be used as a pension, providing an annual income to the bond holder. These instruments had different names depending on the country and the type of bond: “*Rentes* were loans made by the public to the state, in return for annual payment of interest. They existed in Italy in the Middle Ages, and most other states began to issue them in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries . . . In Spain state loans were called *juros*, private and municipal loans *censos*.”⁹⁴ In effect, the government became the bank, and it used the

⁹³ Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, 26.

⁹⁴ Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 101.

taxes it collected to pay interest to bond investors in the form of annuities. This practice led to less productive work among investors, because their annual income was provided by the state. The state would collect taxes from its citizens and use that revenue to pay interest on loans made to the state by other citizens through bonds. This system was viewed as an annual income by bond holders, who were, in essence, living directly off the state and indirectly off of taxes paid to the state by their neighbors:

These annuities were a tempting form of investment, particularly where the state offered both security and a high rate of interest . . . In an age when banking was relatively unknown, the authorities became bankers, borrowing from citizens and paying them their interest out of taxation. In late fifteenth-century Florence it led to the emergence of a *rentier* mentality among the wealthier bourgeoisie, and to the concentration of financial wealth in the hands of the upper rank of citizens, since it was these who controlled the machinery of state.⁹⁵

Nobles in Spain who invested in bonds didn't have to engage in work, which was viewed as beneath their status, in order to obtain an income. However, the activities of trade were socially acceptable for the aristocracy as well as for commoners, and "for many investors in Spain, the *juros* represented quite simply their principal source of income. The nobles invested no less than the bourgeois . . . Innumerable families, particularly widows, drew on *juros* as though they were a pension scheme."⁹⁶ From the point of view of the Crown, there was a great benefit in this method of finance, because it could borrow against receivables expected from Castilian investors. "Over a period of thirty-seven years, Charles V, whose normal annual revenue as King

⁹⁵ Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 101.

⁹⁶ "There was not a noble in Seville, observed the writer Ruiz de Alarcón, who did not trade." Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 77. Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 102.

of Spain was about 1,000,000 ducats a year, rising to 1,500,000 after 1542, was able to borrow 39,000,000 ducats on the strength of the credit of Castile.”⁹⁷

For the Spanish economy overall, one problem with investing in government bonds as a primary source of income was that investors tended not to provide significant contributions to the economy or to society through work, because their incomes were assured through the state. For example, in Valladolid, “232 citizens in 1597 drew more money from the government by way of *juros* than was paid by the whole city in taxes.”⁹⁸

The combination of the aristocracy’s reliance on inheritance for wealth, the negative view of earning one’s living through work, and the de-incentivization of Spanish citizens caused by the increase in the reliance on *juros* and *censos* for income, all led to a tendency for Spanish citizens not to work. For the ever-poorer aristocracy, cash could be obtained without working by means of bond investments or by renting out land or houses. Also, moneylenders became more prevalent among the increasing urban population.

Looking back on the decline of the Spanish economy, Kamen notes that “the clergy and the privileged classes were partly responsible for the failure. They formed an immense non-productive sector of the population; not only because they did not work, but, more important, because they claimed exemption from most direct and much indirect taxation.” In fact, “judging

⁹⁷ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 198.

⁹⁸ Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 102.

by the complaints of the towns to the Crown, the sector was considered a blight on wealth and population.”⁹⁹

Members of the upper middle class and the aristocracy increasingly rented out their property or sold off land holdings to obtain cash. They became absentee landlords, abandoned their agricultural production businesses and became adept at financial investment and trade.¹⁰⁰ A new class of moneylenders grew up in the cities which both owned and managed land. When peasants could raise enough money to buy land, they borrowed cash from the new class of urban moneylenders to improve their holdings.¹⁰¹ However, poor crop years or other problems often led to default on the loans and foreclosure by the lenders. In early modern Europe during long periods of agrarian problems, “thousands of peasant holdings passed out of the hands of their owners into those of the urban bourgeoisie.”¹⁰²

Nobles, too, sold their land to the urban class. “Thanks to the debts contracted by the nobility, the urban class proceeded to take over the ownership of the soil from the nobles no less than from peasants.”¹⁰³ In Castile, the nobility was losing its wealth, but its members did not want to lose their status. The Crown sympathized with the nobles and issued royal decrees to

⁹⁹ Kamen, *Crisis and Change in Early Modern Spain*, VIII.69.

¹⁰⁰ Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 82.

¹⁰¹ “The peasantry inevitably became the largest class of borrowers. The accounts of the Valladolid notary Antonio de Cigales show, for example, that in the years 1576-7 over 51 per cent of his debtors were peasants. The sums were invariably small, but certainly helped the peasant to make ends meet and to develop his holdings when necessary.” Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 102.

¹⁰² Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 102.

¹⁰³ Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 103.

help them by reducing the interest on their loans.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the rental of land and houses, the nobility could obtain cash through court appointments.¹⁰⁵ However, the process of seeking such appointments often led to corruption due to competition among nobles and lobbying the king's councils responsible for processing the applications.¹⁰⁶

Throughout Spain there were communities of artisans who produced various articles for both foreign and domestic use. In Avila there were many wool workers – “weavers, dyers, carders, combers, spinners, fullers – as well as artisans involved in leathermaking, metalworking, construction, and other trades.”¹⁰⁷ Teresa's family had been in the textile business for at least two generations prior to her birth in 1515. Wool was particularly important to the early modern Spanish economy, especially in Avila:

Wool production was the backbone of Avila's, and of Castile's, economy. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, had taken measures to encourage sheepraising in Castile, giving nearly free rein to the *mesta*, the powerful herders' guild. Most of the highly prized Spanish merino wool was exported to foreign manufacturing centers, particularly those in Flanders. Some, however, was kept within Castile, providing the raw material for a native cloth industry . . . Dozens of men and women in Avila . . . found employment in the production of the cheap, coarse woolens made mainly for local consumption. About 20 percent of Avila's active population was

¹⁰⁴ “The scale of indebtedness of the Castilian nobility was so alarming . . . that the crown stepped in to save its ruling class. By royal decrees, individual noble debtors were allowed to seek reductions in the rate of interest they paid; if this was refused by creditors, the nobles were allowed to redeem their *censos* by creating new debts elsewhere in order to repay the old debts. So great was the demand for income from *censos* that reductions were readily conceded by the creditors.” Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 103.

¹⁰⁵ “In Madrid the nobles were given *mercedes* (favours), lucrative offices in Spain and the Indies, annuities and land.” Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 82-3.

¹⁰⁶ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 171-2.

¹⁰⁷ Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 5-6.

involved in the production of textiles in the early part of the sixteenth century. By the 1560s and 1570s this figure rose to over 30 percent.¹⁰⁸

Avila's location was excellent for the wool trade, because it was on a major "sheepwalk," a royally protected set of trade routes throughout Spain.¹⁰⁹

Although craft guilds were formed to establish trade practices and organize markets, they didn't have a large role in determining early modern European work practices for their members. Labor practices among artisans and tradespeople were shifting from a system based on seasonal and liturgical time to one which used clocks. Up until the 16th century, Spanish workers based their schedules on the seasons, the sunrise and the liturgical hours.¹¹⁰ The daily work period was described as extending from sunrise to sunset. Work and rest were practiced together, and rest was encouraged.¹¹¹ The practices associated with rest from doing labor were difficult to legislate and enforce, although liturgical schedules required rest on Christian feast days:

¹⁰⁸ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*, 4-6.

¹⁰⁹ "Avila's location virtually ensured its participation in this vital and lucrative wool trade. One of the three major royally protected systems of sheepwalks, the Segovian, passed through the province. This route of transhumance originated in the northeast corner of Castile, in La Rioja, and linked the cities of Burgos and Segovia, the financial and industrial centers of the wool trade. The massive herds of sheep were pastured in the mountains in the summer, and in winter they migrated west and south through the province of Avila, entering the warm plains of Extremadura through passes in the Val de Corneja. For this reason, many placenames in Avila contain the word *cañada* [sheepwalk]." Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa*, 5.

¹¹⁰ "Clocks were a relative novelty in the early sixteenth century. The population still took its division of the hours and minutes from the Church; the day was measured by liturgical hours; church bells tolled their passing and called the faithful to prayer. Protestantism helped to liberate time from its clerical dress, and clocks completed the process of secularisation. By the end of the sixteenth century the clock industry was booming, particularly when the clockmakers from Catholic counties fled as refugees to Protestant states." Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 36.

¹¹¹ "Industrial time was measured by daylight hours, a winter working day being shorter than a summer one by about two hours, with wages consequently lower . . . Concepts like 'from sunrise to

Considerable difficulty was experienced, in a pre-industrial Spain which had no strict division between labour and leisure, in enforcing holy days of obligation as days of rest . . . from one-third to one-half of the days in the year were holidays, and once the duty of attending mass had been fulfilled many saw no harm in continuing secular duties, even on holidays. This indeed had been the normal practice, the provincial council of Seville in 1512 specifying for instance that the ban on work applied to the period of mass alone.¹¹²

One of the most important aspects of 16th-century Spanish culture with regard to work was the connection between Spain as a center of learning and humanism, exploration and work practices in the New World, and the establishment of early concepts of international law. The work practices in Europe, where work and rest were integrated, and the day's work was not bound by strict time regulations, were much different from the work practices enforced by Spanish overseers in the New World, where workers often were treated harshly. The ill treatment of indigenous workers in the New World led to significant developments by Spanish theologians and philosophers with regard to workers' rights and the rights of native peoples, which eventually became the basis for international law:

Reports of Spanish mistreatment of the New World natives prompted a severe crisis of conscience among significant sectors of the Spanish population in the sixteenth century, not least among philosophers and theologians . . . It was in the course of that philosophical reflection that Spanish theologians achieved something rather substantial: the beginnings of modern international law . . . The controversy surrounding the natives of America provided an opportunity for the elucidation of general principles that states were morally bound to observe in their interactions with each other.¹¹³

sunset' were written into work regulations, but were inevitably imprecise." Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 36-7.

¹¹² Henry Kamen, *The Phoenix and the Flame: Catalonia and the Counter Reformation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 198.

¹¹³ Thomas E. Woods, Jr., *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2005), 134.

The Peruvian mountain called Cerro Rico discovered by Pizarro's men contained a number of veins of solid silver ore, but working conditions were harsh and many miners died:

When an Indian named Diego Gualpa discovered its five great seams of silver in 1545, he changed the economic history of the world . . . To work the mines, the Spaniards at first relied on paying wages to inhabitants of nearby villages. But conditions were so harsh that from the late sixteenth century a system of forced labour (*la mita*) had to be introduced . . . Mortality among the miners was horrendous.¹¹⁴

Dominican friar Antonio de Montesinos, on behalf of his Dominican community at Hispaniola (the island which now contains Haiti and the Dominican Republic), spoke up against the Spanish policy toward Indian workers in 1511. He was reported as preaching about the nature of men with rational souls, and the universal requirement of love:

'By what right or justice do you keep these Indians in such a cruel and horrible servitude? . . . Why do you keep them so oppressed and weary, not giving them enough to eat nor taking care of them in their illness? For with the excessive work you demand of them they fall ill and die, or rather you kill them with your desire to extract and acquire gold every day . . . Are these not men? Have they not rational souls? Are you not bound to love them as you love yourselves?'¹¹⁵

The Dominicans brought their case all the way to King Ferdinand of Spain:

Montesinos and his superior went to Spain to present their side of the story to the king . . . [who] called together a group of theologians and jurists to develop laws that would govern Spanish officials in their interactions with the natives. In this way were born the Laws of Burgos (1512) and of Valladolid (1513), and similar arguments influenced the so-called New Laws of 1542.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, 21.

¹¹⁵ Woods, *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization*, 135-6, quoting Lewis Hanke, *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1965).

¹¹⁶ Woods, *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization*, 137.

The laws were poorly enforced due to distance, but the Spanish Dominican scholar Father Francisco de Vitoria (1483-1546), who is sometimes called the “father of international law,” defended the freedom of all people and asserted their right to life, culture and property.¹¹⁷ Fr. de Vitoria lectured in Theology at Paris until 1523, and after that at Valladolid and Salamanca. In 1532 he delivered an important series of lectures in defense of Indians’ rights. The Spanish Bishop Bartolomé de Las Casas also strongly defended the rights of Indians, arguing against the use of the *encomienda* system in which a group of Indians would pay tribute to an *encomendero*, or governor, who often exacted this tribute in the form of forced labor.¹¹⁸

That Catholic priests gave Western civilization the philosophical tools with which to approach non-Western peoples in a spirit of equality is quite an extraordinary thing . . . The Catholic conception of the fundamental unity of the human race . . . informed the deliberations of the great sixteenth-century Spanish theologians who insisted on universal principles that must govern the interaction of states.¹¹⁹

These currents of thought which were actively debated in Spain in the 16th century were among the key issues that may have informed Teresa’s view of work in her time. Because she conversed with many well-educated scholars and heard reports from missionaries who had been to the New World, it is possible that Teresa may have heard and thought about some of these ideas, which included work considerations.

To summarize this section, a number of socio-economic and political factors contributed to the cultural environment of 16th-century Spain. The trend toward urbanization throughout

¹¹⁷ Woods, *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization*, 137.

¹¹⁸ Woods, *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization*, 145-6.

¹¹⁹ Woods, *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization*, 149-50.

early modern Europe occurred also in Spain. Funds were raised for Spanish involvement in many wars through taxes and the selling of bonds to Spanish citizens. Spaniards came to rely on the interest from government bonds as a major source of income, which led to a large class of people who lived off the state and tended not to contribute significant work to benefit the Spanish economy. Spain became increasingly dependent on foreign markets in its wool trade and other industries. The influx of gold and silver from the New World paradoxically led to a decline in the value of money, due to the volume of precious metals imported. Gold and silver imports also contributed to the problem of a “resource curse,” further removing the incentive for Spanish citizens to work.

Members of the Spanish nobility were becoming poorer. They sold or rented out land and buildings and became more dependent on cash and bonds. An urban moneylending class arose, which financed nobles and peasants alike. Foreclosures brought about by poor crop years increased the wealth of moneylenders and often led peasants into greater poverty. Artisans and tradespeople produced goods for foreign and domestic markets, and the wool trade was particularly important for Spain, and especially for Avila, even though it came to be dominated by foreign markets.

Craft guilds arose in Europe to establish trade practices and organize markets for their members, but they didn’t have a large impact on work practices. Work in Spain was largely organized around seasons and daylight hours, and rest and work were well-integrated. Liturgical feasts and hours for prayer also influenced work days and rest periods. The rise of humanism, the scholarly work of theologians and philosophers, and an analysis of work practices in the New

World led to the beginning of international law, especially with regard to the rights of indigenous people and their working conditions. All of these forces were keenly felt in Avila in the 16th century, because it was a hub of learning, trade and politics, and it was a center of religious and economic life in early modern Spanish society.

Religious Life and Work in 16th-century Spain

In this section we focus on those themes that are most applicable to Teresa's thoughts and practices with regard to work. Because Teresa's heritage includes both Jewish and Christian ancestry, we explore work in Spain from both Jewish and Christian perspectives, as well as work practiced by women in Catholic religious orders during her time. Issues related to work which are not covered here include work in 16th-century Spain from a Moslem perspective, work in men's religious orders (with some exceptions), and a general survey of all types of work in Europe during this time.

The Inquisition, *Conversos* and Work

Religious life in 16th-century Spain was difficult in many ways. Muslims and Jews were persecuted, and Christians were subject to harsh examination of their faith by the Spanish Inquisition. The lives of members of Catholic religious orders were influenced by socio-economic factors and religious events, especially the Protestant Reformation and the Council of

Trent. Members of the aristocracy, in reaction to their loss of wealth, sometimes turned to religious life as a solution to economic problems. This transferred many of the same social issues to religious life, where “early modern religious houses mirrored the stratified society of the outside world, with its concern for social class, ethnicity, and honor.”¹²⁰

An understanding of Jewish life in Teresa’s time is important because her grandfather was a Jewish textile merchant in Toledo in the 15th century, and her family’s work practices influenced her understanding of the importance of work and its place in the home and in society. Later, as her family ascended the social ladder, her brothers would abandon the business in favor of other pursuits more in harmony with their higher status in society, in which work was looked down upon.

Although anti-Semitism had been present in the Iberian peninsula for many years, the treatment of Jews underwent significant changes in the 15th century. Due to an uprising in Toledo in 1449, statutes of *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood) were established which prohibited *conversos* (converted Jews) and *moriscos* (converted Muslims) from holding public office. In Catholicism, “religious orders soon began insisting on *limpieza de sangre* as well.”¹²¹ In 1478, popular pressure on Queen Isabella led to the foundation of the Spanish Inquisition, “over which the Crown was given almost full control by the Pope.”¹²² This may have been due to

¹²⁰ Bárbara Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009), 27.

¹²¹ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 16.

¹²² “Ferdinand and Isabella appealed to Pope Sixtus IV, who issued a bull on 1 November 1478, investing the monarchs with power to appoint inquisitors in all parts of Castile.” Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 17. Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 55-7.

“rivalry and resentment at the success of the *conversos* and Jews,” and according to one historian, “the Inquisition was founded to solve one specific problem: the religious and public status of *conversos*.” Although this action has been interpreted by historians as an effort to unify the Iberian peninsula in faith, “the fact is that there does not appear to have been any single-minded drive towards unity, either in politics or in religion.”¹²³

Beginning in 1481, many Jews suffered public humiliation and even death through sentencing by a tribunal to an *auto de fe* (act of faith), which was “a forced procession of penitent or impenitent ‘heretics’ that ended with the public execution of the unrepentant.”¹²⁴ The Inquisition was outwardly concerned with preventing the Jewish population from engaging in Jewish religious practices, but many cases which came before the tribunals of the Inquisition had political overtones. In March, 1492, the Catholic Monarchs issued an edict to eliminate Jews from Spain, “offering them a choice between conversion and expulsion.”¹²⁵ This was done in response to the rise of violent conflict between Jews and Christians, and the ineffectiveness of twelve years of Inquisitorial proceedings in eliminating heresy from Spain. According to Kamen, this edict sought to “eliminate a religion” rather than “expel a people.”¹²⁶ The “Niño de la Guardia” case of 1491 provided a catalyst for the edict of 1492. Jews of Toledo were accused of using the heart of a Christian boy in a magical rite which was intended to annihilate Christians,

¹²³ “The conquest of Granada and the expulsion of the Jews were mainly completions of a long historical development.” Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 52-7.

¹²⁴ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 18.

¹²⁵ Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 57.

¹²⁶ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 22.

according to confessions obtained under torture. A number of Jews and *conversos* were tried, found guilty and publicly executed in Avila in November, 1491.¹²⁷

As many as 8,000 Jews were brought before tribunals in Toledo, where Teresa's paternal ancestors lived, between 1481 to 1530. Most Jews avoided death by converting to Catholicism. They could "wipe the slate clean by making a cash payment to the inquisitors. It was a welcome source of income to the Holy Office." After the edict of 1492, "it is estimated that over 165,000 emigrated. Probably at least 50,000 stayed behind and chose conversion."¹²⁸

To obtain a respected position in Catholic Spanish society, wealthy Jews not only converted to Catholicism but also established themselves as members of the noble *hidalgo* class, an upper-middle-class status whose members held public office, were exempt from taxation and used the titles *Don* and *Doña*. Wealth was established through inheritance in this class, not through working in trades or businesses, and honor was associated with titles of address. The *hidalgo* class emerged as part of the effort to free Christian lands, including Spain, from the hold of the Moors. *Hidalgos* were committed to military and religious ideals, but they also entertained the hope for booty that would be obtained through military expeditions. Three military orders combining these ideals were the products of 12th-century Castile - Calatrava, Alcántara and Santiago.¹²⁹ The ongoing crusades against the Arabs persisted for centuries, only to be

¹²⁷ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 21.

¹²⁸ Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 57-9.

¹²⁹ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 20.

accomplished in the final battle of the *Reconquista* at Granada in 1492, followed by an edict in February, 1502, to expel all unconverted Moors.¹³⁰

The earliest campaigns of the Castilian military orders in the 12th century established the characteristics of *hidalguía* which would develop over the following several centuries, including the role of wealth and work in the lives of the Castilian nobility:

The Castilian noble confirmed to his own entire satisfaction that true wealth consisted essentially of booty and land. Moreover, his highest admiration came to be reserved for the military virtues of courage and honour. In this way was established the concept of the perfect *hidalgo*, as a man who lived for war, who could do the impossible through sheer physical courage and a constant effort of the will, who conducted his relations with others according to a strictly regulated code of honour, and who reserved his respect for the man who had won riches by the force of arms rather than by the sweat of manual labour.¹³¹

By the end of the 15th century, when the Moors and Jews were forced to convert to Christianity or leave the country, the reliance of the nobility on wealth gained by means other than work (i.e., inheritance, marriage and military expeditions), and the understanding of manual labor as something beneath the nobility of the *hidalguía* class, was firmly entrenched.

After the 1492 edict by the Catholic Monarchs to eliminate Jews from Spain either through exile or conversion, wealthy Jews who had worked for a living felt compelled to abandon their trades and become like “pure-blooded” Catholic Christians in Spain, who had inherited their wealth and for whom work was considered “vile.” This was extremely important for Spanish Jewish merchants in the 16th century because to remain unconverted to Christianity meant possible expulsion, humiliation or even death. To survive, for a Jewish merchant, required

¹³⁰ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 37-40.

¹³¹ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 20.

conforming to Spanish Catholic customs, including practices associated with work, wealth, inheritance and honor. The right to live with dignity in 16th-century Spanish society was achieved not through work and skill in a business or trade, but through heredity, land holdings, religious background and level of nobility. This will be explored more in depth when we examine the history and practices of Teresa's work context at home in Chapter 3.

Aristocracy, Wealth and Work for Nuns in Religious Life in 16th-Century Spain

In early modern Europe, “the one essential mark of nobility was wealth: the aristocracy were the rich.”¹³² While it's true that members of the nobility in Spain were rich, in the 16th century their wealth was waning. Early in the century, many young men from Spain sought their fortunes in the New World and set sail with *conquistadores* such as Hernando Cortés, while the women remained in Spain. Noble parents often valued having daughters in religious life, and they provided dowries when they entered a monastery and regular donations while they lived there. This gave monasteries reliable incomes, and it provided women with safe, productive and respectable lifestyles.

For most of the 16th century, nuns worked both inside and outside their monasteries. Within religious houses, nuns often said special prayers for benefactors in exchange for donations. Members of the nobility were concerned with the well-being of their own eternal souls, and when a daughter entered religious life, her father might donate money for a small

¹³² Kamen, *Early Modern European Society*, 81-2

chapel under which his body would be buried after death, specifying conditions which included regular prayers for him and his family. In one such case at the Incarnation, the expectations for prayer were so exorbitant that the nuns couldn't manage to fulfill the excessive requirements, and after a number of years an agreement was reached with the benefactor's family to reduce the number of prayers to be said for his soul.¹³³

Within women's monasteries, nuns from noble families had different work duties from those who were poor. "Noblewomen often formed cliques, snubbing their lower-born sisters . . . Most orders had a two-tier system: dowered, black-veiled nuns performed administrative duties and choir recitations, while poorer, white-veiled nuns performed manual labor."¹³⁴ Wealthy nuns often entered the convent with family members and servants:

Some prestigious convents attracted whole clans of wealthy, aristocratic women – sisters, cousins, aunts, and nieces, or widowed mothers and their daughters. These women were addressed as *doña* and enjoyed the privileges of their caste. Often they entered with servants and slaves, occupied elaborate cells, ate specially prepared meals off fine china, and slept in feather beds.¹³⁵

Outside the monastery, nuns often tended to the spiritual needs of aristocratic families, especially women, in exchange for promised or expected donations for the monastery. This system formed a complex set of duties, including the need for nuns to engage in correspondence with benefactors in order to maintain relationships which would ensure an income for the monastery:

¹³³ Nicolás González y González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación de Ávila* (Madrid: Editorial de Espiritualidad, 1995), 167-72.

¹³⁴ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 27.

¹³⁵ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 27.

The aristocratic ladies of Avila often requested nuns as confidants and companions, especially in times of distress such as after the death of a husband or child. These women, actual or potential benefactors of convents, undoubtedly came to expect certain services from female religious in exchange for needed donations. On several occasions Teresa fulfilled the role of consoling bereft or lonely ladies and acting as fundraiser for la Encarnación. She found herself deep within the web of patronage and clientage relations which bound together Avila's religious institutions and its oligarchy.¹³⁶

This will be explored more in depth in Chapter 4, in the context of the development of Teresa's views of work during her 27 years as a nun at the Monastery of the Incarnation in Avila.

Humanism and Spiritual Practices

Humanism was a powerful force in northern Europe due to the writings of Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536), but its influence was not as widespread in Spain, where "the learned aspects of humanism always took second place to the influence of scholastic theology."¹³⁷ However, the great Spanish humanist Franciscan Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436-1517) was instrumental in elevating the presence and quality of education in Spain, including the study of humanism. Cisneros was appointed the archbishop of Toledo in 1495, and he became the Inquisitor General in 1507.¹³⁸

Regarding Cisneros, Barbara Mujica observes that his own life demonstrates "the paradoxes characteristic of Spanish religious thought of the period," promoting *devotio moderna*

¹³⁶ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 115-16.

¹³⁷ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 85.

¹³⁸ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 83.

and education, yet imposing these views on others and persecuting *conversos* to try to rid Spain of heresy. He founded the University of Alcalá which fostered humanism, yet “he had thousands of non-Christian books and manuscripts burned.”¹³⁹ In addition to founding the university, another great achievement of Cisneros was “the publication of the great Complutensian Polyglot Bible, in which the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin texts were printed in parallel columns.”¹⁴⁰ Cisneros understood the need to incorporate humanistic studies into religious scholarship, and “under his leadership, the reformers, instead of rejecting the New Learning, used it to further the work of reform.”¹⁴¹

Spiritual and devotional practices flourished in late 15th century Europe, which were “warmly patronized by Cisneros, and produced a literature of which the most outstanding example was the *Spiritual ABC* (1527) of the Franciscan friar Francisco de Osuna.” This school of mysticism emphasized “*recogimiento*, the ‘gathering up’ of the soul to God.”¹⁴² A version of *recogimiento* called *dejamiento* (abandonment) went beyond recollection and advocated a more passive union of the soul with God. Some members of the Spanish nobility were interested in this method of prayer and became practitioners, who were called *dejados* or *alumbrados* (illuminists). In Guadalajara and other Spanish cities such as Alcalá and Toledo, the *beata* (holy woman) Isabel de la Cruz organized groups of *alumbrados*, but in 1519 she was denounced to

¹³⁹ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 16.

¹⁴⁰ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 93.

¹⁴¹ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 94.

¹⁴² Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 86.

the Inquisition. Her followers engaged in “a kind of mystical passivism known as *dejamiento*, which aimed at the direct communion of the soul with God by means of a process of inner purification which would end in total submission to the divine will.”¹⁴³ Investigators recognized similarities between Illuminism and Luther’s doctrines, “especially as both movements emphasized internal religion at the expense of outward ceremonial. To leave Illuminism untouched would therefore be a grave danger to the faith.”¹⁴⁴ After an investigation lasting several years, an edict was issued in 1523 by Inquisitor General Manrique against *alumbrados*, listing 48 propositions of their doctrine and indicating that following their methods and beliefs constituted heresy.¹⁴⁵ To bring the *alumbrado* movement under control the authorities questioned anyone whose ideas might be suspect. Even Ignatius Loyola was interrogated at Alcalá in 1526 and 1527 and was forbidden to preach for three years as a result of this edict.¹⁴⁶

Various religious movements emerged in the 16th century, both as reforms of existing religious orders and as new ways to practice and to spread Christianity.¹⁴⁷ Perhaps the most important new group to influence 16th-century Spanish spirituality was the Company of Jesus (Jesuits), established in 1540 by St. Ignatius Loyola and his companions. This group’s values and

¹⁴³ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 205.

¹⁴⁴ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 206.

¹⁴⁵ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 86.

¹⁴⁶ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 206.

¹⁴⁷ “There were frequent efforts to introduce reform into religious life during the sixteenth century, either by recovering the primitive rigor of existing orders or by founding new groups adapted to new pastoral needs.” Doris Gottenmoeller, “Religious Life for Women: From Enclosure to Immersion,” in *From Trent to Vatican II: Historical and Theological Investigations*, eds. Raymond F. Bulman and Frederick J. Parrella (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). 229.

its well-known text, *Spiritual Exercises*, “were directed from the start to a broader spectrum of Christians . . . wider than the order itself.”¹⁴⁸ Among the vows taken by the Jesuits, they promised obedience to “any papal command to undertake a mission,”¹⁴⁹ and they “abandoned traditional monastic structures . . . From the earliest days, Jesuits volunteered to work in the Americas, Africa, and Asia.”¹⁵⁰ They were oriented toward evangelization and education throughout the world, and Jesuit teachers and advisors were important both to St. Teresa and to St. John of the Cross.

A distinction between observant and conventual Franciscans had been established by the 16th century, due to reform efforts within the order. Observant Franciscans practiced a stricter, more ascetic lifestyle than did Conventuals. In 1517 the order formally split into these two groups, and a third group, the Capuchins, branched off in 1528.¹⁵¹ Teresa’s reform of the Carmelites in the latter half of the 16th century led to a split into the Discalced (barefoot) Carmelites and what are referred to today as the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance. These two groups sometimes have been referred to as Observants and Conventuals due to the similarity of their reform to that of the Franciscans, but this usage is rare.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality: A Brief History*, 2nd ed. (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 126-7.

¹⁴⁹ David L. Edwards, *Christianity: The First Two Thousand Years*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 341.

¹⁵⁰ Sheldrake, *Spirituality*, 131.

¹⁵¹ Gottenmoeller, “Religious Life for Women: From Enclosure to Immersion,” 229.

¹⁵² Karl Suso Frank, O.F.M., *With Greater Liberty: A Short History of Christian Monasticism and Religious Orders*, 4th ed., trans. Joseph T. Lienhard, S.J. (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, Inc., 1983), 142.

Spiritual seekers throughout Europe during this period obtained intellectual and spiritual nourishment through reading. In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, the printing press provided for the wide translation and dissemination of spiritual writings throughout Europe. According to historian John Bossy:

We should give primacy among the anonymous forces of change to a devaluation of image and symbol in favour of the audible or visible word . . . Two offspring of fifteenth-century Catholicism exemplify this shift. Around 1450 it had bred the printing-press in Mainz; in the 1460s it had bred Erasmus in Rotterdam. By 1500 each of them had matured sufficiently to begin to impose their mark on the culture of Christendom.¹⁵³

The writings associated with Erasmus's Christian humanism and *devotio moderna* emphasized individual asceticism and meditative prayer, "to the diminution of stress on communal or liturgical values . . . we see here the individualism of the age taking its appropriate form in Catholic spirituality."¹⁵⁴ For "devout sixteenth-century Catholics, reading spiritual books in their pews and closets" (such as Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, which was a best-seller), "the pious scriptoria of the Netherlands, and in its turn the press, had created an intimate version of monastic devotion which promoted individual meditation, silent prayer and interior dialogue with Christ in the sacrament or otherwise." Erasmus encouraged the reading of such books, which promoted individual devotion through private reading and meditation. Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, "the classic of the genre . . . was popularised outside the Society of Jesus by a mass of devotional paperbacks, and borrowed and adapted by reformers . . . while they awaited

¹⁵³ John Bossy, *Christianity in the West 1400 - 1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 97.

¹⁵⁴ H. Outram Evennett, "Counter-Reformation Spirituality," in *The Counter-Reformation: The Essential Readings*, ed. David M. Luebke (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1999), 58.

the emergence of devotional writers of their own.”¹⁵⁵ Teresa would find spiritual books a great help to her own prayer life (*Vida* 4.7-9, *Way* 26.10),¹⁵⁶ and she would establish well-stocked libraries, with specific recommended titles (including *The Imitation of Christ*), in the new foundations of her reform.¹⁵⁷

The notion of the individual as integrally a part of the mystical body of Christ, and society as interpenetrated with the influence of the church, gave way to a sense of struggling by oneself to achieve mystical heights through the monastic ideals of “self-control, attention to prayer, perseverance in virtue, and [a] sense of dedication.” However, if more stress was laid on individual effort, it was not without an understanding of the proper place of God: “If the great achievements of the Counter-Reformation, in the spirit as well as in action, rest to a large extent upon the doctrine of ceaseless effort and combat against self; over against this, in necessary complementation, stands the conviction that in another sense it is God who does all, and that in the ultimate analysis his glory is all that matters.”¹⁵⁸ One not only prayed, but also did one’s

¹⁵⁵ Bossy, *Christianity in the West*, 101.

¹⁵⁶ “en todos estos si no era acabando de comulgar jamas osava començar a tener oraçion sin vn libro.” *VidaTR*, 4.9. “En todos éstos, si no era acabando de comulgar, jamás osaba comenzar a tener oración sin un libro.” *OC, Vida* 4.9. “In all those years, except for the time after Communion, I never dared to begin prayer without a book.” *CWST, Life* 4.9.

¹⁵⁷ “Tenga cuenta la priora con que haya buenos libros, en especial *Cartujanos*, *Flos Sanctorum*, *Contemptus Mundi*, *Oratorio de Religiosos*, los de fray Luis de Granada y del padre fray Pedro de Alcántara; porque es en parte tan necesario este mantenimiento para el alma, como el comer para el cuerpo.” *OC, Const* II.7. “The prioress should see to it that good books are available, especially *The Life of Christ* by the Carthusian, the *Flos Sanctorum*, *The Imitation of Christ*, *The Oratory of Religious*, and those books written by Fray Luis de Granada and by Father Fray Pedro de Alcántara. This sustenance for the soul is in some way as necessary as is food for the body.” *CWST, Const* 8.

¹⁵⁸ Evennett, “Counter-Reformation Spirituality,” 58-9.

outward work, for the glory of God. Individual spiritual efforts included inwardly focused practices such as prayer and asceticism, as well as outwardly focused practices such as virtuous acts for the benefit of one's neighbor and for God's glory.

The writings of *devotio moderna* spread quickly throughout Europe, accelerated by the invention of the printing press and an increase in the number of translations available. For Teresa, the influence of reading books and talking with priests and scholars from her own and other orders, especially Franciscans, Jesuits and Dominicans, was profound. Teresa's advisors from various religious orders and the readings on the theme of work which were most influential for her are discussed below. Teresa's approach to work in its relationship to asceticism, prayer, and obedience to one's rule of life will be explored more fully in Chapters 4 and 5.

Religious Environment and Efforts Toward Reform

With the rise of the Protestant Reformation, royal and church leadership in Spain made efforts both to contain heresy and to foster reform within the Catholic Church. There were few Protestants in Spain, "mostly in Valladolid and Seville, and even these were to all appearances totally wiped out by a series of *autos de fe* which the Inquisition held from 1559 onwards."¹⁵⁹ Among the Protestants in Seville and Valladolid were "two well-known figures from among the cosmopolitan humanist circle around the Emperor: Dr. Constantino Ponce de la Fuente (a former confessor of Charles V) and Dr. Agustín Cazalla (one of the Emperor's favourite preachers)";

¹⁵⁹ Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 76.

Cazalla was “garrotted and burnt” as part of the Crown’s effort to eradicate the Protestants.¹⁶⁰

Spaniards were also prohibited from studying abroad and censorship was imposed on many religious books within Spain. However, the Spanish Counter-Reformation in the post-Erasmian era wasn’t only reactionary:

It could point back to the reforms of Cardinal Cisneros as having laid the basis for a healthier Church, and in the mystical school of the late sixteenth century it produced a movement without equal in Europe. The poetic and contemplative genius of Luis de León, the mystical verse of St. John of the Cross, were excelled only by St. Teresa of Avila, whose contribution as a reformer, mystic and woman of letters . . . gives her a universal greatness.¹⁶¹

There is some confusion and lots of discussion on what to call the movement of reform of the Catholic Church around the time of the Protestant Reformation. According to Hubert Jedin, the term “Counter-Reformation” is older than the term “Catholic Reformation,” and it originally referred to “the forcible re-conversion of a Protestant region to the Catholic observance.”¹⁶² Originally a series of individual campaigns, as time went on “it was discovered that this movement had been founded on an inner regeneration of the church, and that the Council of Trent and the Jesuit Order were the decisive factors in it.” Jedin bases this assessment on Eberhard Gothein’s book, *Ignatius Loyola and the Counter-Reformation* (1895) which “located the movement’s origins in Spain: for him, Loyola and his Jesuit Order were the instruments by

¹⁶⁰ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 217.

¹⁶¹ Kamen, *A Concise History of Spain*, 76.

¹⁶² Hubert Jedin, “Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation?” in *The Counter-Reformation: The Essential Readings*, ed. David M. Luebke (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1999), 22-3.

which ‘Golden Age’ Spain rescued the church and simultaneously seized predominance in the West.”¹⁶³

There were also a number of leaders of early reform efforts in religious orders other than the Jesuits: Edigio da Viterbo (1469-1532) and his successor, Giorlamo Seripando (1493-1563), in the Augustine Order; Thomas Cajetan (1469-1534) and Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) of the Dominicans; and John Soreth (1394-1471) and his successor, Nicholas Audet (d. 1562), Priors General of the Carmelite Order.¹⁶⁴ Carthusians indirectly influenced reform efforts; for example, Carthusian monk Ludolph of Saxony (ca. 1300-78) wrote the massive *Vita Christi*, which was newly available in a Spanish translation at the beginning of the 16th century. This book promoted imaginative prayer, focusing on the life of Jesus, especially the Passion narratives, and it was influential for both St. Ignatius and St. Teresa.

The Council of Trent was held from December 13, 1545, to December 4, 1563, to clarify Roman Catholic teachings on scripture, doctrine and religious practices, largely as a response to Protestant challenges. Throughout its 25 sessions, the Council issued a number of reform decrees. Tridentine reforms included decrees containing both the elements of reform to be implemented and the processes, structures and agents needed to accomplish the implementation. There were “newly-founded Council congregations, papal nuncios, numerous visitations, and

¹⁶³ Hubert Jedin, “Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation?” 23.

¹⁶⁴ Hubert Jedin, “Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation?” 38.

synods by which the gold of general laws were exchanged into the small coin of daily life, [and] the founding of seminaries for the education of a new clergy.”¹⁶⁵

One of the outcomes of Trent was increased emphasis on the pastoral aspects of the Church. Trent made changes that would improve both clergy presence (bishops must reside in their sees) and education (seminaries were established). The spiritual needs of Church members in the 15th and 16th centuries often were met through means other than traditional parish structures, such as mendicant orders, especially the Dominicans and the Franciscans, and Trent sought to restore a greater emphasis on parish resources for meeting their needs.¹⁶⁶

The practice of confession became more important during the Catholic Reformation, both as a sacramental event and as a resource for spiritual direction, “linked closely with the technique of regular examination of conscience and the practice of fruitful pious meditation on the life of Christ or other biblical or devotional themes.” The “essential elements of Counter-Reformation spirituality” are, for Evennett, “the revival of the sacramental life, the spread and development of powerful new techniques of meditative prayer and eucharistic devotions, the driving urge towards outward activity and good works as a factor in personal sanctification, all deployed . . . within the framework of Tridentine doctrine.”¹⁶⁷

Near the end of the Council of Trent, on December 3, 1563, the decree *De regularibus* was promulgated, which established reforms for religious life. Although it was not a complete

¹⁶⁵ Hubert Jedin, “Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation?” 39.

¹⁶⁶ John W. O’Malley, *Trent and All That* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 64-6.

¹⁶⁷ Evennett, “Counter-Reformation Spirituality,” 60-2.

program of reform, it “represented a firm step ahead on the road to renewal. It provided finally a common law for religious. It rescued religious life from the suffocating morass of privileges and dispensations, papal and otherwise.”¹⁶⁸

This important decree for religious life contained the following points, among others:¹⁶⁹

- Religious shall observe the rules of their institutes.
- Religious are to possess no goods.
- Convents should not have more members than are able to be supported from its incomes.
- Permission of the bishop is required to found new houses.
- Religious may not leave their convents, even to visit their superiors, without due permission.
- The constitution *Periculoso* of Boniface VIII is renewed, thereby obliging all nuns to the cloister.
- Constitutions of nuns should provide for at least monthly confession and communion.
- The minimum age of profession for men and women religious is 16 years completed.
- A year of trial should precede profession.

Regarding the question of enclosure of nuns, this was made more definite a few years later, when “on May 29, 1566, the constitution *Circa Pastoralis* of Pius V elaborated the point of

¹⁶⁸ Joachim Smet, O. Carm., *The Carmelites: A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, 4 vols. (Rome: Carmelite Institute, 1975-1985), 1:299.

¹⁶⁹ Smet, *The Carmelites*, 1:297-8.

the cloister of religious women. All nuns of whatever order, even though not so obliged by their rule, are hereafter bound to perpetual cloister.”¹⁷⁰

A number of new rules were established for bishops. They were to reside within their sees and ensure that priests clergy were properly educated and ordained. Bishops were then to monitor and evaluate their performance. Bishops claimed control over issues previously under the charge of diocesan priests, such as “enforcing the strict enclosure of nuns, inspecting orders suspected of laxity, and compelling monks to observe the diocese’s feast days.” In practice, to carry out the oversight of religious houses and local clergy, bishops after the Council of Trent would need to confront the “local elites, capitular, monastic, and lay, who were unwilling to relinquish control over religious institutions they had appropriated during the decades of episcopal absence and weakness. In Avila, the process of building the power of the bishop took several decades to complete.”¹⁷¹

In Avila, the situation was more complex because the “reform party” there included many different types of members, including those with a more egalitarian viewpoint, and who were educated in humanist values, including:

. . . middle-rank conversos such as the Sánchez de Cepeda family, and clergymen of humble origin such as Julián de Avila and Pedro de las Cuevas. This group emphasized the horizontal kin and collegial connections between its members rather than dynastic links of family over generations, and it fostered religious institutions such as the Jesuit college of San Gil, which in its organization and liturgical program stressed formation over heredity and service to the individual and to a community of believers over intercession for particular families.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Smet, *The Carmelites*, 1:297-8.

¹⁷¹ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 167.

¹⁷² Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 95.

Juan de Avila (1500-1569) and the Society of Jesus initiated reforms for priests who would preach, provide education and spiritual direction, and help the poor. Often holy women or men sought out Jesuit priests for spiritual direction. For example, one such *beata* in Avila was Mari Díaz, who was better known than Teresa in her time. A member of a peasant family, she moved to Avila after her parents died, not to work in the wool trade, as did many rural peasants, but to seek spiritual guidance. “By the mid-sixteenth century neighborhoods in cities and towns frequently were home to individual women or groups of women who chose an informal religious vocation as beatas . . . Mari Díaz distinguished herself by the extent and intensity of her asceticism and devotion.”¹⁷³

In 1553, when the Jesuit college of San Gil was established in Avila, Mari Díaz was accepted for spiritual direction and “it changed her life. The enthusiastic young Jesuits of San Gil, committed to developing programs of systematic prayer and mortification and indifferent to the social status and potential for donations of their penitents, agreed to direct the pious woman”¹⁷⁴ She was advised to take up residence near San Gil at the palace of Doña Guiomar de Ulloa, a spiritual seeker and host to many spiritual leaders, including Teresa and the Franciscan priest, Peter of Alcántara. Because she was poor, Mari Díaz worked with the domestic servants at Doña Guiomar’s palace, but she conversed as an equal with the religious leaders who visited there and she was directed in her spiritual life by Jesuit scholars. This example demonstrates some of the significant cultural and religious changes that were taking place in Avila, and it

¹⁷³ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 96-9.

¹⁷⁴ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 97-9.

shows some of the influences on Teresa's thought which would later be incorporated into her reform.

Influences on Teresa's View of Work

Teresa's views of work may be traced through a number of sources. Influences from her home life and early years will be examined in Chapter 3, and her experiences at the Incarnation monastery will be explored in Chapter 4. The fullest expression of her approach to work is seen in her later years, which we will describe in Chapter 5.

In the remaining two sections of this chapter, we introduce a few of Teresa's most important advisors, because they, both as individuals and as representatives of their religious orders, influenced Teresa with respect to work-related issues. Then we examine some of the major authors who influenced Teresa with respect to work.

Teresa's Advisors

Teresa consulted many *letrados* (learned men) and *espirituales* (spiritual persons) throughout her life, in order to gain clarity on her mystical experiences, to guide her prayer life, and to obtain advice with regard to her foundations. Teresa makes a distinction between

theologians who are well-educated in universities, who she consults in order to “be assured of the authenticity of her experiences,” and spiritual persons who “help her grow in her interior life.”¹⁷⁵

In 1576, Teresa wrote her long *Spiritual Testimony* 58, at the request of two Jesuits, Rodrigo Alvarez and Enrique Enríquez, who were consultants to the Inquisition of Seville. In it she lists her many teachers and describes their guidance and assessment of her mystical life and the authenticity of her experiences. Among the *espirituales*, Teresa lists about ten Jesuits, including Father Francis Borgia and several rectors of colleges, including those at Salamanca and Segovia. Among the *letrados*, she lists nine Dominican professors, including Fr. Domingo Bañez at Valladolid, who was her confessor for six years, and various professors from Salamanca. She also lists Fray Pedro de Alcántara, the great Franciscan ascetic and reformer of the Franciscan Order, and Maestro Juan de Avila, who became known as the “apostle of Andalusia” based on his extensive preaching in that part of Spain.¹⁷⁶

Teresa’s list of colleagues and advisors in this testimony does not include all of her associates. For example, the Carmelite Father John of the Cross, who was chaplain at the Incarnation at the time she wrote this testimony, is not included, and neither is Carmelite Father Jerónimo Gracián, Teresa’s long-time colleague who was so supportive of her reform. Father García de Toledo, a Dominican, was very important when Teresa was writing her *Vida*, during which time she carried on an extended conversation with him, and he was her censor for *Camino*

¹⁷⁵ Tomás Álvarez, *St. Teresa of Avila: 100 Themes on her Life and Work*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2011), 191-4.

¹⁷⁶ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 191-2. For biographical notes on Teresa’s advisors see *Complete Works of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross*, Version 2.0, CD-ROM (Washington, DC: Carmel Clarion Communications, n.d.).

de Perfección. The Jesuit Jerónimo Ripalda is the person who proposed that Teresa write her *Fundaciones*, and ultimately it was submitted to Dominican Diego de Yanguas.¹⁷⁷

Teresa very much valued discussing the state of her soul and her ideas with knowledgeable and spiritual advisors, and she advised her nuns to do the same:

este tener verdadera luz para guardar la ley de dios y la perfeçion es todo nuestro bien sobre esto asienta bien la oraçion sin este çimiento fuerte todo el edefiçio va falso / ansi que jente de espiritu y de letras an menester tratar si el confesor no pudieren lo tenga todo a tienpos procurar otros¹⁷⁸

With regard to work, we note that Teresa's primary contacts were Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits. The writings of the Dominicans and Jesuits she consulted are not within the scope of this study, however it is known that both Teresa and Ignatius Loyola read the *Vita Christi* (*Life of Christ*) by Ludolph of Saxony, and in it there are a number of references to work which will be discussed below. Both Teresa and Ignatius also read the *Lives of the Saints*, but the version Teresa read in her childhood (*Vida* 1.4)¹⁷⁹ and the one she recommended as *Flos Sanctorum*

¹⁷⁷ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 193.

¹⁷⁸ *CaminoTR-E*, 8.1. "Este tener verdadera luz para guardar la ley de Dios con perfección es todo nuestro bien. Sobre ésta asienta bien la oración. Sin este cimientto fuerte, todo el edificio va falso. [Así que gente de espíritu y de letras han menester tratar. Si el confessor no pudieren lo tenga todo, a tiempos procurar otros.]" (Section in brackets here is from Álvarez's contemporary Spanish adaptation of the El Escorial text in *CaminoTR-E*.) *OC*, *Camino* 5.4. "Having true light at our disposal for the sake of keeping the law of God with perfection is all our good; prayer is well founded on such light. Without this strong foundation . . . the whole building will be wobbly. [Thus they must speak to spiritual and learned persons. If the appointed confessor is not spiritual and learned, they should at times seek out others.]" *CWST*, *Way* 5.4.

¹⁷⁹ "pues mis hermanos ninguna cosa me desayvdavan a servir a dios tenia vno casi de mi edad juntavamonos entramos a leer vidas de santos que era el que yo mas queria aunque a todos tenia gran amor y ellos a mí" *VidaTR* 1.4. "Pues mis hermanos ninguna cosa me desayudaban a servir a Dios. Tenía uno casi de mi edad, juntábamonos entrambos a leer vidas de Santos, que era el que yo más quería, aunque a todos tenía gran amor y ellos a mí." *OC*, *Vida* 1.4. "My brothers and sisters did not in any way hold me

(*Const* 8) may not have been the same as the one Ignatius read, which was the 13th-century book *Golden Legend* by an Italian Dominican, Jacopo de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa.¹⁸⁰ In the *Golden Legend*, which follows the liturgical year, the saints are described as models of virtue, but it's not clear how these stories may have influenced Teresa's views of work.

The most important direct influence among her advisors with respect to work may likely have been the Franciscan reformer Peter of Alcántara, who was Teresa's spiritual director and had a profound influence on Teresa's views of work, prayer and poverty, and whose writings she read and recommended to others. Another key influence was the Carmelite Father Jerónimo Gracián, who supported Teresa and encouraged her during the reform, which was perhaps the major aspect of her work legacy. Other important influences among her advisors are the Dominicans and Jesuits who encouraged her to write, which was for Teresa an important aspect of work in her later years, which we explore more fully in Chapter 5.

back from the service of God. I had one brother about my age. We used to get together to read the lives of the saints." *CWST, Life* 1.4.

¹⁸⁰ Philip Caraman, *Ignatius Loyola: A Biography of the Founder of the Jesuits* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 27. Also see William Granger Ryan, "Introduction," in Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 1:xiii-xviii.

Reading

Teresa began to read around the age of six or seven, and she read both books of chivalry and stories of the saints (*Flos Sanctorum*, or *Legends of the Saints*) in her early years.¹⁸¹ In Teresa's own writings she mentions many authors whose writings influenced her. Among them are Ludolph of Saxony, John Cassian, St. Jerome, Gregory the Great and others. In 1559, an index of forbidden books was published by Fernando Valdés, including many books on prayer. Many of these were among Teresa's favorites, "cherished spiritual books by the most renowned contemporary Spanish authors as well as translations from classic writers: St. Francis Borgia, St. John of Avila, Luis of Granada, Osuna, Tauler, Harphius, and Denis the Carthusian."¹⁸² Also banned was the *Enchiridion* by Erasmus. Church leaders organized "a systematic inspection of public and private libraries" to eradicate the banished books, and new laws limited the importing of foreign books and restricted the writing of theological and devotional writings within Spain, thus adding "one more set of barriers to the many barriers now being raised all over Europe to impede the free circulation of ideas."¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 175-81.

¹⁸² Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Book of Her Life – Introduction," in in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, 2nd ed., trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1987), 1:30.

¹⁸³ Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 219.

The Bible

Teresa is not likely to have read the Bible directly, because “in the Spain of that time the faithful were unable to read Scripture, unless, of course, they had knowledge of Latin, since no vernacular edition was permitted.”¹⁸⁴ However, she writes that she has always liked the Gospels: “sienpre yo e sido aficionada y me an rrecojido mas las palabras de los evangelios / que se / salieron por aquella sacratissima boca ansi como las deçia *que* libros muy bien conçertados.”¹⁸⁵ At her time there was a tension between *letrados* and *espirituales* with regard to who should read the Bible. “The theologians assumed a certain right to a monopoly on the Bible so as to base their theology on it. But this use was questioned by the spiritual persons.”¹⁸⁶

Teresa would have found long excerpts from the Bible and many references to scripture in the books she read, including Ludolph of Saxony’s *Vita Christi*, the *Flos Sanctorum* (which contained the account of the Passion from all four Gospels), and the *Morals* of St. Gregory (which contained the book of Job).¹⁸⁷ We focus here on the specific writings she is most likely to have read and that have a direct bearing on the theme of work. Therefore, biblical references to

¹⁸⁴ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “*The Book of Her Life* – Introduction,” 1:30. Also see Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 199.

¹⁸⁵ *CaminoTR-E*, 35.1. “Siempre yo he sido aficionada y me han recogido más las palabras de los Evangelios [que sé salieron por aquella sacratísima boca, así como las decía,] que libros muy [bien] concertados.” (Sections in brackets here are from Álvarez’s contemporary Spanish adaptation of the El Escorial text in *CaminoTR-E*.) *OC, Camino* 21.4. “I have always been fond of the words of the Gospels [that have come from that most sacred mouth in the way they were said] and found more recollection in them than in very cleverly written books.” *CWST, Way* 21.3.

¹⁸⁶ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 199.

¹⁸⁷ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 200.

work in other writings Teresa is known to have read are examined in the context of those writings, below.

The Rule of St. Albert

During her 27 years as a Carmelite nun at the Incarnation, Teresa read the *Rule of St. Albert*, which was the guiding rule of life for Carmelites. According to Álvarez, “*The Rule of Carmel*, after the Bible, was the text most often quoted by Teresa.”¹⁸⁸ The *Rule* was written by St. Albert, then Patriarch of Jerusalem, for the first Carmelite hermits, who were living on Mt. Carmel in the 13th century. The first *Rule of St. Albert*, written between 1206 and 1214, was revised by Pope Innocent IV in 1247.¹⁸⁹ In this dissertation, the later revision is used because it would have been the one read by Teresa.

Chapter 15 of *The Rule of St. Albert* contains a strong emphasis on work:

Some work has to be done by you, so that the devil may always find you occupied, lest on account of your idleness he manage to find some opportunity to entering into your souls. In this matter you have both the teaching and example of the blessed apostle Paul, in whose mouth Christ spoke, who was appointed and given by God as preacher and teacher of the nations in faith and truth; if you follow him you cannot go astray. Labouring and weary we lived among you, he says, working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you; not that we had no right to do otherwise, but so as to give you ourselves as an example, that you might imitate us. For when we were with you we used to tell you, If someone is unwilling to work, let him not eat. For we have heard that there are certain people among you going about restlessly and doing no work. We urge people

¹⁸⁸ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 105.

¹⁸⁹ Kees Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, translated by John Vriend (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 19-38.

of this kind and beseech them in the Lord Jesus Christ to earn their bread, working in silence. *This way is holy and good: follow it.*¹⁹⁰

Chapter 16 emphasizes the importance of silence, which is linked to work: “The apostle recommends silence, when he tells us to work in it.”¹⁹¹ The Carmelite instructions to be always occupied in work, and to work in silence, were important influences on Teresa’s view of work, especially as she would come to establish her new foundations and write their *Constitutions*, in which working in silence would play an important part.

John Cassian (ca 360-435)

Although Teresa may not have read Cassian directly, she mentions his writings in *Camino* 19.13, where she describes his account of a hermit in the desert in connection with discretion and the desire for God.¹⁹² The context of this passage is not related directly to work, but this indicates that Teresa was familiar with the writings of Cassian. Kavanaugh’s notes to this section quote Petronila Bautista, who testified during Teresa’s process of beatification that she

¹⁹⁰ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 35-6.

¹⁹¹ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 36.

¹⁹² “Y si el demonio ayudó en alguna manera a tan gran deseo, que sería posible, como cuenta creo Casiano de un ermitaño de asperísima vida, que le hizo entender se echase en un pozo porque vería más presto a Dios.” *OC, Camino* 19.13. “It would be possible for the devil in some way to foster such a great desire. The account is given, I believe in Cassian, of a hermit who lived a most austere life. The devil made him think that by throwing himself into a well he would see God more quickly.” *CWST, Way* 19.13. Kavanaugh adds in 1:46n10: “This account can be found in Cassian’s *Conferences*. See Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, gen. ed., *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series Two, 14 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), vol. 11: *The Second Conference of Abbot Moses*, p. 310. Most probably Teresa knew of this story from the *Vida de los Santos Padres* published in Zaragoza, 1511.”

“was very devoted to the *Conferences* of Cassian and of the Fathers of the Desert,” and that she asked her (Petronila) to read “two or three accounts of those saints each day and at night tell her about them.”¹⁹³ This familiarity with Cassian connects Teresa’s views of work and idleness to ancient Egyptian views of monastic work.

The following example from Chapter 13 of Cassian’s *Conferences*, “Of the value of work and the harm of idleness,” contains ideas that are echoed in the *Rule of St. Albert* and in Teresa’s writings, especially that work is to be preferred to idleness based on Paul’s admonition that “if anyone [is] unwilling to work, neither should that one eat” (2 Thess 3:10).

For certainly the whole human race, except only that class of monks, who live in accordance with the Apostle’s command by the daily labours of their own hands, looks for the charity of another’s compassion. Wherefore it is clear that not only those who boast that they themselves are supported either by the wealth of their relations or the labours of their servants or the produce of their farms, but also the kings of this world are supported by charity. This at any rate is embraced in the definition of our predecessors, who have laid down that anything that is taken for the requirements of daily food which has not been procured and prepared by the labour of our own hands, ought to be referred to charity, as the Apostle teaches, who altogether forbids the help of another’s bounty to the idle and says: “If a man does not work, neither let him eat.” These words the blessed Antony used against some one, and instructed us also by the example of his teaching, to shun the pernicious allurements of our relations and of all who provide the needful charity for our food as well as the delights of a pleasant home, and to prefer to all the wealth of this world sandy wastes horrid with the barrenness of nature, and districts overwhelmed by living incrustations, and for that reason subject to no control or dominion of man, so that we should not only avoid the society of men for the sake of a pathless waste, but also that the character of a fruitful soil may never entice us to the distractions of cultivating it, whereby the mind would be recalled from the chief service of the heart, and rendered useless for spiritual aims.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ CWST, Way 19.13, 2:467n10. All notes referenced in CWST are Kavanaugh’s comments.

¹⁹⁴ John Cassian, *Conferences*, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/cassian/conferences.iv.viii.xii.html> (accessed 3/7/13).

In this excerpt we find the work of one's hands held up as the best work for a monk to do, and agriculture is looked down upon, as is dependence on one's relatives. Anything except work may be viewed as charity, and the lure of wealth is to be shunned. One should flee even good soil, lest one is enticed to the practice of agriculture and lured away from spiritual growth. Throughout Cassian's *Conferences* the many references to silence, solitude and work are likely to have had a significant effect on Teresa's views of work.

St. Jerome (ca. 347-420)

Although Teresa would not have read the *Letters* of St. Jerome in Latin, she would have had access to a Spanish translation of them by Juan de Molina published in Valencia in 1520.¹⁹⁵ Jerome's letters contain a number of references to work, especially work in religious communities of women. Reading Jerome's letters also ties Teresa's views of monastic work to early Middle Eastern desert monasticism.

Teresa may not have read the entire seven volumes of Molina's translation, which "constituted a real treatise on the different states of Christian life, beginning with the common and the ecclesiastical state (books 1 and 2), and concluding with the conjugal and the comfortable state (books 6 and 7)." What likely interested Teresa most at this stage of her life, after leaving Our Lady of Grace monastery but before deciding to enter religious life as a

¹⁹⁵ CWST, *Life* 3.7, 1:468n6.

Carmelite at the Incarnation, was “the third book on the eremitical or contemplative life and the fourth book which *treats of the virginal state*.”¹⁹⁶

Teresa reports reading St. Jerome’s letters when she was ill: “avianme dado con vnas calenturas vnos grandes desmayos *que* sienpre tenia bien poca salud diome la vida aver *quedado* ya amiga de buenos libros leya en las epistolas de san jeronimo *que* me animavan de suerte *que* me determine a decirlo a mi *padre que* casi era como a tomar el abito.”¹⁹⁷ Teresa again refers to St. Jerome in her well-known example of watering a garden as a metaphor for prayer. Here, after describing the joy the gardener has because of working in the garden of so great an Emperor, “travajar en verto de *tan gran enperador*,” Teresa says that the gardener shouldn’t pay any attention to bad thoughts because they could be from the devil, as they were for St. Jerome in the desert: “*tanbien* los rrepresentava el demonio a san jeronimo en el desyerto.”¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 184. Although Teresa may not have read all of the *Letters* of St. Jerome, she did have access to Molina’s translation, and it was “without doubt a good book of formation for Teresa, who could not carry out that reading (in Gothic characters, not easy) without being a great enthusiast of books . . . for a young person of 18 or 19 years, as was Teresa, the book provided a very rich lesson in spirituality in its various forms. [Translation mine.]” “. . . sin duda buen libro de formación para Teresa, que no pudo llevar a cabo esa lectura (en caracteres góticos, nada fáciles) sin ser una gran apasionada de los libros . . . Para una joven de 18 o de 19 años, como era Teresa, el libro aportaba una riquísima lección de espiritualidad en sus diversas formas.” Tomás Álvarez, “Jerónimo, san,” in *Diccionario de Santa Teresa: Doctrina e Historia*, ed. Tomás Álvarez (Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2002), 373.

¹⁹⁷ *VidaTR*, 3.7. “Habíanme dado, con unas calenturas, unos grandes desmayos, que siempre tenía bien poca salud. Diome la vida haber quedado ya amiga de buenos libros. Leía en las *Epístolas* de San Jerónimo, que me animaban de suerte que me determiné a decirlo a mi padre, que casi era como a tomar el hábito.” *OC, Vida* 3.7. “At that time I had, together with a high fever, great fainting spells; for I always had poor health. My fondness for good books was my salvation. Reading the *Letters of St. Jerome* so encouraged me that I decided to tell my father about my decision to take the habit.” *CWST, Life* 3.7.

¹⁹⁸ *VidaTR* 11.10. “Alegrarse y consolarse y tener por grandísima merced de trabajar en huerto de tan gran Emperador. . . No haga caso de malos pensamientos. Mire que también los representaba el demonio a San Jerónimo en el desierto.” *OC, Vida* 11.10. “He will rejoice and be consoled and consider it

Teresa alludes to a number of Jerome's autobiographical sketches from his letters to Eustochio, the daughter of St. Paula, according to Álvarez. However, the letter which "without doubt . . . most affected her was the first of Book 3, addressed to his friend Heliodoro in a difficult period of being elected bishop. In spite of this, Jerome simply calls out to him to break with everything . . . and retire to the desert."¹⁹⁹ It was due to the encouragement that Teresa received when reading Jerome's *Letters* that Teresa decided to tell her father about her choice to enter religious life (*Vida* 3.7).

Edwin Kaiser, in his *Theology of Work*, says that for Jerome, "work has a three-fold value: it makes the worker self-supporting, enables him to give to the needy, and helps him to form his life in holiness." Jerome, like Cassian, advocates with Saint Paul that one should work or not eat. Writing to the priest Marcus, Jerome says, "I have robbed no man of anything; neither have I taken what I have not earned. With my own hand daily and in the sweat of my brow I labor for my food, knowing that it is written by the apostle: 'If any will not work neither shall he eat.'" Jerome's stress was on the value of work as an ascetic exercise for the monk. "Manual labor, which makes the monk self-supporting and gives him means for charity, also keeps him

the greatest favor to be able to work in the garden of so great an Emperor! . . . He doesn't pay any attention to bad thoughts. He considers that the devil also represented them to St. Jerome in the desert." *CWST, Life* 11.10. See Jerome's "Letter 22: To Eustochium" in *St. Jerome: Letters and Selected Works*, vol. 6 of *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series*, translated and edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1893), published online by Christian Classics Ethereal Library, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.v.XXII.html>, accessed 4/14/13.

¹⁹⁹ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 184.

busy: the devil departs finding him occupied. Work prevents the mind from wandering; it prepares the way for the study of the scripture and for the exercise of prayer.”²⁰⁰

Jerome wrote about work to Demetrias, a Roman lady who had consecrated herself to God. After speaking of studies and prayer, he admonishes her to “have some wool always at hand” for weaving. She is not excused from work merely because she is wealthy; she must “labor with the rest, that being always busy you may think only of the service of the Lord . . . Christ will value nothing more highly than what you have wrought with your own hands.”²⁰¹ Jerome also wrote to Laeta to instruct her daughter, Paula, how to spin wool; this was the same Paula who later went to Bethlehem and founded a community of nuns.

She governed three groups of consecrated virgins, who worked and had their meals separately, but all joined for singing the psalms and prayer. All worked making garments either for themselves or for others. Among the virgins some came from rich and noble families, like Paula herself, others from the middle classes, and again others from the poor. All were dressed alike; all had their allotted tasks.²⁰²

Jerome even wrote to Pachomius, his contemporary and the founder of Egyptian cenobitic monasticism, in praise of Paula and her daughter, Eustochium. “They trim lamps, light fires, sweep floors, clean vegetables, put heads of cabbage in the pot to boil, lay tables . . . they are unwilling that others should surpass them in physical toil whom they themselves surpass in vigor of mind.”²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Edwin Kaiser, C.P.P.S., *Theology of Work* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1963), 105, quoting from Jerome’s letters in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, VI, Letter XVII, 2, p. 21.

²⁰¹ Kaiser, *Theology of Work*, 105, quoting Jerome’s Letter CXXX, 15, p. 269, as above.

²⁰² Kaiser, *Theology of Work*, 107.

²⁰³ Kaiser, *Theology of Work*, 107-8, quoting Jerome’s Letter LXVI, 12-13, p. 139, as above.

Jerome also highly valued intellectual work, translating scripture and encouraging others in their reading and study of it. Reading the letters of St. Jerome, Teresa would find much inspiration for her own reform and the practice of both intellectual and manual work in Carmelite monasteries.

Ludolph of Saxony (ca. 1300-78)

Teresa's Constitutions recommends the reading of good books, including the *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony, a Carthusian monk: "Tenga cuenta la priora con que haya buenos libros, en especial *Cartujanos*, *Flos Sanctorum*, *Contemptus Mundi*, *Oratorio de Religiosos*, los de fray Luis de Granada y del padre fray Pedro de Alcántara; porque es en parte tan necesario este mantenimiento para el alma, como el comer para el cuerpo."²⁰⁴ The *Vita Christi* was written in Latin but was translated into Spanish by the Franciscan friar Ambrosio Montesino in 1502.²⁰⁵ It was four large volumes, and consisted of 1320 pages.²⁰⁶ This book covers the life of Christ in

²⁰⁴ OC, Const II.7. "The prioress should see to it that good books are available, especially *The Life of Christ* by the Carthusian, the *Flos Sanctorum*, *The Imitation of Christ*, *The Oratory of Religious*, and those books written by Fray Luis de Granada and by Father Fray Pedro de Alcántara. This sustenance for the soul is in some way as necessary as is food for the body." CWST, Const 8.

²⁰⁵ Emilio del Río, S.I., "Introducción," in *La Vida de Cristo* (Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2010), viii.

²⁰⁶ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 196.

chronological order, and it contains many references to the Bible and to the writings of patristic and medieval theologians, including Augustine, Ambrose, Aquinas, Bede, Bernard and others.²⁰⁷

Teresa was reading the *Vita Christi* when she had her famous vision of the place she believed she would have merited in hell:

estava vn dia bispera del espiritu santo despues de mis /fuyme a vna parte bien apartada adonde yo rreçava muchas veçes y començe a leer en vn cartujano esta fiesta y leyendo las señales *que* an de tener los *que* comiençan y aprovechan y los perfetos *para* entender esta con ellos el espiritu santo leydos estos tres estados pareçieme por la bondad de dios *que* no dejava de estar conmigo . . . començe a considerar el lugar *que* tenia en el ynfierno mereçido por mis pecados²⁰⁸

Kavanaugh writes about this experience:

This probably happened May 29, 1563. The secluded spot was one of the hermitages at the monastery of St. Joseph. ‘A volume by the Carthusian’ refers to the *Life of Christ* written in Latin by the Carthusian, Ludolph of Saxony. The four volumes were translated into Spanish and first printed in 1502 at Alcalá. The meditation for Pentecost deals with the three stages of the spiritual life: beginners, proficient, and the perfect.²⁰⁹

Álvarez points out that this book had a powerful influence on Teresa’s Christological formation.

Ludolph begins the *Vita Christi* with a preamble which outlines eight premises which guide the

²⁰⁷ Mary Immaculate Bodenstedt, S.N.D., *The Vita Christi of Ludolphus the Carthusian* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1944), 51-52.

²⁰⁸ *VidaTR* 38.9. “Estaba un día, víspera del Espíritu Santo, después de misa. Fuime a una parte bien apartada, adonde yo rezaba muchas veces, y comencé a leer en un Cartujano esta fiesta. Y leyendo las señales que han de tener los que comienzan y aprovechan y los perfectos, para entender está con ellos el Espíritu Santo, leídos estos tres estados, parecióme, por la bondad de Dios, que no dejaba de estar conmigo . . . comencé a considerar el lugar que tenía en el infierno merecido por mis pecados.” *OC, Vida* 38.9. “One day on the vigil of Pentecost I went to a secluded spot after Mass where I often prayed, and I began to read about this feast in a volume by the Carthusian. Reading of the signs beginners, proficient, and the perfect must have in order to recognize whether the Holy Spirit is with them, it seemed to me that by the goodness of God and insofar as I could make out He was not failing to be with me . . . I began to consider the place I had merited in hell on account of my sins.” *CWST, Life* 38.9.

²⁰⁹ *CWST, Life* 38.9, 1:488n3.

reader “not only for the comprehensive reading of the book but for access to the mystery of Jesus.”²¹⁰ He points especially to the fourth premise, “An industriousness about contemplating without error the life of Christ,” as extremely important for Teresa’s prayer life. Ludolph emphasized picturing oneself at the various scenes in the life of Christ: “Be present to these things that were said and done by the Savior as though with your own ears you heard them and with your own eyes saw them . . . examine them as though you thought they were all present to you . . . and read the things that have already taken place as though they were being done now.”²¹¹

Industriousness in prayer is one aspect of the theme of work that Teresa fully embraced. With regard to work, Ludolph wrote on the balance between action and contemplation, and he also wrote about Christ’s work with his hands, as well as that of Joseph and Mary. The following sections of *Vita Christi* were translated into English by Fr. Milton Walsh, S.J. (footnotes his).

“Christ works with his own hands,” from *Vita Christi*, Ch. 16:²¹²

But let us return to our examination of the life and deeds of our Model, the Lord Jesus, which is the purpose of our study. Let us be present to and contemplate in every way the poor, lowly existence of that small but highly exalted family. The blessed old man Joseph exercised the carpenter’s trade to the best of his ability; Our Lady worked with needle and thread, prepared meals for her husband and Son, and performed all the household chores herself, since they had no servants. Unite yourself with her in her tasks, having to work with her own hands. Enter, too, into the labors of the Lord Jesus, who helped her in every way he could; as he himself said, “*The Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister.*” (Mt 20:28) Watch him carefully as he performs the

²¹⁰ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 197.

²¹¹ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 198, quoting Ludolph, *Vita Christi*, Preamble.

²¹² Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, translated by Milton Walsh, S.J., email message to the author, October 15, 2012.

humblest household chores, and study Our Lady and elderly Joseph working to support themselves. Basil writes: “Obedient from his first years to his parents, he reverently and humbly endured all bodily labors. His parents were honest and just, but they were also very poor and lacked many necessities of life (as the manger bears witness), and so they had to earn what they needed by the sweat of their brow. Jesus showed himself completely obedient to them even in his labors.”²¹³ Observe the three of them eating together daily at one table, not dining sumptuously or luxuriously, but sharing poor and simple fare. After dinner they talk together, not engaging in foolish and empty chatter, but speaking words imbued with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, conversation that refreshes the soul as well as the body. After their recreation, we see them each retire to pray in their small bedrooms. Picture those three modest beds, and watch the Lord Jesus taking his rest late at night after prolonged prayer. This was his nightly custom for many years; he lived in a humble, self-effacing way, and persevered in this lifestyle like his poorest neighbors. Every night let us picture him resting on his bed after his day’s labors, share his feelings, and commend ourselves humbly and devoutly to him.

Also from Chapter 16:

You have seen what poverty, abasement, and harsh conditions the eternal Lord and King of kings embraced for many long years in his vigils, his sleep, his abstinence, and all his labors for our sake. Where are the seekers of leisure and comfort, luxuries and ornaments, vanities and opulence? Those who long for such things have not been instructed by this Teacher. Surely we are not wiser than he? He himself has taught us lowliness, poverty, and hard work. Let us follow in the footsteps of this greatest Master, who neither wishes to deceive nor can be deceived, and, according to the teaching of the Apostle, *having sufficient food and what is necessary wherewith to be covered, with these we are content* (1 Tm 6:8).

Teresa read in Ludolph that Christ and the Holy Family were pleased to work with their hands, and to live in poverty, having just enough to supply their needs. While she read this, following Ludolph’s advice from the Preamble, she would have been industrious in her efforts to picture the scenes he describes before her mind’s eye, and to make them very vivid. Her growth in prayer and her reports of visions seem to show that Teresa developed her natural imaginative abilities to a very high degree, and we can conclude that Ludolph’s treatment of work in the life

²¹³ PG 31:1356D; Constit. Asceticae, 4.6; CaA Lk 51-52.

of Christ may have influenced Teresa deeply. In Chapter 58, Ludolph also addresses leadership and rest, and the active/contemplative balance:²¹⁴

Christ made his disciples rest so that everyone would learn, and especially those in positions of leadership, that people who exert themselves in word and deed deserve to rest. This also shows preachers that they should return to solitary contemplation after they have delivered their sermons. They should also review and diligently examine their work in God's presence, giving thanks for what was good and asking pardon for what was not. What the Lord did here encourages us to take a break sometimes from what we are doing and enter into contemplation apart, because we do not have time for contemplation when we are busy. Contemplation is rightly called a *desert* here because it is deserted by many and inhabited by few; and it is there that we *rest a little*, because in our weakness we cannot gaze upon the divine vision for very long, and our neighbor's needs make demands on us. Keep silent for a time rather than edify your neighbor, so that by your silence you can learn what to say that will be useful at the proper time. Ask God to supply to the hearts of your neighbors, from whom you have absented yourself, the interior inspirations that you receive in silence. Gregory says: "No one should delay addressing the necessity of another to contemplate God, nor disregard the contemplation of God in order to meet the needs of his neighbors."²¹⁵ How does it benefit us if we love ourselves and abandon our neighbors? On the other hand, how is it advantageous if we love our neighbors and are zealous for them, but abandon ourselves?"²¹⁶

Teresa grew beyond a practitioner of the contemplative life, to become a reformer, founder and leader. Although she complained of being tired and needing rest, she found a way to balance her own needs with those of others in order to become an effective administrator while remaining rooted in her own prayer life and individual work, particularly the writing of books. Ludolph's insights may well have contributed to these aspects of Teresa's approach to the many tasks she had to balance.

²¹⁴ Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, translated by Milton Walsh, S.J., email message to the author, October 15, 2012.

²¹⁵ PL 175:805A; Richard of St. Victor [att. to Hugh], *Alleg. In Nov. Test.*, 3.3; *attr. to Gregory*.

²¹⁶ PL 76:1144B; *Hom. 17.11*.

Ludolph, like Jerome, includes spiritual effort as an important form of work, in Chapter 70, “Working for spiritual food”:²¹⁷

Because the crowd was working in this manner, following Christ for the sake of bodily food, he led them toward meritorious works, so that they would seek to be nourished by spiritual food. Desirous of satisfying their minds now that he had satisfied their stomachs, he revealed a higher bread to them, and said: “*Labour not for the earthly meat which perisheth, but seek by laboring or merit by works that which endureth unto life everlasting*, the spiritual food that bestows eternal life.” (Jn 6:27) Every person who turns spiritual intention to temporal gain *labours for meat which perisheth*, like those who followed the Lord to this point so they could be fed bodily; but those who redirect bodily work to a spiritual intention *labour for the meat which perisheth not, which endureth unto life everlasting*. This food is the word of God and grace, for the sake of which they should chiefly follow. Our work, our principal pursuit and intention should be to direct our steps to seek the food that leads to eternal life, that is, spiritual goods. We should not aim primarily at obtaining temporal goods, but seek them only in a supplementary way because they are needed to sustain our corruptible body in this life. Chrysostom writes: “It is as if he were saying: ‘You seek material food, but I only fed your bodies so that you would seek more diligently for the food that is not temporary, but contains eternal life.’”²¹⁸

Ludolph’s *Vita Christi* influenced Teresa not only in her appreciation for the importance of contemplating the life of Christ, but also for its biblical and patristic references, including those regarding the theme of work .

²¹⁷ Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, translated by Milton Walsh, S.J., email message to the author, October 15, 2012.

²¹⁸ CA Jn 6:22-27, loosely based on *Hom. Io. 44.1* [PG 59:248].

Peter of Alcántara (1499-1562)

St. Peter of Alcántara was a Franciscan friar and reformer who “is without doubt the Franciscan who had the most profound influence on [Teresa].”²¹⁹ Peter wrote *Tratado de la Oración y Meditación (Treatise on Prayer and Meditation)*, and “although she doesn’t quote from the book it is certain that Teresa read [it].”²²⁰ She recommends his books for her libraries in the *Const.*

In his *Treatise on Prayer and Meditation*, Peter writes about the importance of both work and prayer:

*The life of every true and perfect Christian must be a mingling of unceasing prayer and work. Two feet are essential for us on this journey: the one work, the other prayer. Let a man trust himself to God and toil with constancy for His love, but not in suchwise as, on the one hand, by a foolish confidence in God to allow himself to slumber, nor on the other, by excessive reliance on his own efforts to come to belittle the value of divine grace (as the Pelagians did); but rather, let him follow the proverb, “God helps him who helps himself.”*²²¹

Throughout the *Treatise* Peter refers both to the work and prayer of Christ and of the Christian. When Christ went to the garden to pray before his Passion, “He did this in order to teach us how, in all the labors and temptations of this life, we should always have recourse to prayer, as to a

²¹⁹ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 188.

²²⁰ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 188. Teresa recommends his writings in *Const* (*OC*, *Const* II.7; *CWST*, *Const* 8).

²²¹ Peter of Alcántara, *Treatise on Prayer and Meditation*, translated by Dominic Devas, O.F.M. ([Rockford, IL?]: Tan Books and Publishers, 2009), 165.

sacred anchor.”²²² In prayer, we are to give thanks to God “for the assistance accorded us to pray and work well and to persevere in the good begun.”²²³ Then, we are to “offer to the Father all the merits and good works of His Son” as though they were our own, because Christ earned these merits for us.²²⁴ We may combine reading with prayer, especially to combat distraction, because “the mind, fixed on the words of the book, does not so easily wander away . . . but better still is it to combat and scorn these distracting thoughts and to go on struggling in the work of prayer.”²²⁵

Teresa knew St. Peter of Alcántara personally, and she writes that she was very glad when he came to Avila (*Vida* 30.2). Teresa writes about having spoken with him about her life, prayer, visions, and soul (*Vida* 27.3 and 30.3). He also confided in her regarding his own concerns and business affairs (*Vida* 30.5), and Teresa and Peter agreed to pray for each other (*Vida* 30.7). Teresa’s view of work, especially as it relates to prayer, was very likely fostered by her relationship with Peter, and she recommends his writings for her monastery libraries.²²⁶

Other Authors

In addition to the authors mentioned above, Teresa was aware of and read many of the writings of other authors, including such authors as Franciscans Francisco de Osuna, Bernardino

²²² Peter of Alcántara, *Treatise on Prayer*, 52.

²²³ Peter of Alcántara, *Treatise on Prayer*, 92.

²²⁴ Peter of Alcántara, *Treatise on Prayer*, 94.

²²⁵ Peter of Alcántara, *Treatise on Prayer*, 89.

²²⁶ OC, *Const* II.7. CWST, *Const* 8.

de Laredo, and St. Clare; Dominicans Vincent Ferrer and Luis de Granada; Jesuit Francis Borgia; and John of Avila, who provided an evaluation for her of her *Vida*.²²⁷ Osuna's *Third Spiritual Alphabet* was important for Teresa in her spiritual life, especially with regard to establishing her techniques of recollection and prayer, but it is not likely to have affected her views of work directly.

Teresa was profoundly influenced by Augustine's *Confessions* (*Vida* 9.4), but it's not known whether she read any of his other writings. Of particular interest for this study would be Augustine's short treatise *De opere monachorum* (*Of the works of monks*), but we don't see any reference to it in Teresa's writings.

Influence of Reading and Advisors on Teresa's Approach to Work

The key elements of work that Teresa took away from her reading were an appreciation for the practice of reading and imaginative prayer, as well as insights into the work of Christ and the Holy Family, from Ludolph; an emphasis on silence and industriousness to manage idleness and keep the devil away, from Cassian and Jerome; and the integration of work and prayer from Peter of Alcántara. Also, the many advisors who encouraged Teresa's personal development and reform efforts, including her writing of books, expressed support for work in religious life as Teresa envisioned and practiced it. They helped her to develop the ability to sustain long hours

²²⁷ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 187-90.

and complex leadership tasks while writing and continuing her spiritual practices of prayer and participation in the daily tasks of Carmelite religious life.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter the socio-economic conditions of 16th-century Spain were sketched in order to establish the context in which Teresa formed her views on work, both in its secular and religious dimensions. Some of the key changes in the religious climate during this time were introduced, particularly in light of religious reforms which affected Jewish and Christian life and work in Spain. Finally, the advisors and major writings which most strongly influenced Teresa's views of work were presented in order to situate Teresa's thought within the monastic tradition as rooted in the context of her day.

In the following three chapters, Teresa's insights into the importance of work for religious life and her work practices are further developed within each of the three major periods of her life: her early years, 1515-35 (Chapter 3); her middle years as a Carmelite nun, 1535-60 (Chapter 4); and her later years as a reformer, founder, leader and writer, 1560-82 (Chapter 5).

CHAPTER 3

WORK IN TERESA'S EARLY YEARS: 1515-1535

Introduction to Chapters 3-5

In Chapters 3 through 5, we trace Teresa's development with respect to her approach to work throughout her life, beginning with her early years growing up in Avila and ending with her work as a leader and reformer in her later years. Various types of work are discussed, including needlework, spinning, household duties, administrative tasks, leadership practices and writing books and letters. A number of themes will be highlighted throughout, including solitude, community, contemplation, active work, intellectual work and manual work. In Chapters 4 and 5, special attention will be given to the role of work in the Carmelite *Rule*, which was so important in forming Teresa's approach to work during her reform of the Carmelite Order.

Chapter Introduction

In Chapter 3 we first establish the socio-economic context of work in Avila in more detail just before and during Teresa's early years, to shine a spotlight on her local and familial context. We then explore Teresa's exposure to and practices of work during her first twenty years, to determine the seeds of her approach to work which will develop later as a nun in community and as a leader and reformer. Throughout Chapter 3 we highlight Teresa's individual, community

and leadership roles with respect to work during her early years, and the origins of those influences and practices which will find their fuller expression later in her life and work.

First we describe Teresa's family history so that we have an understanding of the activities and duties in her house, especially with regard to legal and business matters, because these affected her view of work and set the tone for her approach to work in her later years. Then we explore Teresa's early introduction to specific work activities and her most immediate influences, both at home and at the Our Lady of Grace Augustinian monastery, where she attended school as a girl. Finally we describe Teresa's family life after many of her siblings left home, leaving her in charge of many duties on the large family estate.

Avila: Teresa's Immediate Socio-Economic and Religious Context

In the 16th century, Avila was a busy city with many different types of work and diverse social groups. "Even in the city's earliest frontier days, residents organized themselves in barrios or neighborhoods according to occupation, rank and ethnic diversity. These criteria formed the basis of the city's social geography."²²⁸ Avila was a prosperous city, with many artisans and workers in wool, metal and leather. Most of the artisans worked in the manufacture of woolen cloth, which was the backbone of Avila's economy.²²⁹ Other *abulenses* (residents of Avila) worked in the services sector, which included administration, transportation, commerce, and

²²⁸ Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 4.

²²⁹ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 4-5.

management of rental property. Privileged classes, including clergy, comprised about 10% of the population, and the lower classes consisted of peasants, serfs, slaves and marginalized persons.²³⁰

At that time in Castile there were two types of upper-class families, “titled nobility and ‘gentlemen.’” The group of “titled nobility” was very small and its members “derived their wealth and power from the fixed incomes (*rentas*) of large estates they owned in the territory around Avila. These estates included whole villages, and the nobles frequently maintained seigniorial rights over their inhabitants.”²³¹ Teresa’s family belonged to the second tier of nobility, the gentlemen or *hidalgos*:

They were distinguished from their non-noble neighbors by privileges such as exemption from taxation and the right to affix the polite titles of *Don* or *Doña* before their names. Like the titled nobility, they owned property, but often their holdings were more diversified, including properties within the city of Avila as well as farmland, pastures, orchards, and vineyards throughout the countryside.²³²

The center of Avila’s commercial district included two centrally located marketplaces, the Mercado Grande and Mercado Chico. The city was a regional distribution center, and there were fairs and other religious and civic events which drew farmers and artisans from the surrounding area and brought business to local shopkeepers. The commercial district “also

²³⁰ “Teresa conoció una ciudad próspera, rica para aquel entonces, más industrial y artesana que rural, de las ciudades económicamente más dinámicas de Castilla. Existía entonces una copiosa producción lanera (materia prima) y manufacturas de industria textil en torno al río Adaja, y otras artesanías de metal y cuero. El sector servicios, la administración, el comercio, el transporte, la mercadería, la administración y arrendamientos de rentas, etc., ocupaban un buen número de la población activa. Socialmente abundaban las clases altas y privilegiadas de nobles, caballeros, hidalgos y un clero regular y secular abundantísimo, calculado en un 10% de la población total. Y en la base de la pirámide social, los labriegos, los siervos de la gleba, los esclavos y los marginados.” Efrén de la Madre de Dios, *Teresa de Jesús* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, de la Editorial Católica, 1981), 13-14.

²³¹ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 16.

²³² Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 16-7.

provided a place for gossip, communication, and entertainment . . . Religious processions and civic parades wound their way through the district, the true heart of Avila. Taverns, frequently operated by women, accommodated travelers and traders.”²³³

The population of early modern Avila grew rapidly due to the city’s urban atmosphere, economic activity and central location. “During Teresa’s lifetime, the population of Avila doubled,” and it attracted many different types of people, including servants, looking for work. Nobles moved into Avila from the surrounding countryside, “lured by the availability of social contacts and luxury goods.” They built large palaces and needed domestic servants, “and a steady stream of peasants from the surrounding countryside moved to the city.” However, there were more workers than there were positions available for them. “Hoping to find work in textile production, construction, or domestic service, many instead found themselves reduced to begging.”²³⁴

Jobs could be found in various capacities working for the Church. The cathedral chapter was a powerful force in Avila, as was the city council; both were essentially run by members of Avila’s aristocratic families. The cathedral chapter of late 15th-century Avila “included some 140 clerics and lay employees in a hierarchy ranging from aristocratic canons to bellringers, wax suppliers, and the *perrero*, whose function it was to eject stray dogs from the cathedral.”²³⁵ Lay workers participating in religious services not only earned money but also gained social prestige as a result.

²³³ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 10.

²³⁴ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 54-5.

²³⁵ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 24-35.

Joining a religious order could provide a way of life in connection with the Church and in the ongoing spirit of religious renewal at that time. The late 15th and early 16th centuries saw significant growth in the number of religious houses in Avila:

Before 1450 the city housed only four monasteries and one female Cistercian community divided among three small convents. Between 1450 and 1510 five new religious houses were established (four of them female), three of the older houses were rebuilt or reorganized, and many of Avila's shrines, hospitals, hospices, and chapels were founded . . . A large part of the explanation lies in the movement for reform and renewal of the Church which characterized much of western Christendom in the later Middle Ages.²³⁶

Unmarried or widowed women sometimes joined with other single women, including members of their own families, to live lives of holiness together in one house. As part of the spirit of reform and renewal, these holy women of Avila, as elsewhere in Europe, gathered for prayer and to perform acts of charity and penitence. Some groups lived in the home of a widow who acted as the leader of the group. Certain groups wore distinctive clothing and observed a religious rule, often taking vows of chastity, but they were not members of any specific religious order. In Spain, women who lived together in this way were called *beatas*, and their houses were known as *beaterios*.

One such widow in Avila was Doña María Dávila, who had been married and widowed twice, to two wealthy and powerful men, and who had no children. She established the Dominican monastery of Santo Tomás in Avila in 1482 and rebuilt the shrine of Nuestra Señora de Sonsoles not far from Avila. She also served as the first abbess of a convent of Poor Clare nuns near Avila from 1502 to 1511. Her will left funds for the continuation of this convent after

²³⁶ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 36.

she died, which was called “las Gordillas” by the locals because of its location on the family estate at the place of the same name.²³⁷

The first Dominican monastery in Avila, Santa Catalina, was established by Doña Catalina Guiera as a result of arrangements in her will which specified that funds would be used for “institutionalizing an arrangement by which she had lived for several years.” The women in her informal *beaterio* probably lived as Dominican tertiaries in her home after the death of her husband (she had no children). “Doña Catalina established herself as the community’s first abbess, providing for her ‘daughters’ in her will,” which went into effect in 1478.²³⁸

The Augustinian monastery, Our Lady of Grace, where Teresa spent about a year and a half as a lay boarder (from 1531 to 1532), was founded by Doña Mencía López. Her husband, the wealthy silversmith Jorge de Nájera, died in 1504, leaving the estate to his wife. Three years later, Doña Mencía López, two daughters and a female friend began to live in her home as a *beaterio*, following the Rule of St. Augustine. As in the case of the Dominican monastery, the founding widow served as the house’s first abbess.²³⁹

The foundation of the Incarnation monastery has a similar history, and it will be discussed in Chapter 4. This environment is important to our understanding of Teresa’s view of work, especially leadership activities, and to the development of Teresa’s view of what it took to establish a religious foundation. In this environment she would have seen that it was possible for women to establish foundations and to secure a legal and economic basis for the continued

²³⁷ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 41.

²³⁸ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 39-40.

²³⁹ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 42-3.

existence of their religious houses in early modern Spain's climate of ecclesiastical reform. It also demonstrated to her that there were alternatives to marriage or re-marriage for women with leadership gifts and skills.

Teresa's Family History and Context: Economic, Social and Religious

Teresa's family was one of many which left Toledo due to persecution of the Jews. Her grandfather, Juan Sánchez, a successful cloth merchant, moved the family to Avila some time after he and some family members, including Teresa's father, were forced to participate in an *auto de fe*. This was a gruesome parade through the city wearing garb which identified participants as Jewish heretics, at the end of which some were burned at the stake and others were allowed to continue their lives as *conversos*.²⁴⁰

For Sánchez, the painful Inquisitorial proceedings did not interfere with his increase in wealth; he took steps to ensure a good future for himself and his family:

He set himself up [in Avila] as a dealer in fine silk ('trapero'), a business which his sons carried on . . . The 'reconciliation' (i.e., the Toledan Inquisitorial process and public penance), apparently did not affect excessively the upward march of his fortune, furthered on by other interests which were as profitable as they were essential in his world: the collection of rents from tenant farmers . . . and financial administration for the rich archbishopric of Toledo and the sees of Salamanca and Plasencia. His sons, at least initially, tried to round out the family business from their location in Avila.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 109-10.

²⁴¹ Teófanés Egido, O.C.D., "The Historical Setting of St Teresa's Life," in *Carmelite Studies: Spiritual Direction*, edited by John Sullivan, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 146-7.

Sánchez's Avila shop was near the Mercado Chico, on the Cal de Andrín, a busy and central location. He grew wealthy there, "dealing in silks and fine woolens. He belonged to Avila's small but dynamic commercial and professional class, a group that would grow in both number and influence during the sixteenth century."²⁴²

Sánchez also determined that it was necessary to establish himself legally in the class of nobility known as *hidalgos*. To accomplish this he obtained a *pleito de hidalguía*; however, that did not automatically guarantee social acceptance:

Around 1500 Juan Sánchez won a *pleito de hidalguía* entitling him to the status of gentleman and exemption from taxes. Few abulenses, however, were fooled as to the real, and 'unclean,' origins of 'el toledano.' In the value system of sixteenth-century Castile the possession of 'honor,' that complex set of qualities connoting gentle birth, purity of blood, reputation, and the attainment of certain social graces, ranked far above the possession of wealth. Money could buy the descendants of Juan Sánchez access to many of the privileges of upper-class society in Avila, but not necessarily full social acceptance.²⁴³

Sánchez's traditional work as a merchant, well-versed in all aspects of the textile industry, had been established through years of establishing connections and doing all of the necessary business tasks associated with the merchant's trade, including pricing, inventory, negotiation, buying, selling and keeping the books. However, social pressures connected with his new status as *hidalgo*, along with religious tension due to his *converso* background, caused problems for him in his new location, and his sons were not immune to the pressure. The role of merchant was considered "vile" for a member of the social elite, and little by little his sons

²⁴² Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 10.

²⁴³ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 110.

abandoned the family business in favor of travel to America. This was symptomatic of the social and economic trends of the time.²⁴⁴

The legal aspects of establishing *hidalguía* for *conversos* in early modern Catholic Spain were complex. To survive persecution and continue their business affairs, *conversos* became skilled in writing and submitting lawsuits to various juridical authorities. Teresa's brothers and father obtained *pleitos de hidalguía*, which not only established their "clean blood" (*limpieza de sangre*), which was considered equivalent to Old Christian heredity, but also established them as members of the "gentlemen" class. Teresa would later repudiate the importance that people both in religious life and secular life gave to social status and honor. She perceived that worldly honor was closely associated with wealth, and she felt that both could be distractions in religious life.²⁴⁵

As late as 1523, Teresa's father and his brothers were still establishing their religious and social legitimacy through lawsuits. Juan Sánchez's patent of nobility of 1500 attested to his *limpieza de sangre*. But his sons felt they needed additional protection from persecution, so in 1519, when Teresa was four years old, her father and three of her uncles initiated legal proceedings to obtain their own patent of nobility. They had been accused of being mere

²⁴⁴ "Don Juan, el abuelo judío, procuró que sus hijos, entre ellos Don Alonso, padre de la Santa, emparentasen con familias nobles; poco a poco todos fueron abandonando dos elementos delatores de su origen judaico: el oficio de mercaderes, considerado como 'vil', y no utilizaron el apellido Sánchez de Toledo, del abuelo, y, al final, también desapareció en la siguiente generación el apellido Sánchez. Finalmente, todos sus hermanos varones se embarcaron en la aventura americana. Todo ello es muy sintomático para un analista crítico de la historia." Efren, *Teresa de Jesús*, 22.

²⁴⁵ Cf. *Camino*, Chapters 12 and 36.

pecheros – “plebians and taxpayers” – not nobles.²⁴⁶ The Cepeda brothers went to great lengths, including bribery, to obtain an *ejecutoria* in 1523 which preserved their status of *hidalguía*.

Bárbara Mujica has emphasized the importance of writing in the Cepeda home:

The Cepedas not only read, they also wrote. Little has been made of the importance of writing in the Cepeda home, but in the atmosphere of constant litigation in which she spent her early years, Teresa must have been aware of her father constantly writing or dictating letters, complaints, petitions, and declarations . . . As late as 1537, when Teresa was twenty-two years old, the Cepedas were still struggling to validate their social status. That year, they filed a petition demanding that they be exempted from certain debts by virtue of having a patent of nobility.²⁴⁷

She points out that *conversos* of this period became “proficient at filing petitions, managing legal documents, and writing letters.”²⁴⁸ The introduction to legal matters and writing letters in Teresa’s early years gave her experience which would serve her well as she maneuvered her way through many juridical battles and negotiations as she navigated the complex world of civil, ecclesiastical and religious jurisdictions in her reform of the Carmelite Order.

This environment of legal writing and maneuvering is important for us to understand Teresa’s facility with negotiating contracts for her foundations with both civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Her home environment included a great deal of attention to writing legal documents with careful wording and using them to effect change in order to establish a better way of life. The seeds for Teresa’s attention to detail in her own writing and her ability to navigate juridical

²⁴⁶ Bárbara Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009), 22, referencing Teófanos Egido, *El linaje judeoconverso de Santa Teresa* (Madrid: Espiritualidad, 1986), 15.

²⁴⁷ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 24, referencing Teófanos Egido, *El linaje judeoconverso de Santa Teresa* (Madrid: Espiritualidad, 1986), 239-40.

²⁴⁸ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 13.

boundaries and relationships through formal means may be seen in the legal dimension of her early home environment.

Alonso Sanchez and the Family Home

For Alonso Sánchez de Cepeda, Teresa's father, adjusting to a life of nobility was very difficult because he had been raised in "a household which had nothing to do with the lifestyle of the nobility, and much - everything, in fact - to do with that of merchants and businessmen, immersed in economic activities in keeping with their *judeoconverso* status . . . Don Juan, the patriarch of the family, and the saint's grandfather, was a merchant dealing in fine cloths." Don Alonso and his brothers "at first followed in [their father's] footsteps as merchants, landlords and *hidalgos*," but eventually they changed their economic activity due to their new social standing. Alonso "spent half of his wealth on property," but he didn't have a broad enough monetary base to cope with the rapid inflation of that time. He "found it necessary to liquidate his first wife's dowry, after that of Doña Beatriz, and he was embroiled in endless debts until finally, at Christmas of 1543, he died completely ruined, pursued by a swarm of creditors."²⁴⁹

Egido provides a clear summary of the pressures facing Don Alonso and his brothers as they navigated the complex social, religious and economic landscape of 16th-century Castile:

Teresa's family, like innumerable other Castilian families, found themselves faced with the unavoidable choice between *hidalguismo* . . . or continuing to follow the activities appropriate to their heritage. The public . . . was more merciless than the official establishment, and its harassment determined the final fate of these groups, anxious for the social acceptance which was refused them (which the public haggled over) and which

²⁴⁹ Egido, "Historical Setting of St Teresa's Life," 146-8.

only became accessible at the cost of abandoning the true source of their wealth. The choice, whenever possible, was always for identification with the *hidalgos*. This was the case with the family circle of the Cepedas within which Teresa was raised.²⁵⁰

This pressure significantly affected the work lives of Teresa's family by leading them away from their traditional mercantile and textile-related activities into those associated with ownership of land and more suited to the *hidalgo* class. Growing up in a family immersed in this type of transition would have affected Teresa's view of what constituted proper work. She likely would have heard and participated in discussions about cloth, wool and the merchant's trade, while at the same time considering what types of work are proper for members of the nobility.

For a time, the Cepedas were involved in both lifestyles: "The case of the Cepedas, advancing upward by wealth, punished by the Inquisition nevertheless breaks the classical pattern by maintaining at one and the same time very suspicious and 'servile' occupations together with the habits, lifestyle, and reputation of *hidalgos*."²⁵¹ On top of this, there were social pressures due to the fact that Don Alonso had purchased rather than inherited *hidalguía* "through the fruits of vulgar trade and now held up his head alongside those of truly ancient lineage. The *converso* gentleman represented, in the eyes of the old aristocracy, a debasement of the social coinage."²⁵² The status of the new *converso hidalgos* was resented not only by the existing nobility, due to having bought their nobility, but also by ordinary citizens, who paid taxes from which *hidalgos* were exempt.

²⁵⁰ Egido, "Historical Setting of St Teresa's Life," 148.

²⁵¹ Egido, "Historical Setting of St Teresa's Life," 147.

²⁵² Rowan Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, (Wilson, CT: Morehouse Publishing, 1991), 14.

In character, Don Alonso was “a grave, thoughtful man . . . as patient in adversity as he was modest in prosperity, temperate in his way of life, probably a good horseman and swordsman.” But because of his family’s transition into the aristocracy, he was “doubtless unfamiliar, like all of his class, even when reduced in fortune, with any sort of useful or profitable work.”²⁵³ To manage his financial concerns, Don Alonso turned, in part, to marriage. In addition to providing income without the need for work through the acquisition of a dowry, marriage by *conversos* into Old Christian families increased their own status and legitimacy as well as that of their children, especially with regard to *limpieza de sangre*. Don Alonso married Doña Catalina del Peso y Henao in 1504, and had two children with her, Juan and María, before she died in 1507. His estate had been valued around 350 *maravedis* (a unit of Spanish currency) before the marriage, and her dowry increased that by 100,000 *maravedis*.²⁵⁴

Two years after the death of Doña Catalina, Don Alonso, then 24, married Doña Beatriz Dávila y Ahumada, a girl of fourteen and “daughter of one of the oldest and noblest families of Ávila . . . heiress to considerable property there and in near-by country places.” Among the items in her dowry was property in the settlement of Gotarrendura, in the hill country north of Avila, which included “some houses, a garden with a dovecot, two thousand head of cattle in herds, some vineyards, and various meadows and fields.”²⁵⁵

²⁵³ William Thomas Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Ávila: A Biography* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1943), 5.

²⁵⁴ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 5-6.

²⁵⁵ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 5-6, 21.

A son, Hernando, was born to Doña Beatriz a year after her marriage to Don Alonso, then Rodrigo was born in 1511 and Teresa in 1515 (named after her maternal grandmother, Doña Teresa de las Cuevas). The children born to Doña Beatriz after Teresa were, in birth order, Lorenzo, Antonio, Pedro, Jerónimo, Agustín and Juana. Some time after the birth of Juana in 1528, when Teresa was around thirteen years old, her mother died.²⁵⁶

Shortly after his first marriage in 1504, Don Alonso bought a large building in Avila across from the Church of Santo Domingo de Silos and next to the Church of St. Scholastica. It had been the public mint and was called the “money house.” He had the building made into a home, and among the items inside were “a chess table . . . and not a few articles of feminine interest, including a spinning wheel. Of books there were plenty, for those days; great tomes with heavy leather bindings.”²⁵⁷ Ironically, for one who would be so devoted later to establishing foundations in poverty, Teresa grew up in a converted money mint.

Don Alonso made every effort to fit into the upper classes and to provide for his family both economically and socially. Among other things, Teresa’s home environment provided her with a large home, many brothers and two sisters, and access to mentally stimulating games like chess, opportunities to read and tools of manual work such as spinning. Chess (*Camino* 16), reading (*Vida* 1 and 3) and spinning (*Vida* 10) all enter into her thought and writings later in life.

Teresa and Work in Her Early Years: Influences and Experiences

²⁵⁶ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 8, 22.

²⁵⁷ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 3-4.

Teresa's life during her early years had several key segments:²⁵⁸

- Teresa resided with her family until she was sixteen (1531).
- She lived for a year and a half at Our lady of Grace (until the end of 1532).
- A short stay of convalescence in Hortigosa, Castellanos (1533).
- She returned to her paternal home (1534-1535).
- She entered the Incarnation on 11 November 1535.

In Teresa's earliest years at home with her family, we see the beginnings of her approach to work. Her very young years were spent with her mother and grandmother, and her earliest individual work most likely consisted of everyday household tasks. As she grew up and spent more time with her brothers, older sister and cousins, she developed close relationships that contributed to her preparation for life and work in a religious community. She also benefited from the education she received at Our Lady of Grace monastery, an Augustinian convent in Avila where "girls of the nobility were prepared for marriage."²⁵⁹ Finally, we see the seeds for her later practices of leadership and administrative work in her management of household accounts and running the family estate after many family members had moved away or, in the case of her mother, had died, leaving her to function in a leadership role by the time she was

²⁵⁸ Tomás Álvarez, *St. Teresa of Avila: 100 Themes on her Life and Work*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2011), 93. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "A Teresian Chronology," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3: 83-94.

²⁵⁹ Kavanaugh describes this preparation as follows: "In St. Teresa's time, the nuns operated a boarding school where girls from the nobility were prepared for marriage. The intellectual level certainly would not have reached that of the present-day high school. This took place about 1531, when Teresa was sixteen." *CWST, Life* 2.6, 1:468n5.

twenty. These elements of her life will be explored in chronological order, focusing on highlights that help us understand the role of work as it developed throughout Teresa's early years and as it set the stage for work in her middle and later years.

Teresa's home environment was a busy one, where "nadie podía cruzarse de brazos" ("no one was able to cross one's arms," that is, sit back and rest).²⁶⁰ Wood and charcoal were needed to keep the fires burning in the cold Castilian winters, both in Avila and in Gotarrendura. There was work to do to keep the houses stocked with bread, flour, preserves, cheese, bacon, mutton, eggs, honey, dried fruit and wine. Work at home included working with wool and making candles. "Everyone worked incessantly, from the servants and laborers to the lady and the lord of the house [translation mine]."²⁶¹

The following description provides a picture of the interior of Teresa's home, including home furnishings as well as materials for women's handiwork with flax and wool:

The residence of the Cepeda y Ahumada, situated in the Plazuela de Santo Domingo, opposite the church of Santo Domingo de Silos, consisted of two blocks of buildings connected by *patios* and gardens . . . Above the entrance door, decorated with great studs forged by a first-class craftsman, the knight's escutcheon displayed his quarterings of nobility . . . In Don Alonso's house there was no lack of carpets from Flanders, of cushions of rich silk; but there were also the straight-backed armchairs in wood and leather known as *sillones fraileros* or monastic armchairs, crockery from Talavera and Valencia, the copper pots and wrought-iron chandeliers . . . The presses and wardrobes of

²⁶⁰ Efren, *Teresa de Jesús*, 8-9.

²⁶¹ "La vida familiar transcurría entre Avila y Gotarrendura, donde los inviernos eran compensados con abundancia de carbón de encina y troncos de leña para el hogar. En ambas casas abundaban las provisiones de pan y harina de trigo y de centeno, conservas y quesos, tocino y carnero, huevos, miel y fruta seca, así como botas de vino, blanco y tinto. Había, abigualmente, abundante provisión de trabajo casero, lana esquilada, lavada ehilada, así como seda lisa y cintas de color. E instrumental de artesanía: husos, devanaderas, cedazos, artesas, hinteros, mesillas de cerner, tinajas, costales, cubos y celemines, así como hachas, candelas y velones para el alumbrado. Era evidente que en aquella casa nadie podía cruzarse de brazos. Todos trabajaban sin cesar, desde los criados y los gañanes hasta la señora y el señor de la casa." Efren, *Teresa de Jesús*, 8-9.

dark carved oak were filled almost beyond capacity with linen and with the skeins of flax or wool which the mistress of the household reserved for her own use for spinning and weaving, as Queen Isabella the Catholic had done: her husband never wore a shirt which she had not spun with her own hands.²⁶²

Teresa and her siblings would have heard all the news as they went about their work, due to the central location of the family home and the connections her family had with the community. In the garden, which was “the entire world of Juan, María, Fernando, Rodrigo, Teresa, Lorenzo, Antonio, Pedro, and even of little Jerónimo,” servants would be at work on leather, wood or other tasks for the family:

Here the spinning was done, the sewing, the washing; elsewhere there was the digging, the planting, the horses were groomed and the sheep branded with a red-hot iron. All this meant so much talking, singing, praying, perhaps trembling with fear, according to the news which men come from afar, galloping by on horseback, would hastily fling in passing, or the troops of musketeers of the Tercios, on the road to wars.²⁶³

The picture that emerges from these descriptions is one of a busy estate, with many indoor and outdoor tasks and activities. The children could see men and women at work cleaning, fixing things, cooking, spinning and building. In Gotarrendura, farming and ranching were practiced, which allowed Teresa to experience feeding and watering the animals, caring for the land and growing and preserving food. This large and busy setting exposed the young Teresa to the many types of work and coordination of personnel needed to run a large enterprise. This general management knowledge and experience would serve her well in her later administrative and leadership capacity.

Teresa’s Parents and Uncle Pedro

²⁶² Marcelle Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, translated by Kathleen Pond (Petersham, MA: St. Bede’s Publications, 1988), 5-6.

²⁶³ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 6.

Teresa's father was "known as a man of great integrity both in morals and manners, patient and good, very devout."²⁶⁴ His topics of discussion revolved around God, wars and exploration, and for him "progress in the Indies was measured by the number of souls saved there."²⁶⁵ Although it was proper for *hidalgos* to keep slaves, he "refused to do so, and a little Moorish girl whom one of his brothers confided to his care for a certain time was treated by him like one of his own daughters."²⁶⁶

Don Alonso liked fine things, and like his father, Juan Sánchez, he would have been highly knowledgeable about high-quality textiles due to his family's business. An appreciation for luxury goods would have been reinforced by the family's status as *hidalgos*. The wealth Don Alonso had at the time of the death of his first wife, Doña Catalina, consisted of :

374,000 maravedis, magnificent estates, great flocks and herds, houses and an abundance of jewels. he loved splendour, and his violet damask or crimson satin doublets, shirts embroidered in scarlet and gold, ruffs from Paris, gilt swords with black velvet scabbards and gilded belts, red and yellow saddlecloths from Rouen, the breastplates with his armorial bearings, helmets, gauntlets, steel shoes, all showed that this gentleman-at-arms was not disdainful of fine apparel.²⁶⁷

Teresa's mother strove to keep Teresa's "mind and hands constantly occupied: she taught her her the art of fine needlework, how to embroider the designs she made with many shades of

²⁶⁴ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 4.

²⁶⁵ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 4.

²⁶⁶ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 4. Cf. *Vida* 1.1.

²⁶⁷ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 4.

silk.”²⁶⁸ Some of the items Teresa embroidered are still extant today: “In the Carmel of Medina [there is] a vestment and some corporals exquisitely embroidered by her; in the Incarnation in Avila they also have conserved a towel for the washing of the feet on Good Friday, which was embroidered by her.”²⁶⁹

Early in the *Vida*, Teresa writes about her mother’s love of reading books of chivalry, but that it did not distract her from her household duties (*Vida* 2.1). Teresa came to value reading for her own spiritual benefit far more than reading for entertainment, because she reports later that she put down the books about chivalry in favor of better books, because of the harm the former did her (*Vida* 4.7). The seed for Teresa’s evaluation and prioritization of various types of reading, and the importance of reading good books as a form of intellectual work, to which it is worth devoting significant time and effort, may be seen in her early exposure to reading by her family members, perhaps most especially her uncle Don Pedro, whose influence is discussed below.

Although not directly related to formal work in her earliest years, it’s important to mention the powerful influence that religion had on the young Teresa while she was growing up:

The influence that most profoundly shaped her mind, heart, and will during those early years was, of course, the Catholic Faith. . . . The Mass itself, which Teresa attended at one of the near-by churches with her mother, was a re-enactment of the most sublime and sorrowful hours in human history. And one of the invariable customs in the house of Don Alonso was the recital, every evening after supper, of the Rosary.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 12-13.

²⁶⁹ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 212-3.

²⁷⁰ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 8.

Teresa had a profound devotion to Our Lady, and she would often go to the oratory of San Lázaro near her house to “kneel a long while at the feet of Our Lady of Charity, whose image was uncommonly lifelike and compassionate.”²⁷¹

Teresa’s uncle, Don Pedro Sánchez de Cepeda, was also a strong influence in Teresa’s spiritual life, especially with regard to the practices of prayer and reading and the discernment of her vocation to enter religious life. After Teresa had spent a year and a half at Our Lady of Grace, she was forced to go home due to an illness (*Vida* 3.3). Her father brought her to her sister’s home in Castellanos to recover,²⁷² and on the way they stopped at her uncle’s home at Hortigosa (*Vida* 3.4).²⁷³ Don Pedro was a spiritual man, and he became devoted to the monastic way of life in his later years and eventually joined a monastery of Jeronimites. He was fond of reading good books, and he asked Teresa to read to him during her visit to his house: “su ejercicio era buenos libros de romance y su ablar era lo mas ordinario de dios y de la vanidad del mundo açiame le leyese y aunque no era amiga de ellos mostrava *que si*.”²⁷⁴

²⁷¹ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 14-15.

²⁷² Kavanaugh adds additional details: “Her half sister, María de Cepeda . . . married Don Martín Barrientos in January of 1531. They established their home in a little town about a day’s journey northwest of Avila, called Castellanos de la Cañada.” *CWST, Life* 2.3-2.6, 1:468n4,6.

²⁷³ Biographical details about this uncle are described by Kavanaugh: “This uncle was Don Pedro Sánchez de Cepeda, widower of Doña Catalina del Aguila. He lived in the little town of Hortigosa, near the town in which Teresa’s sister lived. Later he retired to the monastery of the Jeronimites, and it was there he died.” *CWST, Vida* 3.4, 1:468n4.

²⁷⁴ *VidaTR*, 3.4. “Su ejercicio era buenos libros de romance, y su hablar era -lo más ordinario- de Dios y de la vanidad del mundo. Hacíame le leyese y, aunque no era amiga de ellos, mostraba *que sí*.” *OC, Vida* 3.4. “He spent his time reading good books in the vernacular, and his talk was -- most often -- about God and the vanity of the world. He asked me to read these books to him; and, although I did not like them, I pretended to.” *CWST, Life* 3.4.

As she convalesced for several months at her sister's home, she continued to read and to wrestle with her choice of vocation:

anque fueron los dias *que* estuve pocos con la fuerça *que* açian en mi coraçon las palabras de dios ansi leydas como oydas y la buena conpañia vine a yr entendiendo la verdad de quando niña de *que* no era todo nada y la vanidad del mundo y como acavava en breve /y a temer si me vuiera muerto como me yva a el ynfierno y anque no acavava mi voluntad de enclinarse a ser monja vi era el mijor y mas siguro estado y ansi poco a poco me determine a forçarme para tomarle²⁷⁵

Teresa reports that reading played a large role in her choice to become a nun, especially the *Letters* of St. Jerome: “avianme dado con vnas calenturas vnos grandes desmayos *que* sienpre tenia bien poca salud diome la vida aver *quedado* ya amiga de buenos libros leya en las epistolas de san jeronimo *que* me animavan de suerte *que* me determine a deçirlo a mi *padre que* casi era como a tomar el abito.”²⁷⁶ Álvarez states that “the *Letters* of St. Jerome had a decisive impact on Teresa, especially the section dedicated to the contemplative life (Book Three, ‘Treatise on the

²⁷⁵ *VidaTR*, 3.5. “Aunque fueron los días que estuve pocos, con la fuerza que hacían en mi corazón las palabras de Dios, así leídas como oídas, y la buena compañía, vine a ir entendiendo la verdad de cuando niña, de que no era todo nada, y la vanidad del mundo, y cómo acababa en breve, y a temer, si me hubiera muerto, cómo me iba al infierno. Y aunque no acababa mi voluntad de inclinarse a ser monja, vi era el mejor y más seguro estado. Y así poco a poco me determiné a forzarme para tomarle.” *OC, Vida* 3.5. “Although the days I remained there were few, because of the good company and the strength the words of God -- both heard and read -- gave my heart, I began to understand the truth I knew in childhood (the nothingness of all things, the vanity of the world, and how it would soon come to an end) and to fear that if I were to die I would go to hell. And although my will did not completely incline to being a nun, I saw that the religious life was the best and safest state, and so little by little I decided to force myself to accept it.” *CWST, Life* 3.5.

²⁷⁶ *VidaTR*, 3.7. “Habíanme dado, con unas calenturas, unos grandes desmayos, que siempre tenía bien poca salud. Diome la vida haber quedado ya amiga de buenos libros. Leía en las *Epístolas* de San Jerónimo, que me animaban de suerte que me determiné a decirlo a mi padre, que casi era como a tomar el hábito.” *OC, Vida* 3.7. “At that time I had, together with a high fever, great fainting spells; for I always had poor health. My fondness for good books was my salvation. Reading the *Letters of St. Jerome* so encouraged me that I decided to tell my father about my decision to take the habit.” *CWST, Life* 3.7.

hermit state . . . On the contemplative life or contempt of the world, or state of the hermit’); and perhaps the letter to Heliodorus, which speaks of overcoming the affection for one’s father.”²⁷⁷

This episode highlights the value of reading in Teresa’s upbringing, and the importance of having an environment in which the reading of spiritual books can impact the life of the reader in such a way that spiritual formation is nourished and life choices are affected. Teresa worked very hard to provide a similar type of environment for Carmelite nuns and friars in her reform later in her life, and the seeds for this may be seen, in part, in her early years with Don Pedro and her parents, when reading, prayer and the Catholic faith were highly valued.

Teresa’s Family Experiences

Teresa’s early years included many good times with her family members and cousins, but also many experiences of loss, including the death of her grandmother (age ten) and her mother (age thirteen), and the departure of her older sister (marriage) and her brothers (expeditions to America). When she decided to enter religious life at the Incarnation, she initially experienced a profound sense of loss in leaving her father, who was against her entry into religious life (*Vida* 4.1). Teresa’s experiences of loss, especially her ability to accept loss and redirect her grief toward religious figures, may have contributed to her ability to practice detachment in later life as she pursued various goals. The loss of her mother, for example, prompted Teresa to seek comfort in prayer in front of the image of Our Lady of Charity at the oratory of San Lázaro.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 94.

²⁷⁸ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 14-15.

As a young girl Teresa spent a lot of time with her brother, Rodrigo, playing in the garden and “playing at” religious life, first by running away with him to try to become a martyr for God (*Vida* 1.4), and later by piling up stones and building little hermitages in order to pretend to live the religious life (*Vida* 1.5). Children’s play is often practice for adult life, and these experiences demonstrate that Teresa as a young girl already had exposure to religious life and an inclination to live for God. The “work” of building hermitages would come to fruition later in her establishment of new religious houses where nuns and friars would indeed become hermits-in-community as Carmelites.

As she grew up, Teresa also spent time with her extended family, including especially one cousin to whom she became particularly attached, perhaps in a romantic way.²⁷⁹ As a young teen, after her mother died, Teresa “succumbed to peer pressure and also began to concern herself with her appearance, her dress, and her reputation.”²⁸⁰ It was at this time, after her older sister María got married and left home (1531), that her father decided to send her to live as a lay boarder at the Our Lady of Grace Augustinian monastery “so that she would break away from the network of her friendships. In the meantime, the first of her brothers, Hernando, leaves for America (1532).”²⁸¹

²⁷⁹ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 111.

²⁸⁰ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 111.

²⁸¹ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 93-4.

Don Alonso employed many servants, but he would not keep slaves as some members of his family did.²⁸² When a female slave of one of Don Alonso's brothers stayed at his home, Teresa reports that he treated her as one of the family (*Vida* 1.1). This observation of different classes of servants and slaves, and the awareness that their roles were not necessarily rigid, would serve Teresa well later when she encountered the two-tiered system of nuns at the Incarnation and when she later established her own foundations. She had a sense of the organizational structure of personnel consisting of diverse levels of ability, social classes and roles. Teresa ultimately would be able to see beyond the existing structures to envision a life in religious houses in which all members were equal. This was radical for her day, and the seeds for this view appeared in her early years, while observing how her father managed his estate.

Community Life at Our Lady of Grace

Teresa had the opportunity to deepen her education at the Our Lady of Grace monastery where she lived for a year and a half when she was sixteen:

Teresa de Ahumada y Cepeda was sixteen and four months. At a time when there were no establishments of higher education for girls, these nuns received the wealthy daughters of distinguished families. They went there more to deepen the practice of their religion and to strive after the attainment of virtue than for learning: to be familiar with the

²⁸² “La servidumbre completaba aquel ambiente familiar. Don Alonso tenía ‘muchos criados’; nunca toleró tener esclavos, porque su tierno corazón no podía ver en torno suyo gente desgraciada. Se han conservado algunos nombres de sus criados; los más, han caído en el olvido. En 1507, entre los paniaguados, están los nombres de Pedro, Juan, María y Leonor; y en 1525 los de Miguel Sánchez y Juan García. Años más tarde aún se hacen referencias a antiguos criados de la casa en las cartas de Santa Teresa. Los tenían en Avila y en Gotarrendura; había renteros, lacayos, ‘mozos del arada’, ayos, mozas y doncellas.” Efrén de la Madre de Dios, O.C.D., and Otger Steggink, O.Carm., *Tiempo y Vida de Santa Teresa* (Madrid: La Editorial Católica, S.A., 1948), 18.

catechism, to know how to read and write, to have some knowledge of how to keep accounts, to be a skilful embroideress, an accomplished lace-maker, a good spinner, an average musician, this was considered sufficient education.²⁸³

Not only did she learn various skills, but also she was introduced to an “intelligent and kind person who was much devoted to the religious life,” the nun in charge of novices and lay students, Doña María Briceño, who provided a role model for her.²⁸⁴ Teresa was impressed by the virtue of the nuns and “their commitment to a life of prayer.” However, when Teresa became ill, she was forced to leave the monastery in order to recover at home. She also spent time at the home of her sister, María, in Castellanos de la Cañada,²⁸⁵ and with her uncle, Don Pedro, while she recovered from her illness, as described above.

Although Teresa was not in favor of becoming a nun when she left Our Lady of Grace, within a few years she would decide to enter the Carmelite monastery of the Incarnation. Her younger brother, Antonio, attempted to enter the Dominicans at the same time that she entered the Carmelite Order, largely due to her persuasion:

After Rodrigo had gone, she chose the gentlest of her brothers, Antonio, who was only fifteen, as her confidant. She was always talking to him about what she did not yet experience except at intervals, and the more she was tempted by the illusory things of earth, the more ardently and persuasively did she speak to him of eternal life . . . She read St Jerome to him aloud, especially the terrible *Letter to Heliodorus*.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 24.

²⁸⁴ Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 112.

²⁸⁵ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 31.

²⁸⁶ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 41.

Teresa frequently visited her friend Juana Suarez at the Incarnation. Eventually she made up her mind to enter religious life there, and she told her father (*Vida* 3.7).²⁸⁷ Teresa decided to enter the Incarnation at age twenty. This caused problems for her father, Don Alonso, which are discussed below.

Leadership and Administration

Teresa's administrative abilities may be listed among other characteristics she had that are helpful to anyone in a leadership role: "Teresa had beauty, charm, literary genius of a high order (though uncultivated), an administrative ability second to none; humor and tenderness and common sense; the courage and resourcefulness of a great soldier, with the patient obedience and humility of a saint."²⁸⁸ She also played chess with her father and handled the estate's accounts with her sister, María.²⁸⁹

After Teresa's recovery from illness and her stay with her sister's family at Castellanos, she returned home where "her father and brothers were glad to welcome her back" because she ran the house so well. "Her talent for organization, her extreme love of order and cleanliness, her intuitive knowledge of character, her need of affection . . . made of her a woman as attractive as she was accomplished."²⁹⁰ By age twenty, due to the absence of her mother, older sister and

²⁸⁷ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 40.

²⁸⁸ Walsh, *Saint Teresa*, 1.

²⁸⁹ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 16.

²⁹⁰ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 36-7.

older brothers, Teresa was leading and managing the family's large estate. The situation in the house at that time was this: "The father is a widower and the oldest son [is] dead in Italy, the oldest daughter, María, [is] married and absent, two older brothers, Hernando and Rodrigo, [are] on course for the Americas; there remain at home Antonio age fifteen, Pedro age fourteen, Augustín age nine, and Juana age seven."²⁹¹ Therefore, when Teresa decided to enter religious life, it caused problems for Don Alonso:

[Teresa's] departure had meant for [Don Alonso] cruel suffering and perhaps financial ruin as well: he was not the sort of man to look after his own interests. Doña Beatriz and then María and Teresa had been the necessary stewards. Left alone, he had become impoverished through his generosity to his sons whose equipment for the army had been on a lavish scale, to María - always in difficulties - to the poor.²⁹²

Don Alonso wrote a letter to Teresa saying, "'On you alone depends this house now about to totter. . . .' It was true that her father's house depended entirely on her."²⁹³ Teresa was very well versed in matters associated with money and trade because of her family's strong association with the world of commerce in Avila.²⁹⁴ Teresa acted in spite of the objections of her father and entered the Incarnation in 1535. Her experience in business matters at home served her well not only at the Incarnation, which itself would go through financial problems and experience

²⁹¹ Álvarez, *100 Themes*, 95.

²⁹² Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 72.

²⁹³ Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 41.

²⁹⁴ "Era el mundo del comercio en que se movía la familia, abierto de par en par a la clientela de la ciudad, y que se prolongará normalmente en la década siguiente, cuando entre en escena Teresa niña. Es muy posible que ese mundillo de compraventas haya influido en ella, que años adelante se apodará reiteradamente a sí misma baratona y negociadora, muy entendida en dineros." Tomás Álvarez, *Cultura de Mujer en el Siglo XVI: El caso de Santa Teresa de Jesús* (Ávila: Imprenta García, 2006), 20.

shortages, but also later, when she negotiated business matters in the establishment of new foundations and was in a leadership position.

To summarize some of the themes and seeds for Teresa in the domain of leadership and administration, Teresa became aware of the need both for legal and business management through observation of her brothers and father. Her father's family was involved in the wool trade during a period of economic expansion in Spain, and Teresa was exposed to the family's business activities early in life. Teresa's family had become well-recognized as prominent merchants before the move to Avila, and after that there was a shift due to maneuvering through the complex social requirements of the nobility class, which placed less emphasis on working for one's livelihood.

Teresa's influences from her parents included the textile industry, legal concerns, business matters, reading, writing and the importance of religion. Teresa's father's influence resulted partly due to the fact that he left many business-related matters undone, especially after Teresa's mother died. There were a number of lawsuits held before and during her life, regarding *hidalguía* and the social importance of establishing *limpieza de sangre* for Jewish *conversos* during that time in Spain.

Teresa learned that not only work itself but also its connection to the wider society must be taken into account in order to navigate life and business – one must deal with society's written and unwritten rules and expectations. This will become important later in her negotiations with residents in the cities in which she establishes foundations, and she develops a facility to communicate well with all levels of society and religious leaders. The seeds for these abilities

were established during her early years, both among her family members and in her early experiences of community life.

Themes and Synthesis: Teresa's Early Years

In this phase of Teresa's life, she never lived completely alone. However, much of her time was spent in solitary activities such as reading or embroidery, or in illness, which most likely was lonely for her at times, and it separated her from her friends at Our Lady of Grace monastery, although it reunited her with family members. Her Uncle Pedro encouraged her love of books and spiritual reading, which would grow even stronger in later years, and which was a largely solitary practice.

Teresa's family connections were strong, especially at the beginning of this phase of her life. She was close to her mother before her mother's death when Teresa was about twelve years old, and most likely to her grandmother, too, who died when Teresa was ten. As Teresa grew older her extended family became even more important than it had been, along with her brothers and sisters, especially her brother Rodrigo, with whom she was particularly close. This developed her social skills and her sense of charm, along with her persuasive abilities.

Teresa experienced much loss in her early years, which may have led to an understanding of life as fleeting and relationships as changeable. The deaths of her grandmother and mother, and the marriage of her sister, María, left Teresa without female leadership in her home. She likely experienced a sense of loss when she was sent to Our Lady of Grace, when she was

separated from her siblings, cousins and father, and again when she left her new friends and perhaps mother figures there and returned home due to illness.

Teresa assumed a great deal of responsibility in her early years, especially in her work as administrator of the accounts on her family's estate. Her mother had taken care of the books more than her father, and when she died the task was left to María and Teresa. After María was married and left home, Teresa did this work, which developed the accounting and business-related skills that would serve her later as she negotiated the purchase of property and houses for new foundations.

Teresa's experience in her search for her own vocation, along with her observation of others during this period, set the stage for her understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of different people for different tasks, even different forms of prayer, that we see later in her writings. She became aware of different classes of people during this time, and learned that roles may be fluid (*Vida* 1.1). Teresa's awareness of the ability to break out of class boundaries and to pursue a vocation fitting for one's personal aptitudes, attentive internally to the call of God while remaining sensitive externally to the demands of society and the needs of the Church, was first formed in this period of her life.

The wider economic, religious and social community was a powerful influence on Teresa during her early years. She witnessed her father and brothers going to great lengths to execute *pleitos de hidalguía* in order to preserve their noble status in a society hostile to their Jewish heritage. She likely heard about taxation due to the shifting role of her family in society, and she learned about the social consequences of engaging in certain kinds of work (i.e., "vile" trades vs. noble inheritance).

An awareness of the different ways of obtaining income were part of Teresa's family's vocabulary, and these included inheritance, trade, farming and income from land holdings, among others. The art of negotiation was one of the skills needed for the family's legal and business proceedings, and this would have included developing a mastery of business and legal language and the ability to "read" people and to be sensitive to their needs and wants. This familiarity with legal and business concepts and practices, along with an awareness of how they fit into the wider society, would serve Teresa well in later years as she would come to navigate the complexities of ecclesiastical, civil, financial, social and legal challenges in the process of establishing new foundations.

Contemplation and Action: Intellectual Work and Household Tasks

Early in life Teresa learned from her mother that recreational reading should not interfere with household duties (*Vida* 2.1), but she also learned from her Uncle Pedro that reading about prayer is important, and from Our Lady of Grace that understanding the Catholic teachings through the catechism is part of a good education. Reading about prayer inspired Teresa to practice prayer (*Vida* 4.7). As she developed she stopped reading books of chivalry recreationally, in favor of studying religious writings such as the *Letters* of St. Jerome (*Vida* 3.7). This strong emphasis on reading, in her own home, in her uncle's home and at Our Lady of Grace, encouraged Teresa to engage in the intellectual work of reading and study and in the contemplative work of prayer. Taking the time to read was rewarded both in her family and at the monastery school where she was a lay boarder, and to read about her faith was even better

and struck a chord in Teresa which led to a deep appreciation of prayer as well as for the teachings of the Church.

Household tasks formed a large part of Teresa's early life, and she most likely learned embroidery, spinning and sewing in her early years, from her mother and during her time at Our Lady of Grace. From later periods of her life we find some of her paper patterns for nuns' habits preserved today in the museum at San José in Avila, and examples of her embroidery are preserved in the museum at the Incarnation. In the *Constitutions* for her reform she will advise the nuns, especially the prioress, to take part in daily monastery tasks such as sweeping (*OC Const VII.1; CWST Const 22*). The seeds of her appreciation for manual labor, needlework and household tasks first appeared in her early years.

Individual Work, Work in Community and Leadership and Administration

The seeds of Teresa's future work as an individual, as a member of a religious community and as a leader and reformer may be found in her early life. Her individual tasks and activities, including daily chores, reading, writing, prayer and manual work such as embroidery, gave Teresa an awareness of the value of intellectual work, manual work and prayer, and also a sense of having an inner and outer life, and the importance of developing one's faith. These seeds will later come to fruition in her own intense prayer life, her deep and articulate writings, her detailed embroidery, her willingness to engage in household tasks, and her devotion to reading and continual education.

Teresa's work in community first developed in her early years through family relationships with brothers, sisters, cousins, parents and her extended family. The servants in her own household, as well as the slaves kept by other family members, introduced Teresa to different classes of people in society. The importance of status and honor to her father and brothers in a society in which their Jewish ancestry was problematic, introduced Teresa to the wider society and its social and religious pressures. Her education at Our Lady of Grace introduced her to life in a religious community, and there she first began to see religious life as an option for herself.

These seeds of community life gave Teresa her first inkling that people could shift from one class to another (her own family had become members of the nobility) and that people could be treated as equals regardless of class (her uncle's slave had been treated like family by her father). Later, in her approach to work in reformed monasteries we will see everyone working as equals, which was a radical change for religious houses in her time.

The seeds of leadership and administration have been highlighted throughout this chapter, especially with regard to Teresa's upbringing in the context of her family's legal and business proceedings. Her exposure to her family's traditional background in the textile industry, and its new role in managing property, including farms, provided not only an opportunity to practice business skills such as accounting but also gave Teresa a sense of how to negotiate. She would have developed a keen awareness of the value of property and other goods through keeping the family's books. The many legal conflicts and *pleitos* provided Teresa with an understanding of the need to establish legal grounds as a basis for important financial, social and personal directions one might want to take in life. Teresa's leadership ability as a reformer later in life

stems, in large part, from this early introduction to the tools and skills necessary for effective negotiation, record-keeping and other administrative and leadership tasks.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, we have described work in Teresa's early years, in its individual, community and leadership dimensions. Growing up on a large estate, as the daughter of a *converso* merchant in a large family, gave Teresa early exposure to many different types of tasks and duties. She observed her mother's household duties and participated in the family's household tasks, and she learned to read and to practice needlework and crafts such as embroidery, sewing and spinning. She experienced the different types of work done by different classes of servants and slaves who worked for her own family and her extended family. She also saw that roles such as slavery could be fluid, especially when her father treated his brother's female slave as a member of their own family while she resided with them.

At Our Lady of Grace monastery, Teresa obtained an education suitable for young ladies of noble status, including reading, writing, study of the catechism, embroidery, lace-making, spinning and music. These activities emphasized the value of intellectual work as well as manual work, and prayer was also a daily part of life at the monastery.

A strong religious atmosphere pervaded Teresa's home and was aligned both with the culture of the time and with important social conventions. Teresa's father and brothers renounced their family's business in the wool trade after establishing noble status by means of *pleitos de hidalguía*, in which taxes were avoided and inherited wealth and income from land holdings

replaced earned income from work in crafts or trade. Teresa witnessed many business and legal activities as a result of her family's lawsuits and struggle to maintain the level of wealth appropriate for a noble family without practicing its former methods of work and trade in a society in which those aspects of earning one's livelihood were devalued. Many of Teresa's brothers left home to sail to the New World, in search of honor and wealth.

Teresa was exposed to leadership and business practices at home in such a way that she was able to emerge as a leader of her family's estate after her brothers and older sister had left the home and her mother had died. By the time she was twenty she was virtually running the estate, including keeping the accounts, with help from her older sister, María.

In Chapter 4 we focus on Teresa's approach to work after her entry into religious life and during her years as a nun at the Incarnation, and in Chapter 5 we focus on her leadership and other work activities associated with reform, establishing foundations and writing books.

CHAPTER 4

WORK IN TERESA'S MIDDLE YEARS: 1535-1560

Chapter Introduction

In this chapter, Teresa's years at the Monastery of the Incarnation are described vis-à-vis her practices and approach to work. Both interior and exterior forms of work are addressed, including the work of her formation as a Carmelite nun and her efforts at prayer, the manual work done at the monastery, and the pastoral work done by the nuns in service to others, particularly wealthy widows, outside the monastery. This period begins when Teresa enters the monastery in 1535 at age 20 and ends in 1560, when she determines that she will form a new foundation that will more closely follow the Carmelite *Rule*.

Biographical Background of Teresa's Middle Years

We begin with an overview of this period of Teresa's life, focusing on the key events that happened during this time. Teresa entered the Incarnation in 1535 and she received the Carmelite habit a year later, in 1536.²⁹⁵ A generous dowry was given to the Incarnation by Teresa's father, which provided her with the spacious living quarters associated with a woman of her status. The

²⁹⁵ William Thomas Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1943), 43. Walsh points out that the year of entry is disputed and dates from 1533 to 1537 have been proposed, but most scholars agree on 1535 as the year of entry, when Teresa was 20.

dowry was valued at 75,000 *maravedís* and “consisted of an area of land, located in Gotarrendura, which rented for 25 *fanegas* of grain, half wheat and half barley [translation mine].”²⁹⁶ A *fanega* of grain would have weighed about 40 kilograms.²⁹⁷ She also brought with her many items of cloth, including blankets, pillows, cushions and clothing made of “choice woolens from which the Cepeda family derived much of its income.”²⁹⁸ Dowries were important sources of income for the Incarnation, as they were for other women’s monasteries in 16th-century Spain.

Teresa became ill shortly after her entry into the Incarnation, and in 1538 she left the monastery at the request of her father, to be cured in the nearby town of Becedas. That “cure” left her worse than before, and after a stay at her father’s house she returned to the Incarnation where she “remained an invalid and paralytic for three years,” and she almost died (*Vida* 4.6; 6.2).²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ “La dote de doña Teresa de Ahumada, según acta notarial del 31 de octubre de 1536, se valoró en un capital equivalente a 75.000 maravedís. Consistió en una superficie de tierra, situada en el término de Gotarrendura, que rentaba al año 25 fanegas de grano, mitad trigo y cebada.” Nicolás González y González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación de Avila* (Madrid: Editorial de Espiritualidad, 1995), 146-7.

²⁹⁷ Nicolás González y González, interview by author, personal interview, Avila, Spain, July 19, 2013.

²⁹⁸ Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 114.

²⁹⁹ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “*The Book of Her Life* – Introduction,” in in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, 2nd ed., trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1987), 1:19-20. “estuve casi vn año por alla y los tres meses de el padeçiendo tan grandisimo tormento en las curas *que* me yçieron tan rreçias *que* yo no se como las pude sufrir y en fin *anque* las sufrí no las pudo sufrir mi sujeto como dire /avia de començarse la cura en el prinçipio del verano y yo fuy en el prinçipio del ynvierno todo este tienpo estuve en casa de la hermana *que* e dicho *que* estava en el aldea esperando el mes de abril porque estava çerca y no andar yendo y viniendo.”

On the way to Becedas Teresa was introduced to the prayer of *recogimiento* (recollection) by her uncle, Don Pedro Sánchez de Cepeda, who lived in Hortigosa (*Vida* 3.4). He gave her Francisco de Osuna's *Third Spiritual Alphabet* (published in 1527), which "served as her introduction to the ideas and values of the *devotio moderna*, the spiritual flourishing of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, and the movement for spiritual renewal of the Church." This "inspired her to begin upon a path of interior, mental, prayer which would bring her to a full commitment to God,"³⁰⁰ and she began to take time to be alone and to pray according to Osuna's

VidaTR, 4.6. "Estuve casi un año por allá, y los tres meses de él *padeciendo* tan grandísimo tormento en las curas que me hicieron tan recias, que yo no sé cómo las pude sufrir; y en fin, aunque las sufrí, no las pudo sufrir mi sujeto, como diré. Había de comenzarse la cura en el principio del verano, y yo fui en el principio del invierno. Todo este tiempo estuve en casa de la hermana que he dicho que estaba en la aldea, esperando el mes de abril, porque estaba cerca, y no andar yendo y viniendo." *OC*, *Vida* 4.6. "I remained in that place almost a year, and for three of those months suffering such severe torments from the harsh cures they used on me that I don't know how I was able to endure them. And, finally, even though I endured them, my bodily make-up could not, as I shall tell. The cure was supposed to begin at the beginning of the summer, and I went at the beginning of the winter. During that interval I stayed, waiting for the month of April, at my sister's house, which I mentioned, which was in a hamlet nearby; and I didn't have to be coming and going." *CWST*, *Life* 4.6 "di luego tan gran prisa de yrme a el monasterio que me yçe llevar ansi a la que esperavan muerta rreçibieron con alma mas el cuerpo peor que muerto para dar pena verle el extremo de flaqueça no se puede deçir que solos los vesos tenia ya digo que estar ansi me duro mas de ocho meses el estar tullida aunque yva mijorando casi tres años quando començe a andar a gatas alabava a dios." *VidaTR*, 6.2. "Di luego tan gran prisa de irme al monasterio, que me hice llevar así. A la que esperaban muerta, recibieron con alma; mas el cuerpo peor que muerto, para dar pena verle. El extremo de flaqueza no se puede decir, que solos los huesos tenía ya. Digo que estar así me duró más de ocho meses; el estar tullida, aunque iba mejorando, casi tres años. Cuando comencé a andar a gatas, alababa a Dios." *OC*, *Vida* 6.2. "Right away I was in such a hurry to return to the convent that I made them bring me back as I was. The one they expected to be brought back dead they received alive; but the body, worse than dead, was a pity to behold. The state of my weakness was indescribable, for I was then only bones. I may add that the above condition lasted for more than eight months. The paralysis, although it gradually got better, lasted almost three years. When I began to go about on hands and knees, I praised God." *CWST*, *Life* 6.2.

³⁰⁰ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 116-7.

method, taking the book as her master (*Vida* 4.7).³⁰¹ Teresa returned to the Incarnation in 1540.³⁰²

Two of Teresa's brothers had left for the New World by the time Teresa entered the monastery, and others would soon follow. Hernando left Spain in 1530, and Rodrigo left in 1535. In 1540, Lorenzo and Jerónimo also joined an expedition to the Americas.³⁰³ Teresa's father died in 1543 following an illness (*Vida* 7.14).³⁰⁴ Some time before this Teresa had decided to give up

³⁰¹ “quando yva me dio *aquel* tio mio *que* tengo dicho *que* estava en el camino vn libro llamase terçer abeçedario *que* trata de enseñar oraçion de rrecojimiento y puesto *que* este primer año avia leydo buenos libros *que* no quise mas vsar de otros *porque* ya entendia el daño *que* me avian echo no sabia como proçeder en oraçion ni como rrecojerme y así olgeme mucho con el y determineme a sigir *aquel* camino con todas mis fuerças y como ya el señor me avia dado don de lagrimas y gustava de leer començe a tener rratos de soledad y a confesarme a menudo y començar *aquel* camino tiniendo a *aquel* libro por maestro.” *VidaTR*, 4.7. “Cuando iba, me dio *aquel* tío mío *que* tengo dicho *que* estava en el camino, un libro: llámase *Tercer Abecedario*, *que* trata de enseñar oración de recogimiento; y puesto *que* este primer año había leído buenos libros (*que* no quise más usar de otros, *porque* ya entendía el daño *que* me habían hecho), no sabía cómo proceder en oración ni cómo recogerme, y así holguéme mucho con él y determinéme a seguir *aquel* camino con todas mis fuerzas. Y como ya el Señor me había dado don de lágrimas y gustava de leer, comencé a tener ratos de soledad y a confesarme a menudo y comenzar *aquel* camino, teniendo a *aquel* libro por maestro.” *OC*, *Vida* 4.7. “When I was on the way, that uncle of mine I mentioned who lived along the road gave me a book. It is called *The Third Spiritual Alphabet* and endeavors to teach the prayer of recollection. And although during this first year I read good books (for I no longer desired to make use of the others, because I understood the harm they did me), I did not know how to proceed in prayer or how to be recollected. And so I was very happy with this book and resolved to follow that path with all my strength. Since the Lord had already given me the gift of tears and I enjoyed reading, I began to take time out for solitude, to confess frequently, and to follow that path, taking the book for my master.” *CWST*, *Life* 4.7.

³⁰² Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 117.

³⁰³ Efrén de la Madre de Dios, *Teresa de Jesús* (Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1981), 35.

³⁰⁴ “en este tienpo /dio a mi padre la enfermedad de *que* murio *que* duro algunos dias fuyele yo a curar estando mas enferma en el alma *que* el en el cuerpo en muchas vanidades *anque* no de manera *que* a quanto entendia estoviesse en pecado mortal en todo este tienpo mas perdido *que* digo *porque* entendiendolo yo en ninguna manera lo estuviera pase arto trabajo en su enfermedad creo le servi algo de los *que* el avia pasado en las mias con estar yo arto mala me esforçava y con *que* en faltarme el me faltava todo el bien y rregalo *porque* en vn ser me le açia tuve tan gran animo para no le mostrar pena y estar asta *que* murio como si ninguna cosa sintiera pareçiendome se arrancava mi alma quando via acavar su vida

mental prayer and recite only the usual vocal prayers in choir, due to what she described later as a false sense of humility (*Vida* 7.1).³⁰⁵ Teresa returned to the practice of prayer a year later, and

porque le queria mucho.” *VidaTR*, 7.14. “En este tiempo dio a mi padre la enfermedad de que murió, que duró algunos días. Fuile yo a curar, estando más enferma en el alma que él en el cuerpo, en muchas vanidades, aunque no de manera que -a cuanto entendía- estuviese en pecado mortal en todo este tiempo más perdido que digo; porque entendiéndolo yo, en ninguna manera lo estuviera. Pasé hartó trabajo en *su* enfermedad. Creo le serví algo de los que él había pasado en las mías. Con estar yo hartó mala, me esforzaba, y con que en faltarme él me faltaba todo el bien y regalo, porque en un ser me le hacía, tuve tan gran ánimo para no le mostrar pena y estar hasta que murió como si ninguna cosa sintiera, pareciéndome se arrancaba mi alma cuando veía acabar su vida, porque le quería mucho.” *OC, Vida* 7.14. “At this time my father was seized with an illness that lasted for some days and from which he died. I went to take care of him, I who was sicker in soul, steeped in many vanities, than he was in body; although, during this entire more lax period of which I am speaking, never so steeped in them -- insofar as I understood -- as to be in mortal sin. For, should I have understood such to be the case, I would have in no way remained in that condition. I suffered much hardship during his sickness. I believe I served him somewhat for the trials he suffered during mine. Although I was very sick, I forced myself. Since in losing him I was losing every good and joy, and he was everything to me, I had great determination not to show him my grief and until he would die to act as though I were well. When I saw him coming to the end of his life, it seemed my soul was being wrenched from me, for I love him dearly.” *CWST, Life* 7.14.

³⁰⁵ “pues ansi començe de pasatienpo en pasatienpo de vanidad en vanidad de ocasion en ’ocasion a meterme tanto en muy grandes ocasiones y andar tan estragada mi alma en muchas vanidades *que* ya yo tenia verguença de en tan particular amistad como es tratar de oraçion tornarme a llegar a dios y ayvdome a esto *que* como creçieron los pecados començome a faltar el gusto y rregalo en las cosas de virtud via yo muy claro señor mio *que* me faltava esto a mi por faltaros yo a vos este fue el mas terrible engaño *que* el demonio me podia açer devajo de pareçer vmildad *que* començe a temer de tener oraçion de verme tan perdida /y pareçíame era mijor andar como los muchos pues en ser rruyn era de los peores y rreçar lo *que* estava obligada y vocalmente *que* no tener oraçion mental y tanto trato con dios la *que* mereçia estar con los demonios.” *VidaTR*, 7.1. “Pues así comencé, de pasatiempo en pasatiempo, de vanidad en vanidad, de ocasión en ocasión, a meterme tanto en muy grandes ocasiones y andar tan estragada mi alma en muchas vanidades, que ya yo tenía vergüenza de en tan particular amistad como es tratar de oración tornarme a llegar a Dios. Y ayudóme a esto que, como crecieron los pecados, comenzóme a faltar el gusto y regalo en las cosas de virtud. Veía yo muy claro, Señor mío, que me faltaba esto a mí por faltaros yo a Vos. Este fue el más terrible engaño que el demonio me podía hacer debajo de parecer humildad, que comencé a temer de tener oración, de verme tan perdida; y parecíame era mejor andar como los muchos, pues en ser ruin era de los peores, y rezar lo que estaba obligada y vocalmente, que no tener oración mental y tanto trato con Dios la que merecía estar con los demonios.” *OC, Vida* 7.1. “Since I thus began to go from pastime to pastime, from vanity to vanity, from one occasion to another, to place myself so often in very serious occasions, and to allow my soul to become so spoiled by many vanities, I was then ashamed to return to the search for God by means of a friendship as special as is that found in the intimate exchange of prayer. And I was aided in this vanity by the fact as the sins increased I began to lose joy in virtuous things and my taste for them. I saw very clearly, my Lord, that these were failing me because I was failing You. This was the most terrible trick the devil could play on me, under the guise of humility: that seeing myself so

from 1544 to 1554 she practiced interior prayer more diligently.³⁰⁶ In 1554 she had a powerful conversion experience before a statue of the wounded Christ.³⁰⁷ As Teresa's prayer life grew deeper, she sought out new advisors, including Jesuits such as Diego de Cetina, whom she first consulted in 1554. In the following two years she spoke with two more Jesuits, Juan de Prádanos and Baltasar Alvarez, and in 1557 she met Francis Borgia, S.J. In 1557 her favorite brother, Rodrigo, was killed in a battle in Chile.³⁰⁸

corrupted I began to fear the practice of prayer. It seemed to me that, since in being wicked I was among the worst it was better to go the way of the many, to recite what I was obliged to vocally and not to practice mental prayer and so much intimacy with God, for I merited to be with the devils." *CWST, Life* 7.1.

³⁰⁶ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Introduction," in *Teresa of Avila: The Way of Prayer*, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2003), 18.

³⁰⁷ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "A Teresian Chronology," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3: 85. "pues ya andava mi alma cansada y aunque queria no la dejavan descansar las ruynes costunbres que tenia /acaeçione que entrando vn dia en el oratorio vi vna ymajen que avian traydo alli a guardar que se avia buscado para çierta fiesta que se açia en casa /era de cristo muy llagado y tan devota que en mirandola todo me turvo de verle tal porque rrepresentava bien lo que paso por nosotros fue tanto lo que senti de lo mal que avia agradeçido aquellas llagas que el coraçon me pareçe se me partia y arrojeme cabe el con grandisimo derramamiento de lagrimas suplicandole me fortaleçiese ya de vna vez para no 'ofenderle." *VidaTR*, 9.1. "Pues ya andaba mi alma cansada y, aunque quería, no le dejaban descansar las ruines costumbres que tenía. Acaeciome que, entrando un día en el oratorio, vi una imagen que habían traído allá a guardar, que se había buscado para cierta fiesta que se hacía en casa. Era de Cristo muy llagado y tan devota que, en mirándola, toda me turbó de verle tal, porque representaba bien lo que pasó por nosotros. Fue tanto lo que sentí de lo mal que había agradecido aquellas llagas, que el corazón me parece se me partía, y arrojéme cabe El con grandísimo derramamiento de lágrimas, suplicándole me fortaleciese ya de una vez para no ofenderle." *OC, Vida* 9.1. "Well, my soul now was tired; and, in spite of its desire, my wretched habits would not allow it rest. It happened to me that one day entering the oratory I saw a statue they had borrowed for a certain feast to be celebrated in the house. It represented the much wounded Christ and was very devotional so that beholding it I was utterly distressed in seeing Him that way, for it well represented what He suffered for us. I felt so keenly aware of how poorly I thanked Him for those wounds that, it seems to me, my heart broke. Beseeching Him to strengthen me once and for all that I might not offend Him, I threw myself down before Him with the greatest outpouring of tears." *CWST, Life* 9.1.

³⁰⁸ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 3:85.

In 1560 the Franciscan ascetic and reformer Peter of Alcántara arrived in Avila and reassured Teresa that her visions were from God. The same year, after a disturbing vision of hell,³⁰⁹ Teresa began to make plans for a new foundation, and she also wrote the first account of

³⁰⁹ “despues de mucho tiempo *que* el señor me avia echo ya muchas de las *mercedes que* e dicho y otras muy grandes estando vn dia en oraçion me alle en vn punto toda sin saber como *que* me pareçia estar metida en el ynfierno entendi *que* queria el señor *que* viese el lugar *que* los demonios alla me tenian aparejado y yo mereçido por mis pecados ello fue en brevisimo espaçio mas *unque* yo biviese muchos años me pareçe ynposible olvidarseme pareçiamela entrada a manera de vn callejon muy largo y estrecho a manera de orno muy bajo y oscuro y angosto el suelo me pareçio de vn agua como lodo muy suçio y de pestilencial olor y muchas savandijas malas en el a el cabo estava vna concavidad metida en vna pared a manera de vna alaçena adonde me vi meter en mucho estrecho /todo esto era deleytoso a la vista en comparaçion de lo *que* alli senti esto *que* e dicho va mal encareçido estotro me pareçe *que* an prinçipio de encareçerse como es no le puede aver ni se puede entender mas senti vn fuego en el alma *que* yo no puedo entender como poder deçir de la manera *que* es los dolores corporales tan ynconportables *que* con averlos pasado en esta vida gravisimos y sigun diçen los medicos los mayores *que* se puedan aca pasar porque fue encojerseme todos los nervios quando me tullí sin otros muchos de muchas maneras *que* e tenido y *an* algunos como e dicho cavados de el demonio no es todo nada en comparaçion de lo *que* alli senti y ver *que* avian de ser sin fin y sin jamas çesar /esto no es pues nada en comparaçio[n] de el agonizar de el alma vn apretamiento vn aogamiento vna afleçion tan sentible y con tan desesperado y aflijido descontento *que* yo no se como lo encareçer porque deçir *que* es vn estarse sienpre arrancando el alma es poco porque *an* pareçe *que* otro /os acava la vida mas aqui el alma mesma es la *que* se despedaça el caso es *que* yo no se como encarezca *aquel* fuego ynterior y *aquel* desesperamiento sobre tan gravisimos tormentos y dolores no via yo quien me los dava mas sentiamme quemar y desmenuçar a lo *que* me pareçe y digo *que* *aquel* fuego y desesperaçion ynterior es lo peor.” *VidaTR*, 32.1-2. “Después de mucho tiempo que el Señor me había hecho ya muchas de las mercedes que he dicho y otras muy grandes, estando un día en oración me hallé en un punto toda, sin saber cómo, que me parecía estar metida en el infierno. Entendí que quería el Señor que viese el lugar que los demonios allá me tenían aparejado, y yo merecido por mis pecados. Ello fue en brevísimo espacio, mas aunque yo viviese muchos años, me parece imposible olvidárseme. Parecíame la entrada a manera de un callejón muy largo y estrecho, a manera de horno muy bajo y oscuro y angosto. El suelo me pareció de un agua como lodo muy sucio y de pestilencial olor, y muchas sabandijas malas en él. Al cabo estaba una concavidad metida en una pared, a manera de una alacena, adonde me vi meter en mucho estrecho. Todo esto era deleitoso a la vista en comparación de lo que allí sentí. Esto que he dicho va mal encarecido. Estotro me parece que aun principio de encarecerse como es no le puede haber, ni se puede entender; mas sentí un fuego en el alma, que yo no puedo entender cómo poder decir de la manera que es. Los dolores corporales tan incomfortables, que, con haberlos pasado en esta vida gravísimos y, según dicen los médicos, los mayores que se pueden acá pasar (porque fue encogérseme todos los nervios cuando me tullí, sin otros muchos de muchas maneras que he tenido, y aun algunos, como he dicho, causados del demonio), no es todo nada en comparación de lo que allí sentí, y ver que habían de ser sin fin y sin jamás cesar. Esto no es, pues, nada en comparación del agonizar del alma: un apretamiento, un ahogamiento, una aflicción tan sentible y con tan desesperado y afligido descontento, que yo no sé cómo lo encarecer. Porque decir que es un estarse siempre arrancando el alma, es poco, porque aun parece que otro os acaba la vida; mas aquí el alma misma es la que se despedaza. El

her life for Pedro Ibáñez, O.P. These events occurred about a year after the Index of Forbidden Books had been published by Inquisitor Fernando Valdés in 1559.³¹⁰

Life at the Incarnation

The Monastery of the Incarnation during the time of Teresa was like a city, according to historian and current chaplain of the monastery, Don Nicolás González y González.³¹¹ Secular

caso es que yo no sé cómo encarezca aquel fuego interior y aquel desesperamiento, sobre tan gravísimos tormentos y dolores. No veía yo quién me los daba, mas sentíame quemar y desmenuzar, a lo que me parece. Y digo que aquel fuego y desesperación interior es lo peor.” *OC, Vida* 32.1-2. “A long time after the Lord had already granted me many of the favors I’ve mentioned and other very lofty ones, while I was in prayer one day, I suddenly found that, without knowing how, I had seemingly been put in hell. I understood that the Lord wanted me to see the place the devils had prepared there for me and which I merited because of my sins. This experience took place within the shortest space of time, but even were I to live for many years I think it would be impossible for me to forget it. The entrance it seems to me was similar to a very long and narrow alleyway, like an oven, low and dark and confined; the floor seemed to me to consist of dirty, muddy water emitting a foul stench and swarming with putrid vermin. At the end of the alleyway a hole that looked like a small cupboard was hollowed out in the wall; there I found I was placed in a cramped condition. All of this was delightful to see in comparison with what I felt there. What I have described can hardly be exaggerated. What I felt, it seems to me, cannot even begin to be exaggerated; nor can it be understood. I experienced a fire in the soul that I don’t know how I could describe. The bodily pains were so unbearable that though I had suffered excruciating ones in this life and according to what doctors say, the worst that can be suffered on earth (for all my nerves were shrunk when I was paralyzed, plus many other sufferings of many kinds that I endured, and even some, as I said, caused by the devil), these were all nothing in comparison with the ones I experienced there. I saw furthermore that they would go on without end and without ever ceasing. This, however, was nothing next to the soul’s agonizing: a constriction, a suffocation, an affliction so keenly felt and with such a despairing and tormenting unhappiness that I don’t know how to word it strongly enough. To say the experience is as though the soul were continually being wrested from the body would be insufficient, for it would make you think somebody else is taking away the life, whereas here it is the soul itself that tears itself in pieces. The fact is that I don’t know how to give a sufficiently powerful description of that interior fire and that despair, coming in addition to such extreme torments and pains. I didn’t see who inflicted them on me, but, as it seemed to me, I felt myself burning and crumbling; and I repeat the worst was that interior fire and despair.” *CWST, Life* 32.1-2.

³¹⁰ Kavanaugh, “A Teresian Chronology,” 3:85-6.

and religious personnel lived together in the monastery, and there were many different kinds of jobs and tasks necessary for the care of the nuns and those who lived with them. The Incarnation became its own small city, with workers coming and going, food and supplies being carted in, and activities of all kinds practiced throughout the grounds.³¹²

At the time Teresa entered religious life, the Incarnation was the largest and most modern monastery in Avila, and the number of nuns was still small enough to permit a family atmosphere.³¹³ “Most of the nuns at la Encarnación descended from the ‘honored and principal men of the city.’ While entering the religious life, they remained women of privilege.” The nuns maintained their social rank and titles, and “the doñas enjoyed higher status within the convent than lower-born women,” living in their own quarters instead of the dormitory-style housing for the lower classes. These conditions mirrored the life of Avila itself, with its concern for “class, caste, and ‘honor’ which Teresa had thought to avoid by entering a convent.”³¹⁴ Wealthy nuns who entered the Incarnation from aristocratic families often brought others to live with them, including family members and servants.³¹⁵ There were seculars of several types who might live with the nuns in their cells, including *criadas* (maids), *doncellas* (young girls or maidens) and *huéspedes* (guests). Teresa’s younger sister, Juana de Ahumada, lived with Teresa at the

³¹¹ Nicolás González y González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas en Tiempos de Doña Teresa de Ahumada* (Avila: Diputación de Avila: Institución Gran Duque de Alba, 2011), 13-15.

³¹² González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 107.

³¹³ “Era el convento más amplio y moderno de Avila. Todavía el número reducido de monjas permitía un ambiente de familia.” González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 216.

³¹⁴ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 113.

³¹⁵ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 113.

Incarnation from the time their father died in 1543 until she was married to Juan de Ovalle Godinez in 1553.³¹⁶ Aristocratic nuns like Teresa had spacious living quarters, secured by large dowries, and there was plenty of room for family members and servants:

The *doñas* had spacious apartments, which consisted of an entrance hall, living room and bedroom, or a single spacious room, well furnished. Some, in turn, had a maid, in order to make the bed, arrange the apartment and run errands. Some had with them female relatives and secular friends. They also admitted young girls or maidens, some of which later, at the age of twelve, took the habit. [Translation mine.]³¹⁷

The poor nuns shared a common dormitory and gathered in various common spaces for recreation and other activities.³¹⁸

Many secular workers were needed to manage the task of keeping the monastery functioning smoothly, feeding the inhabitants, taking care of medical and legal needs, and collecting rent and other income from the outlying properties which the nuns had brought with them as dowries or which the nuns or the monastery had inherited:

In the surrounding area of this small city of the Carmelites there were other houses for the gardener, the administrator of accounts and other servants. This secular staff was occupied to cultivate the garden, to collect from the towns the income from the *fincas* which had been contributed by way of dowries or inheritances, to shepherd the flocks of sheep and goats, to transport the bags of wheat, rye and barley to the mills and to carry the flour to the ovens where the bread was baked. Also hired by the community were chaplains and confessors, the doctor, the surgeon, the notary, the prosecutor and the lawyer. Also completing the village atmosphere of this small city were stables for the

³¹⁶ González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 193-7.

³¹⁷ “Las doñas disponían de amplios apartamentos, que constaban de recibidor, cuarto de estar y dormitorio, o de una sola habitación bien acomodada. Algunas, a su vez, tenían su criada, para hacerles la cama, arreglarles el apartamento y hacerles los recados. Algunas tenían en su compañía parientas y amigas seglares. También admitían niñas o doncellas, de las que algunas tomaban luego, a la edad de doce años, el hábito.” González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 106.

³¹⁸ “El resto de las monjas disponían de un dormitorio común y se juntaban en los claustros o en alguna sala grande para su recreación.” González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 106.

mules, stalls for the pigs, sheds for the sheep and goats, the chicken coop and hay stores, straw and farm tools . . . we have noted that, as in a city, there were women and men, nuns and secular people, free people and people without liberty. [Translation mine.]³¹⁹

The living together of seculars and religious caused problems for the religious life, particular with regard to providing the quiet atmosphere which would promote the recollection required for prayer.³²⁰ As the monastery increased in population at an even greater rate than the growth of Avila itself, the difficulty of living a recollected life of prayer in the midst of so much activity grew worse.

Economic and Social Problems at the Incarnation: Growth and Poverty

When Pope Eugenius IV introduced changes in 1432 which relaxed the original 13th-century rule, the nuns were no longer required to renounce their possessions. This led to some nuns living in luxury due to their incomes from family holdings such as property, while others lived in poverty. As the population of the Incarnation grew (increasing five-fold during the thirty

³¹⁹ “En los alrededores de esta pequeña ciudad de las carmelitas había otras casas para el hortelano, el administrador de rentas y demás criados. Este personal seglar se ocupaba de cultivar la huerta, recolectar por los pueblos las rentas de las fincas aportadas en concepto de dotes o herencias, pastorear el rebaño de ovejas y cabras, trasportar los sacos de trigo, centeno y cebada a los molinos y llevar la harina a los hornos donde se cocía el pan. A cargo de la comunidad estaban contratados también los capellanes y confesores, el médico, el cirujano, el notario, el procurador y el letrado. También completaban el caserío de esta pequeña ciudad las cuadras para las mulas, las casillas para los cerdos, los cobertizos para las ovejas y cabras, el gallinero, y los almacenes de heno, paja y utensilios de labranza . . . Hemos apuntado, que, al igual que en una ciudad, había mujeres y hombres, monjas y seglares, personas libres y personas sin libertad.” González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 107.

³²⁰ “La convivencia de religiosas y seglares traía consigo necesariamente muchos inconvenientes perjuicios para la vida regular, particularmente para la guarda de la clausura y el recogimiento claustral.” González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 106.

years Teresa was there),³²¹ the social and economic problems of the monastery grew worse. At the end of this period there were about 200 nuns living in the monastery, far more than the property could support.

The increase in population at the Incarnation paralleled the increase in Avila: “During Teresa’s lifetime, the population of Avila doubled.”³²² During the thirty years Teresa was at the Incarnation its population increased five-fold, from about 40 nuns in 1535 to about 200 nuns in 1565.³²³ Nicolás González y González has provided an in-depth analysis of the economic situation of the Incarnation from the period 1535 to 1565, during this period of dramatic growth and increase in poverty:

The main basis of the economy of the monastery, maintenance of the building and support of the nuns ... was in rural properties, like that of other similar institutions. The convent obtained the property or benefits of these goods in very different ways, dowries of the nuns, private donations, or by direct purchases conducted within the normal system of investment in each period. The other two sources of income were work and alms. [Translation mine.]³²⁴

González points out that as the number of nuns increased, one would expect a corresponding increase in income due to receiving more goods and land in dowries, especially due to the ongoing and cyclic nature of the revenue from the *fincas* or rural properties brought into the

³²¹ González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 139.

³²² Bilinkoff, *The Avila of St. Teresa*, 54.

³²³ González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 135.

³²⁴ “La base principal de la economía del monasterio, sostenimiento del edificio y manutención de las monjas . . . estuvo en las fincas rústicas, igual de la de otras instituciones semejantes. El convento accedía a la propiedad o disfrute de estos bienes por caminos muy diferentes, dotes de las monjas, donativos de particulares, o por compras directas que realizaba dentro del sistema normal de inversiones en cada época. Las otras dos fuentes de ingreso fueron el trabajo y las limosnas.” González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 137-8.

monastery holdings by the wealthier nuns. However, the expectation of the increased income led to over-commitment in capital spending: “What happened was that the administrator was hoping that many would enter, in order to collect their dowries and use them to pay for the construction projects on the property, that never ended. For this reason, the works ate up the dowries, and the nuns died of hunger [translation mine].”³²⁵

In 1535, when the Incarnation supported about 40 nuns, it had *fincas* in 20 towns, consisting of 800 hectares, and it received income per year of 950 *fanegas* of grain, 100 chickens, 40 *libras* (pounds) of linen, 3 *arrobas* (pounds) of cheese and several dozen carts of straw. The *fincas* produced grains - wheat, barley and rye - and vegetables such as garbanzos and lentils. As has already been mentioned, a great deal of work was required to transport grain and other items produced on the properties, such as chickens and lambs, to the monastery, by way of mills, bakers and others who would prepare the food.³²⁶ This work had to be figured into the expenses of the monastery.

In 1565, thirty years later, the Incarnation attempted to support about 200 nuns and six service people. The monastery ultimately came to have land holdings in 50 municipalities of the province, as well as outside of it.³²⁷ The income per year, however, had not increased proportionately in order to accommodate their needs. In a document that the community sent to

³²⁵ “Lo que ocurría era que la administradora estaba esperando que ingresaran muchas, para coger sus dotes y pagar con ellas las obras de construcción del inmueble, que no terminaban nunca. Por eso, las obras se comían las dotes y las monjas se morían de hambre.” González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 139.

³²⁶ González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 140.

³²⁷ González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 140.

the mayor of Avila on April 12, 1565, the income at the Incarnation consisted of only 1,700 *fanegas* of bread and 30,000 *maravedís* in cash, from which 100 *fanegas* of bread were given to the chaplains, 50 to the doctor and additional salaries to other workers. Each nun was allotted no more than 150 grams of bread and 115 grams of meat per day.³²⁸

The problems of growth and poverty produced a grave situation for the Incarnation. To prevent the closing of the monastery and to sustain themselves during this time of crisis, nuns would sometimes leave the monastery to stay at the homes of family or friends. Teresa was

³²⁸ González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 140-1. “pensava *que* podria azer por dios y pense *que* lo primero era sigir el llamamiento *que* su majestad me avia echo a rreligion guardando mi rregla con la mayor perfeçion *que* pudiese y anque en la casa adonde estava avia muchas servas de dios y era arto servido en ella /a cavsa de tener gran neçesidad salian las monjas muchas veçes a partes adonde con toda onestidad y rreligion podiamos estar /y tambien no estava fundada en su primer rrigor la regla sino guardavase conforme a lo *que* en toda la orden *que* es con bula de rrelajaçion y tambien otros ynconvenientes *que* me pareçia a mi tenia mucho rregalo por ser la casa grande y deleytosa mas esta ynconveniente de salir anque yo era la *que* mucho lo vsava era grande para mi ya porque algunas personas a quien los perlados no podian deçir de no gustavan estuviese yo en su compaõia y ynportunados mandavanmelo y ansi sigun se yva ordenando pudiera poco estar en el monasterio.” *VidaTR*, 32.9. “Pensaba qué podría hacer por Dios. Y pensé que lo primero era seguir el llamamiento que Su majestad me había hecho a religión, guardando mi Regla con la mayor perfección que pudiese. Y aunque en la casa adonde estaba había muchas siervas de Dios y era harto servido en ella, a causa de tener gran necesidad salían las monjas muchas veces a partes adonde con toda honestidad y religión podíamos estar; y también no estaba fundada en su primer rigor la Regla, sino guardábase conforme a lo que en toda la Orden, que es con bula de relajación. Y también otros inconvenientes, que me parecía a mí tenía mucho regalo, por ser la casa grande y deleitosa. Mas este inconveniente de salir, aunque yo era la que mucho lo usaba, era grande para mí ya, porque algunas personas, a quien los prelados no podían decir de no, gustaban estuviese yo en su compañía, e, importunados, mandábanmelo. Y así, según se iba ordenando, pudiera poco estar en el monasterio.” *OC, Vida* 32.9. “I was thinking about what I could do for God, and I thought that the first thing was to follow the call to the religious life, which His Majesty had given me, by keeping my rule as perfectly as I could. Even though there were many servants of God in the house where I was, and He was very well served in it, the nuns because of great necessity often went out to places where they could stay -- with the decorum proper to religious. Also, the rule was not kept in its prime rigor, but was observed the way it was in the whole order, that is, according to the bull of mitigation. There were also other disadvantages; it seemed to me the monastery had a lot of comfort since it was a large and pleasant one. But this disadvantage of going out, even though I was one who did so a great deal, was now a serious one for me because some persons to whom the superiors couldn't say 'no' liked to have me in their company; and when urged, the superiors ordered me to go. So, by reason of their command I wasn't able to remain in the monastery much.” *CWST, Life* 32.9.

among those who took advantage of this remedy at times (*Vida* 32.9).³²⁹ Others obtained income outside the monastery in other ways, through work such as spinning wool or asking for alms.³³⁰ Aristocratic ladies in Avila had come to expect spiritual comfort and encouragement from nuns, who would go out to help them, especially in times of bereavement, and in exchange they would give much needed donations to the monastery.³³¹

For nuns to be able to come and go freely provided some relief for the economic conditions at the Incarnation by transferring living expenses to friends and family and by permitting work and fund-raising activities outside the monastery. However, with the enforcement of enclosure by the Council of Trent, the Incarnation was put into a difficult situation. The Council of Trent promulgated the decree *De regularibus* on December 3, 1563. Among its points were that convents should not have more members than were able to be supported from their incomes, individual religious were to possess no goods, they were to obey the rules of their institutes, and all nuns were obliged to remain in the cloister.³³² Although the formal promulgation of the decree occurred a few years after the period we are considering here (Teresa's middle years, 1535-60), the motivations and trends toward these reforms existed prior to this and influenced members of religious orders significantly in the years leading up to the Council.

³²⁹ González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 141.

³³⁰ González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 141-2

³³¹ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 115-6.

³³² Joachim Smet, O. Carm., *The Carmelites: A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, 4 vols. (Rome: Carmelite Institute, 1975-1985), 1:297-8.

A number of solutions to the question of extreme poverty in the midst of the population growth at the Incarnation were proposed. One suggestion was to reduce the salary of internal officials such as the prioress and the sub-prioress;³³³ the organist also was among those who received a salary.³³⁴ Another solution suggested was limiting the number of aspirants entering the monastery, but this would also reduce income.³³⁵ Sometimes parents would send one or more daughters to live with a nun in her cell, who would serve as a teacher in exchange for a stipend. This became a “fuente de ingresos” for the monastery when it was most needed.³³⁶ However, this still was not enough for the over-populated monastery, and “they had to avail themselves of the remedies characteristic of the poor: begging for alms and looking for money and bread to be provided [translation mine].”³³⁷

The Work of the Nuns

Regarding the personal work done by the nuns at the Incarnation during the time of Teresa, “on this issue there is little documentation, but enough to know that the nuns used their

³³³ González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 141.

³³⁴ González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 163.

³³⁵ González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 153.

³³⁶ Nicolás González y González, interview by author, personal interview, Ávila, Spain, July 19, 2013.

³³⁷ González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 154. “tuvieron que acogerse a los remedios característicos de los pobres: pedir limosna y buscar dinero y pan prestados.”

personal work to provide supplies when there was no other recourse [translation mine].”³³⁸ A brief account referenced by González and written by Doña María Pinel describes some of the work done by the nuns during a period of extreme poverty:

Four to six religious gathered themselves together and brought a pound of yarn to spin, and with all haste, they all spun, with which they raised [money for] something to eat the following day. This was not enough for clothing and footwear. And finding a religious without shoes in a time of great cold, she went to the holy Christ who was in the choir and showed him her feet and said, “How well you know, Lord, that I don’t have anything with which to buy them, nor anyone to give them to me.” And later they called her to the turn and there had been put into it some shoes for her, without knowing who brought them. And others, going to my Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, showed Him their needs and His Majesty comforted them in ways that they had not thought of . . . Later Our Lord was comforting the community for which they gave greater rations, but always limited. [Translation mine.]³³⁹

The primary liturgical work of the nuns at the Incarnation during Teresa’s time consisted of personal prayer and singing the Divine Office (Liturgy of the Hours) in choir seven times a day. Additionally, some manual labor was done, such as making socks or doing embroidery, which could be sold to buy food to eat.³⁴⁰ Although Teresa wrote about her time at the

³³⁸ “Sobre este tema hay poca documentación, pero la suficiente para saber que las monjas se valían de su trabajo personal para suplir entonces la falta de otros recursos.” González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 159.

³³⁹ “Juntábanse cuatro o seis religiosas y traían una libra de estambre que hilar, y a toda prisa, entre todas hilaban, con que traían qué comer el día siguiente. No alcanzaba esta ganancia para vestir y calzar. Y hallándose una religiosa sin zapatos en tiempo de mucho frío, como se fue al santo Cristo que está en el coro, le enseñó los pies y le dijo: ‘Bien sabeis Vos, Señor, que no tengo con qué comprarlos, ni quién me los dé.’ Y luego la llamaron al torno y la pusieron en él unos zapatos, sin saber quién los traía. Y otras, yéndose a mi Señor sacramentado, le representaban su necesidad y su Majestad las socorría por caminos que ellas no pensaban . . . ‘Después fue Nuestro Señor socorriendo a la comunidad para que las diesen más ración, aunque siempre limitada.’” González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 159-60.

³⁴⁰ Nicolás González y González, interview by author, personal interview, Ávila, Spain, July 19, 2013.

Incarnation - indeed, she was its first chronicler³⁴¹ - information on the types of work done by the nuns is scarce.³⁴² Teresa is known to have done embroidery, and there is an example of her delicate and intricate embroidery on display at the Incarnation museum today:



Figure 1. Embroidery by Teresa of Jesús,
Monastery of the Incarnation, Avila.
Photo by the author, July 26, 2013.

She also did the manual work of spinning, which she mentions herself in the *Vida*, when she laments that writing the account of her life is keeping her from spinning and from doing the many other things needed in the house (*Vida* 10.7). González places this account at the

³⁴¹ González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 215.

³⁴² González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 159.

Incarnation, but Kavanaugh views this as unlikely; rather, she is more likely to be talking about her work at St. Joseph's:³⁴³

[According to González,] we know that St. Teresa, while at the Incarnation, did manual work to help the convent. We have notice of this, by one of the excuses that she gave when they ordered her to write her autobiography. She answered that she had scruples about wasting time redacting the book of her life [(*Vida* 10.7)]. [Translation mine.]³⁴⁴

We might recall here that the wool trade was the backbone of the Castilian economy in the 16th century, and Teresa's family had been involved in the textile business for decades, because her grandfather had been a cloth merchant both in Toledo and in Avila, so spinning would have been a common trade at that time and one in which Teresa would have been well-versed. Another job of the nuns was to care for the sick, and this was one of Teresa's favorite jobs during her initial years at the Incarnation.³⁴⁵

³⁴³ Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., interview by author, personal interview, Washington, DC, September 19, 2013.

³⁴⁴ "Sabemos que Santa Teresa, estando en la Encarnación, hacía trabajos manuales para ayudar al convento. Tenemos noticia de ello, por una de las excusas que puso cuando le encargaron que escribiese su autobiografía. Contestó que tenía escrúpulos de perder el tiempo redactando el libro de su vida." *VidaTR*, 10.7. "... solos los *que* me lo mandan escribir saben *que* lo escribo y al presente no estan aqui y casi vrtando el tienpo y con pena porque me estorvo de ylar por estar en casa pobre y con artas ocupaciones." OC, *Vida* 10.7. "... solos los que me lo mandan escribir saben que lo escribo, y al presente no están aquí) y casi hurtando el tiempo, y con pena porque me estorbo de hilar, por estar en casa pobre y con hartas ocupaciones." *CWST, Life* 10.7. "... only those who commanded me to write this know that I am writing it, and at present they are not here), and almost stealing time, and regretfully because it prevents me from spinning and this is a poor house with many things to be done." González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 160.

³⁴⁵ "Una de sus ocupaciones preferidas era cuidar a las enfermas . . . Entre hacer oración y visitar las enfermas ocupaba la mayor parte del tiempo que le quedaba fuera de las horas que seguía a la comunidad, según relata su compañera María Bautista." González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 221.

The monastery was very poor, and the families of the nuns could benefit both their young children and their family member who was a nun by sending their young daughters to live with the nun in her cell, and providing a stipend for teaching. Other families sent their daughters to the nuns as well, often hoping that the girls would become nuns themselves someday:

Another type of personal work that the nuns did at this time, and the one most profitable, was to care for children within the convent. It seems that this began on an individual basis, not as a communal project of the convent. They were individual nuns who were caring for certain children in their own cells. Preferably girls of the same family of the nun, in whose charge they entered into the house. [Translation mine.]³⁴⁶

However, practices like these sometimes forced young girls into religious life before they were ready: “Some girls were consigned to a convent for care and schooling at very young ages, and then never had an opportunity to leave - or to make a free and mature choice of religious life.”³⁴⁷

Even though many nuns came from rich families, and remained rich as individuals after their entry into religious life, the monastery as an institution grew poor due to its over-spending and over-crowding. This situation was rooted in the fact that members of religious orders were not required to share everything in common, nor were they necessarily expected to take a vow of poverty when they entered religious life:

We have to distinguish between the convent and individual nuns. It was possible to have rich nuns when the convent was poor, because in the first half of the 16th century

³⁴⁶ “Otro tipo de trabajo personal que las monjas hacían en este tiempo, y el más rentable, consistía en cuidar de niños dentro del convento. Por lo que parece, estas atenciones debieron comenzar en forma individualizada, no como un proyecto común del convento. Se trataba de monjas particulares que cuidaban ciertos niños en sus mismas celdas. Preferentemente niñas de la misma familia de la monja, a cuyo cargo entraban en la casa.” González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación*, 160.

³⁴⁷ Doris Gottenmoeller, “Religious Life for Women: From Enclosure to Immersion,” in *From Trent to Vatican II: Historical and Theological Investigations*, eds. Raymond F. Bulman and Frederick J. Parrella (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). 228.

everything in the monasteries was not held in common. The convent was poor due to the lack or scarcity of common goods. That is to say that those goods were lacking with which the convent had to attend to the support of the nuns, the staff that was in the service of the house and the completion of the new buildings and their maintenance. Actually the word “convent” designated the community as owner of some goods that were for everyone and for no one in particular . . . in the time of St. Teresa the nuns didn’t profess a vow of poverty, only one of obedience. The only limitation on the extent of ownership and use of the goods was governed by the submission to the permission of the prioress or provincial to enjoy their own possessions. [Translation mine.]³⁴⁸

As mentioned above, the nuns were actively involved in pastoral work in that they assisted people who requested their help with spiritual direction or special spiritual or personal needs, such as the loss of a family member. Sometimes this work resulted in gifts to the nun or to the monastery.³⁴⁹ Teresa stayed at the house of Doña Guiomar de Ulloa in Avila from 1556 to 1557 or 1558,³⁵⁰ and she stayed with Doña Luisa de la Cerda in Toledo for about six months after her husband died, from late 1561 to mid-1562 (*Vida* 34.1).³⁵¹

³⁴⁸ “Tenemos que distinguir entre convento y monjas individuales. Cabe que hubiera monjas ricas y que el convento fuera pobre, porque en la primera mitad del siglo XVI no todo era común en los monasterios. El convento era pobre, por la carencia o escasez de bienes comunes. Es decir de aquellos con los que el convento debía atender al sustento de la monjas, al personal que estaba al servicio de la casa y a la culminación de las obras del nuevo edificio y a su mantenimiento. En realidad la palabra ‘convento’ designaba a la comunidad como propietaria de unos bienes que eran de todas y de ninguna en particular . . . En tiempos de santa Teresa las monjas no profesaban voto de pobreza, únicamente el de obediencia. La única limitación en cuanto a la propiedad y el uso de los bienes se regía por la sumisión a la licencia de la priora o del provincial para disfrutar de bienes propios.” González, *La Ciudad de las Carmelitas*, 142.

³⁴⁹ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 115-6.

³⁵⁰ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 115.

³⁵¹ Kavanaugh, “A Teresian Chronology,” 3:85-6. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “Biographical Sketches,” in *The Collected Letters of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2001-07), 1:621-2. “que se ofrecio en vn lugar grande mas de veynte leguas de este que estava vna señora muy aflijida a cavsá de aversele muerto su marido estavalo en tanto extremo que se temia su salud tuvo notiçia de esta pecadorçilla que lo ordeno el señor ansi que la dijessen bien de mi para otros bienes que de aqui sucedieron conoçia esta señora mucho a el provincial y como era persona principal y supo que yo estava en monesterio que salian ponele el señor tan gran deseo de verme

Although there was a significant amount of work done by various people to maintain the monastery and handle the business accounts, it's not likely that any of the administrative work of the monastery would have been done by Teresa herself during her time as a nun there.³⁵²

However, in 1543, the death of Teresa's father required Teresa's involvement as coexecutor of his will, "forcing her to put her managerial skills to work."³⁵³ The other executor was her brother-in-law, Martín de Guzmán, who filed claims on the estate. Teresa wrote to her brothers in the colonies, who gave some of their inheritance to her sister, María. This event "plunged Teresa back into the world of litigation and paperwork she had known as a child."³⁵⁴

pareciéndole *que se consolaria conmigo que no devia ser en su mano sino luego procuro por todas las vias que pudo llevarme alla enbiando a el provincial que estava bien lejos el me envio vn mandamiento con preçeto de 'obediencia que luego fuese con 'otra compañera /yo lo supe la noche de navidad."* *VidaTR*, 34.1. "Que se ofreció en un lugar grande, más de veinte leguas de éste, que estaba una señora muy afligida a causa de habérsele muerto su marido. Estábalo en tanto extremo, que se temía su salud. Tuvo noticia de esta pecadorcilla, que lo ordenó el Señor así, que la dijessen bien de mí para otros bienes que de aquí sucedieron. Conocía esta señora mucho al Provincial, y como era persona principal y supo que yo estaba en monasterio que salían, pónale el Señor tan gran deseo de verme, pareciéndole que se consolaría conmigo, que no debía ser en su mano, sino luego procuró, por todas las vías que pudo, llevarme allá, enviando al Provincial, que estaba bien lejos. El me envió un mandamiento, con precepto de obediencia, que luego fuese con otra compañera. Yo lo supe la noche de Navidad." *OC, Vida* 34.1. "It happened that in a large city, more than twenty leagues from here, a lady was very grieved because of the death of her husband. Her distress had reached such an extreme that they feared for her health. She had heard news about this little sinner, for the Lord had so arranged matters that for the sake of other blessings that would follow they spoke highly to her about me. This lady was well acquainted with the provincial, and since she was a person of the nobility and knew I was in a monastery where the nuns were allowed to go out, the Lord gave her a strong, irresistible desire to see me; she thought I would be able to console her. She immediately tried by every means she could to bring me there, and to this effect sent a message to the provincial who was far away. He sent me an order, under precept of obedience, to go immediately with another companion. I learned of it on Christmas eve." *CWST, Life* 34.1.

³⁵² Nicolás González y González, interview by author, personal interview, Ávila, Spain, July 19, 2013.

³⁵³ Bárbara Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009), 29.

³⁵⁴ Mujica, *Teresa de Ávila: Lettered Woman*, 30.

Themes and Synthesis: Teresa's Middle Years

The Work of Prayer

Teresa's interior life deepened significantly during her middle years, as she increased her practices of prayer and overcame health challenges and other struggles. Biographer Emilio Miranda describes the period of Teresa's life from 1535-60 as a period of maturation.³⁵⁵ Tomás Álvarez describes it as "years of formation, at first. Later, years of illness, digressions of mediocrity, of struggle, of spiritual maturation [and] initiation into the mystical life [translation mine]."³⁵⁶

Kavanaugh emphasizes Teresa's spiritual growth during this period according to her descriptions of the fourth and fifth dwelling places in the *Interior Castle*. From 1544, when Teresa returned to the practice of prayer, up to her conversion in 1554, Teresa's prayer life was associated with the fourth dwelling place, in which "the natural and supernatural are interwoven in experiences of recollection and quiet." During the period from 1554 to 1560, Teresa's individual spiritual practices deepened and "contemplative prayer, the prayer of quiet and often of union, became habitual and would last a long while . . . Her prayer as an intimate sharing between friends reached a fulness of reality in which her divine Lord began perceptively taking

³⁵⁵ Emilio Miranda, *Teresa de Jesus: Vida, fundaciones, escritos*, 2nd ed. (Avila: Asociación Educativa Signum Christi, 1986), 155.

³⁵⁶ "Años de formación, los primeros. Luego, años de enfermedad, paréntesis de mediocridad, de lucha, de maduración espiritual. Iniciación en la vida mística." Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús," *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 605.

part in the conversation.”³⁵⁷ These characteristics are associated with the fifth dwelling place in her *Interior Castle*.

When Teresa began the life of prayer, she was bothered by distractions. She recommended that those who wish to recollect themselves for prayer use a book, or think of elements of creation such as fields, water or flowers, to remind them of the Creator (*Vida* 9.5).³⁵⁸ She also struggled with her involvement both in the world and in religious life, feeling torn between the two for twenty years (*Vida* 8.2).³⁵⁹ Throughout this time of struggle she managed to

³⁵⁷ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “Introduction,” in *Teresa of Avila: The Way of Prayer*, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2003), 18.

³⁵⁸ “para las *que* van por aquí es bueno vn libro para presto rrecojerse /aprovechavame a mi tanbien ver campo v agua flores en estas scosas allava yo memoria del criador digo *que* me despertavan y rrecojian y servian de libro y en mi yngratitud y pecados /en cosas de el çielo ni en cosas subidas era mi entendimiento tan grosero *que* jamas por jamas las pude ymajinar /asta *que* por otro modo el señor me las rrepresento.” *VidaTR*, 9.5. “Para las *que* van por aquí es bueno un libro para presto recogerse. Aprovechábame a mí también ver campo o agua, flores. En estas cosas hallaba yo memoria del Criador, digo *que* me despertaban y recogían y servían de libro; y en mi ingratitude y pecados. En cosas del cielo ni en cosas subidas, era mi entendimiento tan grosero *que* jamás por jamás las pude imaginar, hasta *que* por otro modo el Señor me las representó.” *OC, Vida* 9.5. “Those who follow this path of no discursive reflection will find that a book can be a help for recollecting oneself quickly. It helped me also to look at fields, or water, or flowers. In these things I found a remembrance of the Creator. I mean that they awakened and recollected me and served as a book and reminded me of my ingratitude and sins. As for heavenly or sublime things, my intellect was so coarse that it could never, never imagine them until the Lord in another way showed them to me.” *CWST, Life* 9.5.

³⁵⁹ “por estar arrimada a esta fuerte columna de la oraçion pase este mar tenpestuoso casi veynte años con estas caydas y con levantarme y mal pues tornava a caer y en vida tan vaja de perfeçion *que* ningun caso casi açia de pecados veniales y los mortales an*que* los temia no como avia de ser pues no me apartava de los peligros se deçir *que* es vna de las vidas penosas *que* me parece se puede ymajinar porque ni yo goçava de dios ni traya contento en el mundo quando estava en los contentos de el mundo en acordarme lo *que* devia a dios era con pena quando estava con dios las afeçiones de mundo me desasosegavan ello es vna gerra tan penosa *que no se* como vn mes la pude sufrir quantimas tantos años con todo veo claro la gran misericordia *que* el señor yço conmigo ya *que* avia de tratar en el mundo *que* tuviese animo para tener oraçion digo animo porque no se yo para *que* cosa de cuantas ay en el es menester mayor *que* tratar trayçion a el rrey y saber *que* lo sabe y nunca se le quitar de delante porque puesto *que* sienpre estamos delante de dios pareçeme a mi es de otra manera los *que* tratan de oraçion porque estan viendo *que* los mira *que* los demas podra ser esten algunos dias *que* an no se acuerden *que*

persevere in prayer (*Vida* 8.2), but it took courage and much effort ultimately to give herself completely to God (*Vida* 8.3).³⁶⁰

los ve dios.” *VidaTR*, 8.2. “Por estar arrimada a esta fuerte columna de la oración, pasé este mar tempestuoso casi veinte años, con estas caídas y con levantarme y mal -pues tornaba a caer- y en vida tan baja de perfección, que ningún caso casi hacía de pecados veniales, y los mortales, aunque los temía, no como había de ser, pues no me apartaba de los peligros. Sé decir que es una de las vidas penosas que me parece se puede imaginar; porque ni yo gozaba de Dios ni traía contento en el mundo. Cuando estaba en los contentos del mundo, en acordarme lo que debía a Dios era con pena; cuando estaba con Dios, las aficiones del mundo me desasosegaban. Ello es una guerra tan penosa, que no sé cómo un mes la pude sufrir, cuánto más tantos años. Con todo, veo claro la gran misericordia que el Señor hizo conmigo: ya que había de tratar en el mundo, que tuviese ánimo para tener oración. Digo ánimo, porque no sé yo para qué cosa de cuantas hay en él es menester mayor, que tratar traición al rey y saber que lo sabe y nunca se le quitar de delante. Porque, puesto que siempre estamos delante de Dios, paréceme a mí es de otra manera los que tratan de oración, porque están viendo que los mira; que los demás podrá ser estén algunos días que aun no se acuerden que los ve Dios.” *OC, Vida* 8.2. “I voyaged on this tempestuous sea for almost twenty years with these fallings and risings and this evil -- since I fell again -- and in a life so beneath perfection that I paid almost no attention to venial sins. And mortal sins, although I feared them, I did not fear them as I should have since I did not turn away from the dangers. I should say that it is one of the most painful lives, I think, that one can imagine; for neither did I enjoy God nor did I find happiness in the world. When I was experiencing the enjoyments of the world, I felt sorrow when I recalled what I owed to God. When I was with God, my attachments to the world disturbed me. This is a war so troublesome that I don’t know how I was able to suffer it even a month, much less for so many years. However, I see clearly the great mercy the Lord bestowed on me; for though I continued to associate with the world, I had the courage to practice prayer. I say courage, for I do not know what would require greater courage among all the things there are in the world than to betray the king and know that he knows it and yet never leave His presence. Though we are always in the presence of God, it seems to me the manner is different with those who practice prayer, for they are aware that He is looking at them. With others, it can happen that several days pass without their recalling that God sees them.” *CWST, Life* 8.2.

³⁶⁰ “verdad es *que* en estos años vvo muchos meses y creo alguna vez año *que* me guardava de ofender a el señor y me dava mucho a la oraçion y açia algunas y artas dilijençias *para* no le venir a ofender *porque* va todo lo *que* escrivo dicho con todo verdad trato aora esto mas acuerdaseme poco de estos dias buenos y *ansi* devian ser pocos y mucho de los rruynes /rratos grandes de oraçion pocos dias se pasavan sin tenerlos si no era estar muy mala v muy ocupada quando estava mala estava mijor con dios / procurava *que* las personals *que* tratavan conmigo lo estuviesen y suplicavalo a el señor ablava muchas veçes en el *ansi que* si no fue el año *que* tengo dicho en veynte’ ocho años *que* a *que* començe oraçion mas de los deçiocho pase esta batalla y contienda de tratar con dios y con el mundo los demas *que* aora me quedan por deçir mudose la cavsas de la gerra *unque* no a sido pequeña mas con estar a lo *que* pienso en serviçio de dios y con conoçimiento de la vanidad *que* es el mundo todo a sido suave como dire despues.” *VidaTR*, 8.3. “Verdad es que en estos años hubo muchos meses, y creo alguna vez año, que me guardaba de ofender al Señor y me daba mucho a la oración y hacía algunas y hartas diligencias para no le venir a ofender . . . Así que, si no fue el año que tengo dicho, en veinte y ocho que ha que comencé oración, más de los dieciocho pasé esta batalla y contienda de tratar con Dios y con el mundo. Los demás que ahora me

Teresa practiced the work of prayer intensely, and most of her writings have much to do with the practice and experience of prayer. She sorts out for the reader various experiences which may arise (visions, locutions) and she describes vocal prayer, mental prayer, the prayer of quiet and the prayer of union in her writings. Although the first account of her life was written in 1560, her most significant writings on prayer were written in her later years. Teresa's writings describing the life of prayer are closely tied to the work of prayer which she did during her middle years, and are in many ways the result of her profound inner spiritual insights and efforts during her time as a nun at the Incarnation. These two types of work - her interior work in her middle years and her exterior work as a writer in her later years - are therefore closely tied together, and the profundity of her spiritual writings could not have emerged in such depth without the long period of struggle and interior work which preceded them..

Teresa notes that her understanding of the vanity of the world - her triumph over the struggle between friendship with the world and friendship with God - led to a different kind of war in the service of God in her later years, which she describes as going smoothly from that point on (*Vida* 8.3). The *Vida* was finished in 1565, so this could refer, in part, to the foundation of St. Joseph, which occurred in August of 1562. While her external struggles would continue to

quedan por decir, mudóse la causa de la guerra, aunque no ha sido pequeña; mas con estar, a lo que pienso, en servicio de Dios y con conocimiento de la vanidad que es el mundo, todo ha sido suave, como diré después." *OC, Vida* 8.3. "True, during these years there were many months, and I believe sometimes a year, that I kept from offending the Lord. And I put forth some effort, and at times a great deal of it, not to offend Him . . . So, save for the year I mentioned, for more than eighteen of the twenty-eight years since I began prayer, I suffered this battle and conflict between friendship with God and friendship with the world. During the remaining years of which I have yet to speak, the cause of the war changed, although the war was not a small one. But since it was, in my opinion, for the service of God and with knowledge of the vanity that the world is, everything went smoothly, as I shall say afterward." *CWST, Life* 8.3.

pose problems for her foundations until the end of her life (especially with regard to practical matters such as finding houses, obtaining licenses, and counteracting civil and ecclesial opposition), the inner work she did through prayer in her middle years provided a strong foundation for her work as a foundress and as a writer in her later years.

Connections Between Prayer and Work

Throughout her writings, Teresa makes connections between prayer and work, especially work done in service to God. As described in Chapter 1, *Castillo* was written during the space of only six months, from June to November of 1577. Many of Teresa's ideas and insights most likely were formed in the years preceding the six months of writing, in order for her to write her greatest spiritual masterpiece in so short a time. *Camino* was written about a decade earlier, in 1566-7, as an instruction book on prayer for nuns. In this writing Teresa provides an in-depth treatment of the "Our Father" in order to guide her nuns through this prayer with greater depth of insight. In the section of the "Our Father" on doing the will of God, Teresa emphasizes that not words alone, but also deeds, must be done by *religiosos* in order for them to conform to the will of God. Excerpts from *Castillo* and *Camino* that demonstrate Teresa's connections between work and prayer are presented below.

In Teresa's treatment of the "Our Father" in *Camino*, she addresses the importance of backing up one's words with deeds in doing the will of God. The Prolog to Chapter 32 introduces the subject of this chapter and highlights the need for determination: "q̄ trata de estas

palabras del paternoster fiad voluntas tua sicut yn çelo et yn terra y lo mucho q̄ açe quien diçe estas palabras con toda determinaçion y quā bien se lo paga el señor.”³⁶¹ Teresa contrasts nuns with people in the world, exacting a higher standard from the nuns. Doing the will of God requires determination, and it must be expressed both in words and deeds: “los del mundo arto aran si tienen de verdad determinaçion de cunplirlo vosotras yjas diçiendo y açiendo palabras y obras como a la verdad pareçe açemos los rrelisiosos.”³⁶² Deeds done in the service of the Lord are repaid by Him in prayer, completing the cycle: “y mientras mas se va entendiendo por las obras q̄ no son palabras de cunplimiento mas mas nos llega el señor a sí y la levanta de todas las cosas de aca y de sí mesma pa abilitarla a rrecibir grādes m̄ds q̄ no aca va de pagar en esta vida este serviçio.”³⁶³

In the seventh dwelling place of the *Castillo*, the highest stage of prayer, Teresa reminds her readers not to put a limit on God’s works: “dios . . . es muy amigo de q̄ no pōgā tasa a sus

³⁶¹ *Camino TR-V*, 32.Prolog. “Que trata de estas palabras del Paternóster: ‘Fiat voluntas tua sicut in coelo et in terra’, y lo mucho que hace quien dice estas palabras con toda determinación, y cuán bien se lo paga el Señor.” *OC, Camino* 32.Prolog. “Discusses the words of the Our Father, Fiat voluntas tua sicut in caelo et in terra; the great deal a person does when he says them with full determination; and how well the Lord repays this.” *CWST, Way* 32.Prolog.

³⁶² *Camino TR-V*, 32.8. “Los del mundo harto harán si tienen de verdad determinación de cunplirlo. Vosotras, hijas, diciendo y haciendo, palabras y obras, como a la verdad parece hacemos los religiosos.” *OC, Camino* 32.8. “Those in the world will be doing enough if they truly have the determination to do His will. You, daughters, will express this determination by both saying and doing, by both words and deeds, as indeed it seems we religious do.” *CWST, Way* 32.8.

³⁶³ *Camino TR-V*, 32.12. “Y mientras más se va entendiendo por las obras que no son palabras de cunplimiento, más más nos llega el Señor a sí y la levanta de todas las cosas de acá y de sí misma para habilitarla a recibir grandes mercedes, que no acaba de pagar en esta vida este servicio.” *OC, Camino* 32.12. “And the more our deeds show that these are not merely polite words, all the more does the Lord bring us to Himself and raise the soul from itself and all earthly things so as to make it capable of receiving great favors, for He never finishes repaying this service in the present life.” *CWST, Way* 32.12.

obras.”³⁶⁴ In the same chapter, she says that the reason for prayer is to give birth to good works in the service of God: “pa esto es la oraç*io*n yjas mias de esto sierve este matrimonio espiritual de q̄ nazcan siēpre obras (obras [sic]).”³⁶⁵ Teresa’s prayer life was intimately connected to works done in the service of God. We pray to learn God’s will and to do it, and He responds to our service with ever greater intimacy with Him in prayer.

Intellectual Work and Forming Social Networks

Throughout Teresa’s time at the Incarnation there were reform movements being discussed in 16th-century Spain, and her connection with well-educated advisors and with the world outside the Incarnation kept her well-informed about them. Through Doña Guiomar de Ulloa she met Peter of Alcántara and others (*Vida* 24.4), and her Jesuit confessors “exercised a critical influence on Teresa’s concepts of prayer and monastic administration. thus Teresa de Ahumada became acquainted with the members of Avila’s ‘reform party.’”³⁶⁶ She mentions the Lutherans in her writings (*Way* 1.4; 35.6), and she was aware of the Council of Trent and the issue of enclosure. Teresa was especially concerned about the effect of frequent visits outside of

³⁶⁴ *CastilloTR*, I.1.4. “Dios . . . es muy amigo de que no pongan tasa a sus obras.” *OC, Castillo* I.1.4. “God doesn’t like us to put a limit on his works.” *CWST, IC* I.1.4.

³⁶⁵ *CastilloTR*, VII.4.6. “Para esto es la oraci*o*n, hijas mías; de esto sirve este matrimonio espiritual: de que nazcan siempre obras, obras.” *OC, Castillo* VII.4.6. “This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works.” *CWST, IC* VII.4.6.

³⁶⁶ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 120.

the monastery on religious life (*Vida* 32.9), and she ultimately would found a new monastery in which enclosure was strictly enforced (St. Joseph's, established in 1562). The lax observance of the Carmelite *Rule* at the Incarnation also seemed to her like a major cause of problems in religious life as followed at the Incarnation (*Vida* 7.3, 7.5, 32.9).³⁶⁷

Teresa sought out many educated advisors during her middle years. At that time the currents of thought about religion, international issues, wealth, poverty, war, taxes and the Crown were discussed throughout Avila and other centers of 16th-century Spanish culture, such as Salamanca, Segovia and Valladolid. New universities were established through the efforts of the newly founded Society of Jesus (Jesuits), and *letrados* or learned men were highly regarded by Teresa (*Vida* 13.16-13.20). Among her contacts were John of Avila, who reviewed her *Vida* and gave her a letter of approval in 1568,³⁶⁸ and the many others she listed in her *Spiritual Testimony* 58, written in 1576 and discussed in Chapter 1. To recall what was said there, she includes among the *espirituales* about ten Jesuits, including Francis Borgia and several rectors of colleges. Among the *letrados* she lists nine Dominican professors, including Domingo Bañez of Valladolid and various professors from Salamanca. She also refers to the Franciscan ascetic and reformer, Peter of Alcántara, and fellow Carmelites Jerónimo Gracián and John of the Cross.

Much has also been written about Teresa as a reader of spiritual and doctrinal books, many of which included excerpts from the Bible. Teresa's life as a reader was described in Chapter 2. Some of the authors whose writings she read were St. Gregory (*Morals*), St. Jerome

³⁶⁷ "Teresa ultimately traced the social problems found in the convent of la Encarnación to the relaxation of the primitive Carmelite rule." Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 114.

³⁶⁸ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 3:87.

(*Letters*), Ludolph of Saxony (*Vita Christi*) and Spanish spiritual writers including Francisco de Osuna and Bernardino de Laredo. She also read stories of the saints (*Flos Sanctorum*) and the Carmelite *Rule of St. Albert*. Teresa was a well-read woman and she exercised her intellectual gifts not only through reading and writing, but also through discussion with learned advisors.

The development of Teresa's doctrinal understanding, spiritual practices, and the formation of strong connections with spiritual and learned men and women in and around Avila all formed a strong basis for networking with the community and understanding how to move forward in her work of establishing foundations. Teresa would eventually write not only books of spiritual guidance (*Camino, Castillo*) and finish the account of her life (*Vida*), but she would also write many letters and some juridical documents for managing monasteries (*Const, Modo*). These writings articulate the ideas behind her vision and advise readers how to approach the major areas of work which were developed in her middle years: the interior life of prayer, detachment from the world, and establishing methods and an environment conducive to growth in prayer and the spiritual life, in accordance with the Carmelite *Rule* and the reforms of Trent.

Many of the problems Teresa observed during her time at the Incarnation would be resolved in her new foundations, and she formed her ideas about a better way to approach Carmelite spiritual life in 16th-century Spain primarily during her middle years. Some of the key concepts of her new foundations would include smaller, more manageable communities, less emphasis on heredity, wealth and power, and enforcing enclosure. These ideas emerged in large part through her observation of the problems associated with growth, poverty and lax observance

of the *Rule*, but her intellectual foundations were established through a correct understanding of Church doctrine through reading and discussions with learned advisors during her middle years.

Chapter Summary

In her middle years, Teresa's work was primarily internal. Her choice to enter religious life launched her into a life of prayer, and her illnesses and mystical experiences led her to deepen her interior work and to seek learned advisors to support her spiritual development. Teresa struggled against the world's concerns and increasingly turned toward prayer and the interior life, finally overcoming her friendship with the world to devote herself completely to God.

Teresa's experiences and her prayerful, well-advised and well-informed reflections on religious life, through the lens of Carmelite goals and the Carmelite *Rule*, and in the atmosphere of religious reform leading up to Trent, would lead her from maintaining the social structure associated with wealth, inheritance, status and honor to a system of poverty, equality and reliance on God in close adherence to the *Rule* and with additional guidelines which would be embodied in spiritual and juridical writings.

Teresa met with many learned men during her time as a nun at the Incarnation, and this, along with reading and study, fostered her intellectual development and may be seen as having laid the intellectual foundation for her work as a writer. This, along with her profound interior life, will allow her to establish foundations and become involved in exterior works (buying

houses, managing workers) without losing her focus on God through prayer, and while remaining true to the Church's doctrines and biblical principles.

Teresa's interior work during her middle years, and her associations with many key figures of the Avilan religious reform movement, gave her the necessary background, understanding and connections to expand her influence into the surrounding countryside and ultimately establish 17 new foundations in which closer observance of the Carmelite *Rule* would be the norm. Teresa's work as a writer and as a foundress in her later years is the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

WORK IN TERESA'S LATER YEARS: 1560-1582

Chapter Introduction

We will approach Teresa's work in her later years in two main areas: establishing foundations and writing. Teresa's administrative, management, and leadership activities were brought to bear on her strong sense of mission to establish reformed Carmelite monasteries. A section on the *Rule* describes the version of the *Rule* Teresa chose, and why she chose it. Teresa had to engage in a great deal of writing in order to establish the means of governance which would embody the principles put forth in the Carmelite *Rule*, and to communicate with ecclesial and civil authorities and the leaders of the Carmelite Order, as well as benefactors, family members and others. The new foundations and their oversight would be guided by Teresa's writings, *Constituciones* and *Modo de Visitar los Conventos*, and a glimpse of her communications with others may be seen in her many *Cartas*.

In the midst of establishing foundations and planning for their governance, Teresa wrote her spiritual masterpieces (*Camino, IC*) as well as some shorter spiritual reflections (*ST*) to guide the members of her foundations in their spiritual development. Teresa's work, both as a foundress and as a writer, was to establish environments in which God would be served by souls who could devote time to Him in prayer and silence, and who would do their own work inspired

by the original eremitical charism that motivated the first Carmelite brothers on Mt. Carmel in the 13th century.

Biographical Background of Teresa's Later Years

As described in the general overview of Teresa's life in Chapter 1, Teresa's later years brought together her exposure to religious, social and economic influences in her early years with the profound spiritual development of her middle years to allow her to emerge as a leader, reformer, foundress and writer in her later years. She integrated her insights into a plan for how to institute both prayer and work in her reformed Carmelite houses while managing her own life of work and prayer, and she subjected her decisions and her writings to ecclesial authorities amid the atmosphere of intense scrutiny associated with the Spanish Inquisition.

A turning point for Teresa came in 1560, when she began to have visions of Christ in prayer. At that time she had a vision of hell that moved her deeply and inspired her strongly to want to save souls (*Vida*, 32). She began to discuss the possibility of a new foundation with members of her community and others, including St. Peter of Alcántara, the Franciscan reformer.³⁶⁹

Emilio Miranda points out that the during the two years from 1560-1562, Teresa's role may be best characterized as "mother and reformer," and from 1562-1582, as "mother and

³⁶⁹ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "A Teresian Chronology," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3: 85.

founder.” During the two years from 1560 to 1562 Teresa spent much time studying the Carmelite *Constitutions* and planning how best to make the first new foundation (*Vida* 35.2) , and after the initial foundation was made, the work of establishing other foundations could use St. Joseph’s as a guide. St. Joseph’s also served as a sort of showcase for authorities, such as when the prior general (Fr. Juan Bautista “Rubeo” Rossi) visited in 1567 and encouraged the foundation of new monasteries according to the model he saw practiced at St. Joseph’s.³⁷⁰

Kavanaugh and others have recounted historically the details of establishing the many foundations, the reaction to her efforts by members of her order and other civil and ecclesiastical authorities, the problems of travel and sending correspondence in 16th-century Spain, and Teresa’s many illnesses throughout this period of her life.³⁷¹ In this chapter we will draw on the portions of her writings that shed light on the role of work in Teresa’s life and writings during these final years. We will focus especially on the foundations of Avila (St. Joseph’s), Malagón, Salamanca and Burgos, because this set includes both the initial and the final foundation (Avila (1562) and Burgos (1582)), Malagón, where Teresa supervised the work of construction on a monastery made to her own specifications (founded 1575; additional work 1579-80), and

³⁷⁰ Kavanaugh provides biographical details: “The general, Fr. John Baptist Rossi (1507-1578), whose last name was Latinized in Spain to Rubeo, was elected general in 1564 and visited Avila, February 16-18, 1567.” *CWST, Foundations* 2.1, 3:415n4.

³⁷¹ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “*The Foundations* – Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:3-82. See also William Thomas Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1943) and Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink, *Tiempo y vida de Santa Teresa* (Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1968).

Salamanca (1570), as a representative foundation and one that this author has visited, to see the work of the nuns that still continues there to this day.

In December, 1561, Teresa went to Toledo to stay with Doña Luisa de la Cerda, to help her recover emotionally from the death of her husband.³⁷² This is where, in June, 1562, Teresa completed her first redaction of the *Vida*.³⁷³ In July, 1562, St. Joseph's received the necessary permission to be established as a Carmelite monastery, and it was formally established on August 24, 1562. A lawsuit from the city of Avila caused problems for the new monastery which had been founded in poverty, and Teresa was called back to the Incarnation. However in December, 1562, Teresa received permission to move to St. Joseph's with four nuns from the Incarnation, and she was elected prioress there in the spring of 1563.³⁷⁴ She wrote the *Constitutions* for St. Joseph's that same year.³⁷⁵

In 1566, Alonso Maldonado visited St. Joseph's from Mexico and described the many souls who were being lost in the New World. His visit inspired Teresa to pray for their salvation and to find a way to do something for God:

a los quatro años me pareçe era algo mas açerto a venirme a ver vn frayle *francisco* llamado fray *alonso* maldonado arto syervo de dios y con los mesmos deseos de el bien de las almas *que* yo y podialos poner por obra *que* le tuve yo arta *envidia* este venia de las yndias poco avia / comencome a contar de los muchos millones de almas *que* alli se

³⁷² Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Biographical Sketches," in *The Collected Letters of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2001-07), 1:621-2.

³⁷³ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 85-93.

³⁷⁴ William Thomas Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Ávila: A Biography* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1943), 212-44.

³⁷⁵ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 86.

perdian por falta de dotrina / y yconos vn sermon y platica animando a la penitencia y fuese yo *quede* tan lastimada de la perdición de tantas almas *que* no cabia *en* mi fuyme a vna ermita con artas lagrimas clamava a nuestro señor suplicandole diese medio como yo pudiese algo *para* ganar algun alma *para* su servicio pues tantas llevaba el demonio y *que* pudiese mi oración algo ya *que* yo no era para mas avia gran envidia a los *que* podian por amor de nuestro señor enplearse *en* esto *anque* pasasen mil muertes / y *ansi* me acaeçe *que* quando *en* las vidas de los santos leemos *que* convirtieron almas mucha mas devoción me açe y mas ternura y mas envidia *que* todos los martirios *que* padeçen por ser esta las ynclinaçion *que* nuestro señor me a dado pareçiendome *que* preçia mas vn alma *que* por nuestra yndustria y oración le ganasemos mediante su misericordia *que* todos los servicios *que* le podemos açe³⁷⁶

³⁷⁶ *FundTR*, 1.7. “A los cuatro años, (me parece era algo más), acertó a venirme a ver un fraile francisco, llamado fray Alonso Maldonado, harto siervo de Dios y con los mismos deseos del bien de las almas que yo, y podíalos poner por obra, que le tuve yo harta envidia. Este venía de las Indias poco había. Comenzóme a contar de los muchos millones de almas que allí se perdían por falta de doctrina, e hízonos un sermón y plática animando a la penitencia, y fuese. Yo quedé tan lastimada de la perdición de tantas almas, que no cabía en mí. Fuime a una ermita con hartas lágrimas. Clamaba a nuestro Señor, suplicándole diese medio cómo yo pudiese algo para ganar algún alma para su servicio, pues tantas llevaba el demonio, y que pudiese mi oración algo, ya que yo no era para más. Había gran envidia a los que podían por amor de nuestro Señor emplearse en esto, aunque pasasen mil muertes. Y así me acaeçe que cuando en las vidas de los santos leemos que convirtieron almas, mucha más devoción me hace y más ternura y más envidia que todos los martirios que padecen, por ser ésta la inclinación que nuestro Señor me ha dado, pareciéndome que precia más un alma que por nuestra industria y oración le ganásemos, mediante su misericordia, que todos los servicios que le podemos hacer.” *OC*, *Fund* 1.7. “Four years later, or, I think, a little more than that, a Franciscan friar happened to come to see me, whose name was Fray Alonso Maldonado, a great servant of God, who had the same desires for the good of souls as I, but he was able to transfer them into deeds for which I envied him greatly. He had recently come back from the Indies. He began to tell me about the many millions of souls that were being lost there for want of Christian instruction, and before leaving he gave us a sermon, or conference, encouraging us to do penance. I was so grief-stricken over the loss of so many souls that I couldn’t contain myself. I went to a hermitage with many tears. I cried out to the Lord, begging him that he give me the means to be able to do something to win some souls to His service, since the devil was carrying away so many, and that my prayer would do some good since I wasn’t able to do anything else. I was very envious of those who for love of our Lord were able to be engaged in winning souls, though they might suffer a thousand deaths. And thus it happens to me that when we read in the lives of the saints that they converted souls, I feel much greater devotion, tenderness, and envy than over all the martyrdoms they suffered. This is the inclination the Lord has given me, for it seems to me that He prizes a soul that through our diligence and prayer we gain for Him, through His mercy, more than all the services we can render Him.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 1.7.

We see here an echo of her early years, when she ran off as a young girl with her brother to become a martyr before an uncle brought her back home. She also references the *Lives of the Saints*, which she read in her youth:

pues mis hermanos ninguna cosa me desayvdavan a servir a dios tenia vno casi de mi edad juntavamonos entramos a leer vidas de santos *que* era el *que* yo mas *queria* aunque a todos tenia gran amor y ellos a mi /como via los martirios *que* por dios las santas pasavan pareçiamе conpravan muy barato el yr a goçar de deios y deseava yo mucho morir ansi no por amor *que* yo entendiese tenerle sino por goçar tan en breve de los grandes bienes *que* leya aver en el çielo y juntavame con este mi hermano a tratar *que* medio avria para esto concertavamos yrnos a tierra de moros pidiendo por amor de dios para *que* alla nos descabeçasen y pareçeme *que* nos dava el señor animo en tan tierna edad si [vi]eramos algun medio sino *que* el tener padres nos [par]jeçia el mayor enbaraço.³⁷⁷

In her maturity, Teresa retained the intensity of her youthful motivation to serve God in a bold way, and Maldonado's visit re-ignited her early desire to be a martyr for God, but her wish has changed from desiring heaven to gaining souls for the Lord. She receives confirmation from the Lord: "pues *andando* yo con esta pena *tan grande* / vna noche estando *en oraçion* rrepresentoseme nuestro señor de la manera *que* suele y mostrandome mucho amor a manera de

³⁷⁷ *VidaTR*, 1.4. "Pues mis hermanos ninguna cosa me desayudaban a servir a Dios. Tenía uno casi de mi edad, juntábamonos entrambos a leer vidas de Santos, que era el que yo más quería, aunque a todos tenía gran amor y ellos a mí. Como veía los martirios que por Dios las santas pasaban, parecíame compraban muy barato el ir a gozar de Dios y deseaba yo mucho morir así, no por amor que yo entendiese tenerle, sino por gozar tan en breve de los grandes bienes que leía haber en el cielo, y juntábame con este mi hermano a tratar qué medio habría para esto. Concertábamos irnos a tierra de moros, pidiendo por amor de Dios, para que allá nos descabezasen. Y paréceme que nos daba el Señor ánimo en tan tierna edad, si viéramos algún medio, sino que el tener padres nos parecía el mayor embarazo." *OC, Vida* 1.4. "My brothers and sisters did not in any way hold me back from the service of God. I had one brother about my age. We used to get together to read the lives of the saints. (He was the one I liked most, although I had great love for them all and they for me). When I considered the martyrdoms the saints suffered for God, it seemed to me that the price they paid for going to enjoy God was very cheap, and I greatly desired to die in the same way. I did not want this on account of the love I felt for God but to get to enjoy very quickly the wonderful things I read there were in heaven. And my brother and I discussed together the means we should take to achieve this. We agreed to go off to the land of the Moors and beg them, out of love of God, to cut off our heads there. It seemed to me the Lord had given us courage at so tender an age, but we couldn't discover any means." *CWST, Life* 1.4.

quererme consolar me dijo / espera vn poco yja y veras grandes cosas.”³⁷⁸ Shortly after this, in 1567, the prior general of the Carmelite Order visited Teresa and encouraged her to found other monasteries according to the way of life he saw they practiced at St. Joseph’s (*Fund* 2.1-2.4). During the following four years Teresa established seven more monasteries (Medina (1567), Malagón (1568), Valladolid (1568), Toledo (1569), Pastrana (1569), Salamanca (1570) and Alba de Tormes (1571)).³⁷⁹

In 1568, Teresa met St. John of the Cross, who had been studying at Salamanca and was already a Carmelite friar:³⁸⁰ “poco despues açerto a venir alli vn padre de poca edad que estava estudiando en salamanca y el fue con otro por compañero / el qual me dijo grandes cosas de la vida que este padre açia llamase fray jua [sic] de la cruz yo alabe a nuestro señor y ablandole contentome mucho.”³⁸¹ Teresa brought John with her to Valladolid when she established her fourth foundation there in 1568, and after he lived for some time with the community there to

³⁷⁸ *FundTR*, 1.8. “Pues andando yo con esta pena tan grande, una noche, estando en oración, representóseme nuestro Señor de la manera que suele, y mostrándome mucho amor, a manera de quererme consolar, me dijo: *Espera un poco, hija, y verás grandes cosas.*” *OC*, *Fund* 1.8. “Well, going about with such great affliction, while I was in prayer one night, our Lord represented Himself to me in His usual way. He showed me much love, manifesting His desire to comfort me, and said: ‘Wait a little, daughter, and you will see great things.’” *CWST*, *Foundations* 1.8.

³⁷⁹ Kavanaugh, “A Teresian Chronology,” 93.

³⁸⁰ *CWST*, *Foundations* 3.17, 3:417n18. Kavanaugh addes, “This was St. John of the Cross (1542-1591), then a Carmelite with the name Juan de Santo Matía.”

³⁸¹ *FundTR*, 3.17. “Poco después acertó a venir allí un padre de poca edad, que estava estudiando en Salamanca, y él fue con otro por compañero, el cual me dijo grandes cosas de la vida que este padre hacía. Llámase fray Juan de la Cruz. Yo alabé a nuestro Señor, y hablándole, contentóme mucho.” *OC*, *Fund* 3.17. “A little later it happened that a young Father came there who was studying at Salamanca. He came along with another, as his companion, who told me great things about the life this Father was leading. The young Father’s name was Fray John of the Cross. I praised our Lord. And when I spoke with this young friar, he pleased me very much.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 3.17.

experience first-hand the reformed Carmelite way of life, St. John of the Cross, under Teresa's direction, established the first monastery for friars at Duruelo in 1568.³⁸²

In 1571, Teresa was appointed prioress of the Incarnation, a position she would hold for three years. We explore this position in greater depth because Teresa's work as the prioress of a large monastery in economic difficulty sheds light on her approach to leadership, business and administration, as well as her skill in managing people, particularly under negative circumstances where there is significant resistance to change.

Teresa as Prioress of the Incarnation

From 1571 to 1574, Teresa was prioress of the Incarnation, a monastery that had not adopted her reform. She was appointed by the Dominican priest Fr. Pedro Fernández, who was one of the two visitators appointed by Pius V to reform the monasteries in Spain.³⁸³ In the summer of 1571, Fr. Fernández had sent Teresa to her discalced foundation at Medina (established in 1567) to set it in order after "the inept government of Doña Teresa de Quesada," then prioress there.³⁸⁴ Teresa succeeded in restoring order to the monastery over the course of several weeks, and because of her success there she was appointed prioress of the Incarnation which was so badly in need of reform. While there had been no major scandals reported at the

³⁸² Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 92-93.

³⁸³ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 385.

³⁸⁴ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 386.

Incarnation, previous visitators had agreed that there was “a dangerous relaxation of discipline” at the Incarnation:

Lady boarders came and went as they pleased. Visits and long conversations with relatives and friends were tolerated, almost as if the place were a fashionable hotel instead of a convent. The true spirit of prayer and recollection having been lost, the income of the house had fallen with its spiritual tone, until there was not even enough to buy food for the nuns. Most of them went to the homes of relatives every day to eat; some were threatening to leave altogether.³⁸⁵

When Teresa returned to the Incarnation as prioress, there were outcries against her. “The demonstration became so uncontrolled that several of the nuns fainted.”³⁸⁶ Some nuns, such as Catalina de Castro, were in favor of having Teresa as prioress, but most were against her. By the day following her arrival, Teresa had placed a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Clemency, in the seat of the prioress in the chapter room, and a statue of St. Joseph had been put in the seat of the subprioress. When the nuns entered, “Teresa was sitting humbly at the feet of the Virgin.”³⁸⁷

She opened the chapter meeting by pointing out that she was their servant, and she would have all serve the Lord quietly, according to the Carmelite *Rule* and the *Constitutions* of the Incarnation. She was thus able to begin immediately to address the practical problems associated with such a large monastery, and she began with the shortage of food. She procured money from wealthy friends and relatives to provide food for the poorest nuns, and “she was particularly

³⁸⁵ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 386.

³⁸⁶ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 390.

³⁸⁷ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 391.

attentive to the sick, and sought delicacies for them.”³⁸⁸ Teresa began in a very practical way to take care of her Carmelite sisters, without regard of class, status or wealth, other than to provide more help to those who could not afford the basic necessities of life.

Teresa was successful in setting the Incarnation on a more stable foundation, but “it took months to place this cumbersome convent on what might be called a business basis. Teresa was not to be discouraged; she never wavered in her belief that ‘God never fails anyone who serves Him.’”³⁸⁹ Teresa had described her view of the relationship of poverty to prayer in *Vida*: “mas temia *que* si a las demas no dava el señor estos deseos bivirian descontentas y tanbien no fuese cavsa de alguna destrayçion *porque* via algunos monesterios pobres no muy rrecojidos y no mirava *que* el no serlo era cavsa de ser pobres y no la pobreza de la destrayçion *porque* esta no açe mas rricas ni falta dios jamas a quien le sirve.”³⁹⁰ Like the newly elected president of a country, Teresa slowly began to put her “cabinet” in place, appointing people she knew would carry out her wishes to key positions. After only about a month at the Incarnation, Teresa writes to her friend, Doña Luisa de la Cerda on November 7, 1571, that she is having some success in

³⁸⁸ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 392.

³⁸⁹ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 393.

³⁹⁰ *VidaTR*, 35.2. “Mas temía que, si a las demás no daba el Señor estos deseos, vivirían descontentas, y también no fuese causa de alguna distracción, porque veía algunos monasterios pobres no muy recogidos, y no miraba que el no serlo era causa de ser pobres, y no la pobreza de la distracción; porque ésta no hace más ricas, ni falta Dios jamás a quien le sirve.” *OC, Vida* 35.2. “I also feared that poverty would be the cause of some distraction since I observed certain poor monasteries in which there wasn’t much recollection. I failed to reflect that this lack of recollection was the cause of their being poor and that it was not the practice of poverty that caused their distraction. For distraction won’t make monasteries richer; nor does God ever fail anyone who serves Him.” *CWST, Life* 35.2.

convincing the 130 nuns to give up many unnecessary conversations and visits and to curtail other bad habits:

Nuestro Señor pague a vuestra señoría la merced y consuelo que me dio con la suya, que yo le digo que he menester alguno. ¡Oh, señora!, quien se ha visto en el sosiego de nuestras casas y se ve ahora en esta barahúnda, no sé cómo se puede vivir, que de todas maneras hay en qué padecer. Con todo, gloria a Dios, hay paz, que no es poco, yendo quitándoles sus entretenimientos y libertad; que M, aunque son tan buenas -- que cierto hay mucha virtud en esta casa -- mudar costumbre es muerte, como dicen. Llévadlo bien y tiénenme mucho respeto. Mas adonde hay ciento y treinta, ya entenderá vuestra señoría el cuidado que será menester para poner las cosas en razón. Alguno me dan nuestros monasterios; aunque, como vine aquí forzada por la obediencia, espero en nuestro Señor que no consentirá les haga falta sino que tendrá cuidado de ellos. Parece que no está inquieta mi alma con toda esta babilonia, que lo tengo por merced del Señor. El natural se cansa; mas todo es poco para lo que he ofendido al Señor.³⁹¹

By 1572 Teresa had arranged for John of the Cross to join her at the Incarnation as chaplain and confessor to the nuns. During this time the Incarnation experienced significant renewal under these two leaders, according to the person who appointed her:

[Teresa's appointment as prioress of the Incarnation] was made in 1571 by the Dominican apostolic commissary, Pedro Fernández, who hoped that she could bring about some reforms and find some remedy for the community's economic troubles. She called on her new, discalced friar John of the Cross to come as confessor and spiritual director to assist her. In Fernández's view, the step taken was a highly successful one; the

³⁹¹ *Cartas* 38.4. "May our Lord repay you for your kindness and the consolation your letter brought me, for I tell you that I need some of this. Oh, my lady, as one who has known the calm of our houses and now finds herself in the midst of this pandemonium, I don't know how one can go on living, for everywhere there is suffering. Nonetheless, glory to God, there is peace, which is no small thing. Gradually I am taking away the nuns' diversions and freedom, for even though these nuns are so good -- certainly there is much virtue in this house -- changing a habit is death, as they say. They bear it well and show me much respect. But where there are 130 nuns, you will understand the care that is necessary to keep things in order. I am somewhat concerned about our own monasteries; but since I was obliged to come here under obedience, I hope that our Lord will not allow me to fail in my duty, but that he will care for them. It doesn't seem that my soul is disturbed in the midst of this whole Babylon, which I take to be a favor from the Lord. Human nature grows tired, but it is all little next to my offenses against the Lord." *Letters* 38.4.

community at the Incarnation under the guidance of these two leaders experienced a complete spiritual renewal and was liberated from a number of its problems.³⁹²

Teresa completed her term as prioress of the Incarnation on October 6, 1574, having restored the monastery to greater order and well-being for the community, in both practical and spiritual matters.³⁹³

During her term as prioress of the Incarnation, Teresa journeyed with John of the Cross to Segovia, where a new foundation was established on March 19, 1573. The following month, due to major problems in Pastrana with the Princess of Eboli, a disruptive and powerful person who had insisted on becoming a Carmelite nun there after the death of her husband, Prince Ruy Gómez, Teresa's original nuns in Pastrana soon realized they needed to escape the trouble and disturbances that the Princess was causing them, and they left the Princess in Pastrana and relocated to the new Segovia foundation (*Fund* 17.16-17). Teresa continued to travel and in February, 1575, she established a foundation in Beas. In April, 1575, she met with Jerónimo Gracián de la Madre de Dios, the Carmelite friar who would become so important to Teresa and her reform. In May, 1575, the Foundation in Seville was established.³⁹⁴

In December, 1575, Teresa's *Vida* was denounced to the Inquisition of Seville by the disgruntled Princess of Eboli, and while it was under investigation Teresa was ordered by her

³⁹² Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Foundations – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:20.

³⁹³ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 88.

³⁹⁴ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 88-9.

superiors to stop traveling and to remain confined to one of her monasteries in Castile.³⁹⁵ The manuscript of the *Vida* was given to one of Teresa's confessors, Fr. Bañez, to review as censor: "His judgment of the book contained a matter-of-fact statement of approval: 'Although this woman ... is mistaken in some matters, at least she does not intend to lead others into error, for she speaks so frankly of good and bad, and with such desire to be correct in what she says, that one cannot doubt her good intention.'"³⁹⁶

Teresa was ultimately cleared of any wrongdoing, but the autograph of the *Vida* was kept by the authorities until 1588.³⁹⁷ Teresa wrote a long account of her spiritual life for Rodrigo Alvarez, S.J., the Inquisitor of Seville, in 1576 (*ST* 58). During the same year she also wrote *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* (*On Making the Visitation*), and the following year, 1577, she wrote *Vejamen* (*A Satirical Critique*), and the entire *Castillo Interior* (*Interior Castle*).³⁹⁸

³⁹⁵ "When the capricious and wealthy Princess of Eboli, through whose benefactions Teresa was able to found two Carmels at Pastrana, heard news of the secret work, she insisted so emphatically on reading it that Teresa was forced to yield. The princess made no effort to keep the manuscript out of the hands of the servants, and soon this intimate, deeply spiritual account became a subject of gossip and ridicule throughout the entire household by people who were completely out of their depth. After her husband's death the domineering princess, with much fanfare, expressed her grief by entering the Carmel of Pastrana to become a nun. She caused so much disturbance to the quiet contemplative life of the community that the nuns had to abandon the monastery there for Segovia. This was a blow to the princess's self-love. She settled the score by denouncing Teresa's *Life* to the Inquisition as the work of a heretical, illuminist nun and as being all about visions, revelations and dangerous doctrines. Without delay the Inquisition began its inquiry. A letter was sent on January 2, 1575 to Don Alvaro de Mendoza, Bishop of Avila, ordering him to give over the book he had by Teresa of Jesus." Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "The Book of Her Life – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, 2nd ed., trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1987), 1:46-7.

³⁹⁶ Kavanaugh, "The Book of Her Life – Introduction," 1:47.

³⁹⁷ Kavanaugh, "The Book of Her Life – Introduction," 1:47.

³⁹⁸ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 85-91.

In 1577, while St. John of the Cross was still chaplain at the Incarnation in Avila, he was taken prisoner and transferred to Toledo by Carmelite friars of the mitigated observance of the *Rule*, who felt they were acting properly according to recently revised jurisdictional authority.³⁹⁹ Teresa was living at St. Joseph's in Avila at that time, and she wrote a letter to King Philip II requesting his help in the matter. She accidentally fell down the stairs on December 24, 1577, and she broke her left arm. In 1578, St. John of the Cross escaped from prison in Toledo. In 1579, Teresa was able to begin traveling again, and she continued to establish new foundations, including overseeing construction of a new monastery which was built according to her own design in Malagón. In 1581 Teresa was re-elected prioress in Avila, and after much difficulty she established her final foundation in Burgos in April, 1582.⁴⁰⁰

“The erection of the monastery in Burgos, the last one that she brought to life, cost her much effort and time.”⁴⁰¹ Teresa had left Avila in January, 1582, and she was finally ready to return home in July, 1582, but “Fr. Antonio of Jesus brought her to Alba to comply with a wish of the Duchess María Henriquez, the great patroness of that monastery.”⁴⁰² There were problems throughout her travels (difficulty finding food, ungracious hosts and problems with relatives),

³⁹⁹ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “General Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1991), 17-18.

⁴⁰⁰ Kavanaugh, “A Teresian Chronology,” 85-91.

⁴⁰¹ Edith Stein, “Love for Love: Life and Works of St. Teresa of Jesus,” in *The Hidden Life: Hagiographic Essays, Meditations, Spiritual Texts*, edited by L. Gelber and Michael Linssen, O.C.D., translated by Waltraut Stein (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1992), 64.

⁴⁰² Edith Stein, “Love for Love,” 64.

and Teresa became increasingly ill during her travels.⁴⁰³ Teresa arrived in Alba on September 20, 1582. She participated in the exercises of the monastery as much as she could, but finally she could no longer get out of bed, and she died at Alba on October 4, 1582.⁴⁰⁴

Teresa's Work as a Writer

The Writings of Teresa's Later Years

A general overview of Teresa's writings was presented in Chapter 1. Here we will describe what she wrote in her later years and explore in greater depth those writings most directly related to the theme of work, including *Modo de Visitar los Conventos*, *Constituciones*, *Fundaciones* and some of her *Cartas*.

Teresa wrote many of her most well-known books, as well as a number of minor writings, during the last two decades of her life. Teresa's *Relaciones* (*Spiritual Testimonies*) consists of six long accounts and many shorter accounts of her spiritual state at various moments in her life, which were written from 1560 to 1581.⁴⁰⁵ Teresa's 468 extant letters are primarily from the last twenty years of Teresa's life. In June, 1562, Teresa finished the first redaction of

⁴⁰³ Kavanaugh. "The Foundations - Introduction," 3:73-78.

⁴⁰⁴ Edith Stein, "Love for Love," 64.

⁴⁰⁵ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Spiritual Testimonies – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 1:369-71.

the *Vida*. She wrote the *Constituciones* in 1563 and *Camino de Perfección* in 1566.⁴⁰⁶ In 1569 Teresa wrote *Exclamaciones del Alma a Dios (Soliloquies)*, and in 1572 she wrote *Respuesta a un Desafío (Response to a Spiritual Challenge)*. *Conceptos del Amor de Dios (Meditations on the Song of Songs)* was probably written between 1572 and 1575.⁴⁰⁷ In 1573 Teresa began writing *Las Fundaciones*, which she would continue to write until 1582, the year of her death. In 1576 she wrote *Modo de Visitar los Conventos (On Making the Visitation)*, and in 1577 she wrote both *Vejamen (Satirical Critique)* and the entire *Castillo Interior*.⁴⁰⁸

From the point of view of content, the writings that are most important for our study of work in this period of Teresa's life are the *Constituciones* (1563), *Fundaciones* (1573-1582), and *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* (1576). *Const* describes how the new foundations would be governed, *Fund* documents the establishment of new foundations, including all of the various tasks that went into that effort, and *Modo* gives instructions to visitors on how to encourage the nuns and evaluate the monasteries during their visits for the purposes of oversight. All of these writings have in common the work of management and administration, and governing the work that would go on in the monasteries as well as some construction work in getting them ready initially. The spiritual leadership of the nuns is also discussed.

⁴⁰⁶ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 86-91.

⁴⁰⁷ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Meditations on the Song of Songs – Introduction," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 2:207-14.

⁴⁰⁸ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 86-91.

Teresa's Motivation and Process of Writing

This section explores Teresa's descriptions of her process of writing, including both its difficulties and its joys, from the perspective of illuminating how she approached her work as a writer, and how she balanced this work with her many other tasks and obligations.

The *Vida* was composed initially at the Toledo palace of her friend and supporter, Doña Luisa de la Cerda:

[Teresa's handwritten manuscript] tells much about the authoress and her methods of composition. She wrote clearly and vigorously at great speed, hardly ever erasing or crossing anything out, now and then underlining some words for emphasis . . . Hers tells of an intense but well-balanced nature. In the whole manuscript there are only fourteen corrections, of which some were made by her, some by Father Báñez, and the rest by a third person.⁴⁰⁹

The motivation for Teresa's work as an author is largely rooted in obedience to her spiritual directors. She describes her motivation for writing the *Vida* in the Prolog: "quisiera yo *que* como me *an* mandado y dado larga liçençia *para que* escriva el modo de oraçion y las *merçedes que* el señor me a echo me la dieran *para que* muy por menudo y con claridad dijera mis grandes pecados y rruyn vida dierame *gran* consuelo mas no *an querido*."⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁹ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 257.

⁴¹⁰ *VidaTR*, Prólogo. "Quisiera yo *que*, como me han mandado y dado larga licencia *para que* escriba el modo de oración y las mercedes *que* el Señor me ha hecho, me la dieran *para que* muy por menudo y con claridad dijera mis grandes pecados y ruin vida. Diérame gran consuelo. Mas no han querido." *OC, Vida* Prólogo. "Since my confessors commanded me and gave me plenty of leeway to write about the favors and the kind of prayer the Lord has granted me, I wish they would also have allowed me to tell very clearly and minutely about my great sins and wretched life. This would be a consolation. But they didn't want me to." *CWST, Life* Prolog.

Teresa's confessors, especially when they learned about her mystical experiences in this environment of suspicion around the *alumbrada* movement in 16th-century Spain, often requested written accounts of her experiences: "At the time Teresa took up her pen to begin *The Book of Her Life* she was approaching fifty and had been experiencing a steady flow of mystical grace for close to ten years. She was obliged, finally, to report in writing her unusual and sometimes disconcerting experiences so as to submit all to the judgment of professionals."⁴¹¹

Teresa took great pains to ensure that her prayer life and her writing was in accord with Church doctrine and teachings. When Inquisitor Don Francisco Soto de Salazar arrived in Avila in the winter of 1562-1563, Teresa was "alarmed . . . by rumors that her book was being investigated by the Holy Office," so she requested a meeting with Salazar and told him the state of her soul, "begging him, in conclusion, for a judgment upon her spirit, her works, and her method of prayer, which she assured him she desired to submit, in all things, to the mind of the Church."⁴¹² Salazar advised her to submit her *Vida* to Father John of Avila, "the apostle of Andalusia, then considered the most qualified person in Spain to judge spiritual matters." After some effort she was able to submit a copy of her book to him, and she received approval of her *Vida* in a letter from him dated September 12, 1568.⁴¹³

⁴¹¹ Kavanaugh, "*The Book of Her Life* – Introduction," 1:35.

⁴¹² Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 260.

⁴¹³ Kavanaugh, "*The Book of Her Life* – Introduction," 1:46.

Other books and writings, too, were written at the request of superiors. *Castillo Interior* came about when Teresa was talking with her confessor, Gracián, on August 28, 1577, in Toledo:

Fr. Gracián, her confessor and also enthusiastic supporter as a Carmelite friar in her reform, has left us his account of the event: “What happened with regard to the book of the *Dwelling Places* is that while I was superior and speaking with her once in Toledo of many things concerning her spirit, she said to me: ‘Oh, how well this point was described in the book about my life which is in the Inquisition!’ I answered: ‘Since we cannot have it, recall what you can and other things and write another book, but put down the doctrine in a general way without naming the one to whom the things you mentioned there happened.’ And thus I ordered her to write this book of the *Dwelling Places*.”⁴¹⁴

Camino de Perfección, however, had been written for her nuns, because they had heard about the *Vida* but were not permitted to read it. Although Teresa was writing under “obedience” to her nuns, not her confessors, she still obtained the permission of her superiors to write the book:

Having got word of this work written by their Mother Foundress, the nuns at St. Joseph’s were understandably curious and eager to read it. Teresa herself did not share her confessor’s misgivings and thought the book could be read profitably by those who were favored with passive prayer. But since Báñez refused to hear of this and even threatened to throw the manuscript into the fire, the nuns pressed Teresa to write another work just for them about prayer. The learned Dominican was more receptive to this idea, and he allowed Teresa to “write some things about prayer.” The nuns themselves, in addition to Báñez’s general permission, made their own specific requests about the subject matter. Some of them were eager to learn about contemplation -- and even perfect contemplation. Others, apparently frightened by the thought of such elevated topics, asked for simpler themes such as how to recite vocal prayer. In any event, Teresa wrote *The Way of Perfection* for her nuns and with their requests and needs in mind; and she therefore dialogues with them throughout the work. In Teresa’s view, her response to the Sisters’

⁴¹⁴ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “*The Interior Castle* – Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 2:263.

urgings was like an act of obedience; “I have decided to obey them,” she says [*Camino, Prolog*].⁴¹⁵

The Foundations were begun in response to her confessor when she was staying in Salamanca in 1573:

The idea for this new book seems to have derived from the Jesuit Jerónimo Ripalda, formerly skeptical of Teresa but now her friend and confessor. Having read her *Life* and its account of the first foundation, Ripalda urged the foundress to enlarge her story and write as well the history of the seven monasteries she had founded since the completion of her first book; she could tell, too, about the first monasteries of her friars.⁴¹⁶

Teresa previously had been urged to write about the foundations in a mystical vision of Christ several years earlier, in 1570:⁴¹⁷

Acabando de comulgar, segundo día de cuaresma en San José de Malagón, se me representó nuestro Señor Jesucristo en visión imaginaria como suele . . . Díjome que no era ahora tiempo de descansar, sino que me diese prisa a hacer estas casas . . . que escribiese la fundación de estas casas. Yo pensaba cómo en la de Medina nunca había entendido nada para escribir su fundación. Díjome que qué más quería de ver que su fundación había sido milagrosa. Quiso decir que haciéndolo sólo El, pareciendo ir sin ningún camino, y determinarme yo a ponerlo por obra.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “*The Way of Perfection* – Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 2:15-16.

⁴¹⁶ Kavanaugh. “*The Foundations* - Introduction,” 3:5.

⁴¹⁷ Kavanaugh provides additional biographical information about Teresa’s uncle: “This uncle was Don Pedro Sánchez de Cepeda, widower of Doña Catalina del Aguila. He lived in the little town of Hortigosa, near the town in which Teresa’s sister lived. Later he retired to the monastery of the Jeronimites, and it was there he died.” *CWST, ST 6*, 1:468n4.

⁴¹⁸ *OC, Relaciones 9*. “Right after I received Communion, on the second day of Lent, in St. Joseph’s at Malagón, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me in an imaginative vision, as He usually does . . . He told me that now was not the time for rest, but that I should hurry to establish these houses . . . and that I should write about the foundation of these houses. I thought of how in regard to the house at Medina I never understood anything in a way that I could write of its foundation. He told me that that was all the more reason to write of it since He wanted it to be seen that the Medina foundation had been miraculous. He meant that He alone founded that house, since it had seemed absolutely impossible to found. And as a result I decided to write about the founding of these houses.” *CWST, ST 6*.

Teresa's reasons for waiting several years before she began writing *Las Fundaciones* may have been due to her lack of time for writing or to her recognition that she shouldn't take any credit because the work was God's work. In the end, she begins due to her commitment to obedience:

Teresa's reluctance to follow the Lord's urgings that she write about her foundations could have been due to her fear that others might then think they were her own accomplishments, an idea she disavows. The work was God's work. In addition, she dreaded taking up the task because of the lack of quiet time for writing. Tangled business matters, endless correspondence, persistent bad health, certainly none of these contributed any spark of enthusiasm for the project. In the end, only the thought of obedience to her confessor provided her with the strength needed to begin.⁴¹⁹

Modo de Visitar los Conventos was written in 1576, in order to advise visitators how to manage their oversight of reformed Carmelite houses in such a way to preserve the Mother Foundress' vision and principles. In this document Teresa tempers correction with encouragement to ensure a leadership style that is both firm and kind, neither overly autocratic nor too permissive. More details on the content of *Modo* and *Const* as they describe Teresa's style of leadership and governance are covered below.

Teresa sheds light on her motivations for writing elsewhere in her writings, also. For example, she writes down the Lord's counsels in obedience to His instructions to her in prayer, and so that she won't forget them: "Hija, . . . no dejes de escribir los avisos que te doy, porque no se te olviden; pues quieres por escrito los de los hombres, ¿por qué piensas pierdes tiempo en

⁴¹⁹ Kavanaugh, "*The Foundations* - Introduction," 3:5.

escribir los que te doy?; tiempo vendrá que los hayas todos menester.”⁴²⁰ Teresa also writes in order to bring to others the delight she experiences on the path of prayer:

Ahora, con parecer de personas a quien yo estoy obligada a obedecer, escribiré alguna cosa de lo que el Señor me da a entender que se encierran en palabras de que mi alma gusta para este camino de la oración, por donde, como he dicho, el Señor lleva a estas hermanas de estos monasterios e hijas mías Si fuere para que lo veáis, tomaréis este pobre donecito de quien os desea todos los del Espíritu Santo como a sí misma, en cuyo nombre yo lo comienzo. Si algo acertare, no será de mí. Plega a la divina Majestad acierte . . .⁴²¹

As Teresa finished writing the first part of *Fund* in 1576, she wrote to Gracián to tell him it was almost done and to say that she thought he would be pleased with it. She also complains about the burden caused by writing letters, and her lack of time:

Jesús. -- La gracia del Espíritu Santo sea con vuestra paternidad. *Las Fundaciones* van ya al cabo; creo se ha de holgar de que las vea, porque es cosa sabrosa. ¡Mire si obedezco bien! Cada vez pienso que tengo esta virtud, porque de burlas que se me mande una cosa la querría hacer de veras, y lo hago de mejor gana que esto de estas cartas, que me mata tanta baraúnda. No sé cómo me ha quedado tiempo para lo que he escrito, y no deja de haber alguno para José, que es quien da fuerzas para todo.⁴²²

⁴²⁰ *OC, Relaciones* 28. “‘Daughter, . . . don’t fail to write down the counsels I give you, so that you don’t forget them. Since you want the counsels of men in writing, why do you think you’re losing time by writing down those I give you? The time will come when you will need them all.’” *CWST, ST* 24.

⁴²¹ *OC, Conceptos* Prólogo.3. “Now in accord with the opinion of persons whom I’m obliged to obey, I shall write something about the understanding the Lord gives me of what is contained in the words that bring delight to my soul about this path of prayer. As I have said, it is along this path that the Lord leads these Sisters, and my daughters, in these monasteries. If this writing is such that you may see it, accept this poor little gift from one who desires for you as well as for herself all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in whose name I begin. If I succeed in saying something worthwhile, the success will not be from me. May it please the divine Majesty . . .” *CWST, Meditations* Prolog.3.

⁴²² *OC, Cartas* 138.1. “Jesus. The grace of the Holy Spirit be with your paternity. *The Foundations* is nearing completion. I think you will be delighted to see it. It makes for pleasant reading. See how well I obey! Sometimes I even wonder if I have this virtue, for if one gives me an order in jest, I want to take it seriously. And I carry out the orders more eagerly than I do this letter-writing, for all the bustle involved is killing me. I don’t know how I found time for what I have written, and I have not failed to find some for Joseph either, who is the one who gives me strength for everything.” *CWST, Letters* 138.1.

In the above letter to Gracián, Teresa's "code name" for Jesus is "José," and her complaint seems to suggest that she is not finding enough time for prayer.⁴²³ Teresa also complains of a lack of time in a letter to Gracián a couple of months later, as she describes his sister, Isabel, a young Carmelite, with her needlework. This letter also highlights the fact that needlework was done in the reformed monasteries:

Mi Isabel está cada día mejor. En entrando yo en la recreación, como no es muchas veces, deja su labor y comienza a cantar:

La madre fundadora
viene a la recreación;
bailemos y cantemos
y hagamos el son.

Esto es un momento. Y cuando no es hora de recreación, en su ermita tan embebida en su Niño Jesús y sus pastores y su labor, que es para alabar al Señor, y en lo que dice que piensa. Dice se encomienda a vuestra paternidad y que le encomienda a Dios y le tiene deseo de ver. A la señora doña Juana no, ni a ninguno, que dice son del mundo. Harta recreación me da, sino que este escribir me deja poco tiempo para tenerla.⁴²⁴

Only two months later, in a letter to the prioress in Seville in February, 1577, "Teresa had become completely exhausted from too much work and incapable of doing any more letter-

⁴²³ Kavanaugh's note adds that this is Teresa's "code name for Jesus." *CWST, Letters* 138, 1:376n2.

⁴²⁴ *OC, Cartas* 169.1-2. "My Isabel is getting better every day. When I go to recreation, which is not often, she sets aside her needlework and begins to sing: Mother Foundress / Is coming to recreation; / Let's all dance and sing / And clap our hands in jubilation. But this is for a moment. Outside the time of recreation she remains in her hermitage so absorbed with the Infant Jesus, the shepherds, her work, and her thoughts (which she tells me about) that it is something to praise the Lord for. She sends her regards, and prays for you. And she desires to see you, but not Señora Juana or anyone, for she says they are of the world. She is for me a delight, but all this writing leaves me little time to enjoy it." *CWST, Letters* 169.1-2.

writing.”⁴²⁵ Teresa was also ill: “Jesús sea con ella, hija mía. Por la indisposición que verá en este papel, no la he escrito más veces hasta estar mejor, por no las dar pena. Aunque lo estoy mucho, no de manera que pueda escribir sino muy poco, que luego siento gran daño; mas para como estaba luego luego [sic], es mucha la mejoría, gloria a Dios.”⁴²⁶ By the end of the writing of *Castillo*, in November, 1577, Teresa reported feeling happy about her writing, and the joy that she expected this book would bring to her Sisters:

an̄ quādo comēce a escribir esto q̄ aqui va fue con la cōtradiçiō q̄ al principio digo despues de a cabado me a dado mucho contento y doy por bien epleado el trabajo /āq confieso q̄ a sido arto poco /considerādo el mucho eçerramiēto y pocas cosas de ētreenimiēto q̄ teney mis ermanas y no casas tā bastantes como conviene ē algunos monesterios de los v̄ros me pareçe os sera consuelo deleytaros ē este /castillo ynterior /pues sin liçençia de las superiores podeys ētrar y pasearos por el a qualquiera (ora⁴²⁷

⁴²⁵ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “Introduction to Letter 186,” in *The Collected Letters of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2001), 1:510.

⁴²⁶ *OC, Cartas* 186.1. “Jesus be with you, my daughter. Because of the illness described on the enclosed piece of paper, I have not been writing to you, waiting until I felt better so as not to cause you any grief. Although I am much better, I can still do only a little writing; otherwise I immediately feel the harm it does me. But in comparison with how I was a short time ago, the improvement is great, glory to God.” *CWST, Letters* 186.1.

⁴²⁷ *CastilloTR, Epílogo*.1. “Aunque cuando comencé a escribir esto que aquí va fue con la contradicción que al principio digo, después de acabado me ha dado mucho contento y doy por bien empleado el trabajo, aunque confieso que ha sido harto poco. Considerando el mucho encerramiento y pocas cosas de entretenimiento que tenéis, mis hermanas, y no casas tan bastantes como conviene en algunos monasterios de los vuestros, me parece os será consuelo deleitaros en este castillo interior, pues sin licencia de las superiores podéis entrar y pasearos por él a cualquier hora.” *OC, Castillo Epílogo*.1. “Although when I began writing this book I am sending you I did so with the aversion I mentioned in the beginning, now that I am finished I admit the work has brought me much happiness, and I consider the labor, though I confess it was small, well spent. Considering the strict enclosure and the few things you have for your entertainment, my Sisters, and that your buildings are not always as large as would be fitting for your monasteries, I think it will be a consolation for you to delight in this interior castle since without permission from the prioress you can enter and take a walk through it at any time.” *CWST, IC Epilog*.1.

Regarding her style of writing, Kavanaugh observes that Teresa had little training and often wanders in her thinking:

Unlike other Spanish classic authors, Teresa had no training as a writer. Her style is thoroughly spontaneous, without the slightest trace of artificiality or sophistication. Writing the way she talked, she reflects the popular language of the Castilian people of her time: natural, direct, colorful, and incisive. As though her thoughts were jostling with each other for position, her sentences often become highly involved with parentheses and digressions, causing her sometimes to lose the thread -- which never prevents her from leaping forward quickly and easily to a new thought. . . . In spite of the grammatical or stylistic shortcomings there is something about the color, spontaneity, and simplicity of Teresa's style that makes her a delight to read. There is also a subtle wit frequently at work in what she says or in the way she says it.⁴²⁸

Teresa acknowledges her lack of training in *Vida*, and complains that writing causes her to lose valuable time which could be spent doing other, perhaps more worthwhile tasks:

porque yo sin letras ni buena vida ni ser ynformada de letrado ni de persona ninguna porque solos los *que* me lo mandan escribir saben *que* lo escribo y al presente no estan aqui y casi vrtando el tienpo y con pena porque me estorvo de ylar por estar en casa pobre y con artas ocupaçiones ansi *que* aunque el señor me diera mas abilidad y memoria *que* an con esta me pudiera aprovechar de lo *que* [e] oydo v leydo es poquisima la *que* tengo ansi *que* si algo bueno dijere lo quiere el señor para algun bien lo *que* fuere malo sera de mi y vuestra merçed lo quitara⁴²⁹

⁴²⁸ Kavanaugh, "The Book of Her Life - Introduction," 1:48.

⁴²⁹ *VidaTR*, 10.7. "Porque yo sin letras ni buena vida ni ser informada de letrado ni de persona ninguna (porque solos los que me lo mandan escribir saben que lo escribo, y al presente no están aquí) y casi hurtando el tiempo, y con pena porque me estorbo de hilar, por estar en casa pobre y con hartas ocupaciones. Así que, aunque el Señor me diera más habilidad y memoria, que aun con ésta me pudiera aprovechar de lo que he oído o leído, es poquísima la que tengo; así que si algo bueno dijere, lo quiere el Señor para algún bien; lo que fuere malo será de mí, y vuestra merced lo quitará." *OC, Vida* 10.7. "For I am without learning or a good life, without instruction from a learned man or from any other person (for only those who commanded me to write this know that I am writing it, and at present they are not here), and almost stealing time, and regretfully because it prevents me from spinning and this is a poor house with many things to be done. For even though the Lord may have given me greater capability and memory so that I might thereby have been able to profit from what I have heard or read, I have retained very little of it. Thus if I should say something good, the Lord wills it for some good; what is bad will be from me, and your Reverence will strike it out." *CWST, Life* 10.7.

Teresa tried to be accurate in her writing of the *Fundaciones*, because the work was for the Lord:

plega a su magestad *que* sea ansi y de graçia para *que* açierte yo a deçir para gloria suya las mercedes *que* en estas fundaçiones a echo a esta orden / puedese tener por çierto *que* se dira con toda verdad sin nengun encareçimento a quanto yo *entendiere* sino conforme a lo *que* a pasado porque en cosa muy poco ynportante yo no trataria mentira por nenguna de la tierra *en* esto *que* se escribe para *que* nuestro señor sea alabado ariaseme gran conçiencia y creeria no solo era perder tiempo sino *engañar* con las cosas de dios y en lugar de ser alabado por ellas ser ofendido seria vna gran trayçion no plega a su magestad me deje de su mano para *que* yo la aga / yra señalada cada fundaçion y procurare abreviar si supiere porque mi dxgilo dx gzn pesado *que* aunque quiera temo *que* no dejare de cansar y cansarme mas con el amor *que* mis yjas me tienen a quien a de quedar esto despues de mis días se podra tolerar⁴³⁰

Teresa's reform activities required much correspondence, to establish foundations and provide for their maintenance. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Teresa wrote many letters (perhaps thousands), and her letter writing took up a great deal of time. Much of it was done late at night after other tasks were finished, and she often wrote duplicates and sent them by different routes in order to ensure their arrival. Sometimes the names of people written in her letters were given

⁴³⁰ *FundTR*, Prólogo.3. "Plega a Su Majestad que sea así y dé gracia para que acierte yo a decir para gloria suya las mercedes que en estas fundaciones ha hecho a esta Orden. Puédese tener por cierto que se dirá con toda verdad, sin ningún encarecimiento, a cuanto yo entendiere, sino conforme a lo que ha pasado. Porque en cosa muy poco importante yo no trataría mentira por ninguna de la tierra; en esto, que se escribe para que nuestro Señor sea alabado, haríaseme gran conciencia, y creería no sólo era perder tiempo, sino engañar con las cosas de Dios, y en lugar de ser alabado por ellas, ser ofendido. Sería una gran traición. No plega a Su Majestad me deje de su mano, para que yo la haga. Irá señalada cada fundación, y procuraré abreviar, si supiere, porque mi estilo es tan pesado, que, aunque quiera, temo que no dejaré de cansar y cansarme. Mas con el amor que mis hijas me tienen, a quien ha de quedar esto después de mis días, se podrá tolerar." *OC, Fund* Prólogo.3. "May it please His Majesty that this be so, and may He grant me the grace to be able to recount for His glory the favors that through these foundations He has granted this order. One can be certain that this account will be given in all truthfulness, without any exaggeration, in so far as possible, but in conformity with what has taken place. For even in something of very little importance I wouldn't tell a lie for anything in the world. In this work that is being written for the praise of our Lord, any untruthfulness would cause me great scrupulosity. I believe that such a thing would involve not only a waste of time but deception concerning the works of God, and instead of being praised for them He would be offended. It would be a great betrayal. So that I might accomplish this task, may it please His Majesty not to let me out of His hand." *CWST, Foundations* Prologue.3.

in code so that authorities could not directly identify who was being discussed if the letters were intercepted.⁴³¹ “Eventually the burden and the lack of sleep took its toll, and she fell into the alarming exhaustion of 1577, precisely in the most intense period of her correspondence . . . The doctor issued orders that she not continue writing after midnight and that she get a secretary.”⁴³²

Teresa made a point of using the best materials and the proper letter-writing format of her day, including addressing the recipients of her letters with their correct titles.⁴³³ The postal system itself had problems:

When Teresa’s task was finished and her letters ready to go, she had no choice but to hand them over to uncertainty, the carriers not always being reliable. They might open the packets if they suspected something valuable within, and then destroy the letters; or they might lose them, or themselves be the victims of robbery before reaching their destination.⁴³⁴

Teresa’s correspondence is an important part of the corpus of her writings, and the process she undertook to write her many letters sheds light on her work as a writer and a foundress. The topics of her letters included inquiries about relatives, descriptions of her illnesses and details about purchases and other needs for the new foundations. Her letters were written in the brief moments she could find amid the heavy workload associated with establishing and managing foundations and writing books. The volume of letters, and the care with which she wrote them,

⁴³¹ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “Introduction,” in *The Collected Letters of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2001), 1:18.

⁴³² Kavanaugh, “Introduction,” in *Letters*, 1:13.

⁴³³ Kavanaugh, “Introduction,” in *Letters*, 1:17-18.

⁴³⁴ Kavanaugh, “Introduction,” in *Letters*, 1:21.

demonstrate her attention to detail and her desire to establish and maintain strong relationships while addressing the many issues involved in managing her reform.

To summarize Teresa's writing in her later years, she wrote spiritual books and reflections, documents of governance for practical business and administrative matters, and many letters to request and provide support, to keep colleagues aligned with her goals, and to share good news as well as problems. Writing was a necessary, time-consuming, sometimes cumbersome and often happy part of the saint's life in her later years. Teresa's motivations for writing were rooted in obedience to her superiors, to her religious sisters and to the Lord. She stayed up late and exhausted herself to the point that writing affected her health and she needed a secretary. In the midst of a grueling travel schedule and many business and administrative tasks, Teresa kept up a demanding writing schedule and produced a number of significant spiritual books and shorter items, many letters and two juridical documents in her later years.

The reforms called for by Trent and the historical situation of poverty and excessive taxation in 16th-century Spain put Teresa in a good position to offer a way for members of the nobility and others to serve God together according to the needed reforms. A large part of her writing was done to direct nuns and visitators how to proceed, spiritually and practically, so that God would be served, souls would be saved, and money, honor and status would be oriented toward the will of God rather than toward private gain or social prestige. Establishing reformed houses and writing about prayer and practical matters were both essential parts of the new direction Teresa set for the Carmelite Order.

Teresa's Work of Establishing Foundations

We next turn our attention to the work of establishing foundations, and in preparation for understanding this we first go into some detail about the Carmelite *Rule* in order to see why it was so important to Teresa and how it determined and inspired the way the foundations unfolded.

The Carmelite *Rule*

The Carmelite *Rule* was very important for Teresa's reform. The Carmelite nuns at the Incarnation followed a less strict, "mitigated" form of the *Rule*, than did the early Carmelite hermits on Mt. Carmel in the early part of the 13th century. Teresa came to believe that the "social problems found in the convent of la Encarnación" were due to "to the relaxation of the primitive Carmelite rule."⁴³⁵ This section describes the various forms of the Carmelite *Rule*, how they developed up to Teresa's time, and how she came to choose the version that her reform would use.

There were three versions of the Carmelite *Rule* in its history of development up to Teresa's time:

a] the Rule of "Albert": written by St. Albert. This was for the Latin hermits on Mount Carmel. It was drawn up at the beginning of the XIII century (between 1206 and 1214). It was approved by Honorius III and Gregory IX (1226 and 1229).

⁴³⁵ Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 114.

b] the Rule of “Innocent”: this is the Rule of St. Albert, but revised, corrected and mitigated by Cardinal Hugo of Santa Sabina and Bishop William, Bishop of Antarada, under Innocent IV (1247), for the Carmelites who were now living in Europe, and who were obliged to adopt new life-styles, while retaining the primitive eremitical inspiration. The text was approved by Pope Innocent IV: Lyons 1247.

c] the Rule of “Eugene”: this is the same Rule, but mitigated in its penitential austerity by a series of pontifical concessions, especially from Eugene IV, with the Bull of mitigation “*Romani Pontificis providentia*” (1432).⁴³⁶

The changes from the first to the second form of the *Rule* adds “new coenobitical elements,” to allow the foundations in urban areas to practice more exercises in common (such as the Divine Office), to own some animals in common and to observe less strict requirements for silence. The third form does not change the text itself but adds certain “pontifical dispensations” to modify its observance.⁴³⁷

At the beginning of the 15th century, the superiors of the Carmelite Order petitioned Rome to adapt the Carmelite *Rule* in order to renew the order by relaxing some of the regulations, such as those regarding fasting and abstinence. This would attract more youth and minimize the scrupulosity and sense of guilt felt by those who could not keep the strict rules.⁴³⁸

For these reasons, the General Chapter held at Nantes in 1430 decreed that the pope was to be asked to clarify or mitigate these points. As a result, Pope Eugene IV granted the Bull *Romani Pontificis*; it was dated 15 February 1432 and promulgated in 1435. What this Bull did, in effect, was to allow meat to be eaten three times a week and permit the friars to leave their cells at suitable times to walk in the cloisters or to spend some time in

⁴³⁶ Curia General de Carmelo Teresiano, “Saint Teresa and the Carmelite Rule,” http://www.ocd.pcn.net/nuns/n10_en.htm (accessed 9/15/13), paragraph 22.

⁴³⁷ “Saint Teresa and the Carmelite Rule,” http://www.ocd.pcn.net/nuns/n10_en.htm.

⁴³⁸ Idelfonso Moriones, O.C.D., “The Carmelite Order,” in *Teresian Carmel*, translated by S.C. O’Mahony, http://www.ocd.pcn.net/histo_1.htm#N_4 (accessed 9/15/13).

the church. Eugene IV did not amend the text of the Rule in any way; these were marginal glosses which left the text itself, as approved by Innocent IV, intact.⁴³⁹

Teresa would have learned about the Carmelite *Rule*, practiced in this mitigated form, during the period of her initiation at the Incarnation (*Vida* 32.9). When the nuns made their profession, they promised obedience to God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel, to the Prior General of the Order, to the Prioress of the monastery, and to their successors, “according to the Rule of the said Order, until death.”⁴⁴⁰ The *Rule* was the basis for community life at the Incarnation, but it is not known how accessible the text of the *Rule* would have been to the nuns who did not know Latin.

In 1560, after her frightening vision of hell (*Vida* 32.1), Teresa experienced “los ynpetus grandes de aprovechar almas”⁴⁴¹ and felt that she shouldn’t be satisfied in doing “menos de açer todo lo *que* pudieremos de nuestra parte.”⁴⁴² She begins by resolving to follow the *Rule* more closely:

pensava *que* podria açer por dios y pense *que* lo primero era sigir el llamamiento *que* su majestad me avia echo a rreligion guardando mi regla con la mayor perfeçion *que* pudiese y anque en la casa adonde estava avia muchas siervas de dios y era arto servido en ella /a cavsa de tener gran neçesidad salian las monjas muchas veçes a partes adonde con toda onestidad y rreligion podiamos estar /y tanbien no estava fundada en su primer

⁴³⁹ Idelfonso Moriones, O.C.D., “The Carmelite Order,” in *Teresian Carmel*, translated by S.C. O’Mahony, http://www.ocd.pcn.net/histo_1.htm#N_4 (accessed 9/15/13).

⁴⁴⁰ Profession formula used at the Incarnation in 1521. See “Saint Teresa and the Carmelite Rule,” http://www.ocd.pcn.net/nuns/n10_en.htm (accessed 9/15/13), paragraph 2.

⁴⁴¹ *VidaTR*, 32.6. “los ímpetus grandes de aprovechar almas” *OC*, *Vida* 32.6. “great impulses to help souls” *CWST*, *Life* 32.6.

⁴⁴² *VidaTR*, 32.7. “menos de hacer todo lo que pudiéremos de nuestra parte” *OC*, *Vida* 32.7. “anything less than doing all we can on our part” *CWST*, *Life* 32.7.

rigor la regla sino guardavase conforme a lo *que* en toda la orden *que* es con bula de relajación⁴⁴³

During the years from 1560 to 1562, Teresa studied the *Rule* and constitutions (*Vida* 35.2) and she became aware that there was an earlier version of the *Rule* which had been followed prior to the mitigated version of Eugene IV (1432).

This *Rule* of Innocent (1247) was the version Teresa chose for her foundations, because it preserved aspects of solitude and community that she felt were essential for the type of spiritual life that she envisioned: “Solitude for the community, which she will effectually enshrine in enclosure. And solitude for the Sisters, but within the community, that is to say, solidly based on community life: prayer in common, shared recreation, but working alone . . . she is reaffirming the primitive eremitical inspiration of the Rule.”⁴⁴⁴ In addition, the *Rule* in its unmitigated form does not allow nuns or friars to have their own private property; everything is held in common (Chapter IX): “Let none of the brothers say that anything is his property, but let everything be held in common among you; to each one shall be distributed what he needs from the hand of the

⁴⁴³ *Vida*TR, 32.9. “Pensaba qué podría hacer por Dios. Y pensé que lo primero era seguir el llamamiento que Su majestad me había hecho a religión, guardando mi Regla con la mayor perfección que pudiese. Y aunque en la casa adonde estaba había muchas siervas de Dios y era harto servido en ella, a causa de tener gran necesidad salían las monjas muchas veces a partes adonde con toda honestidad y religión podíamos estar; y también no estaba fundada en su primer rigor la Regla, sino guardábase conforme a lo que en toda la Orden, que es con bula de relajación.” *OC, Vida* 32.9. “I was thinking about what I could do for God, and I thought that the first thing was to follow the call to the religious life, which His Majesty had given me, by keeping my rule as perfectly as I could. Even though there were many servants of God in the house where I was, and He was very well served in it, the nuns because of great necessity often went out to places where they could stay -- with the decorum proper to religious. Also, the rule was not kept in its prime rigor, but was observed the way it was in the whole order, that is, according to the bull of mitigation.” *CWST, Life* 32.9.

⁴⁴⁴ “Saint Teresa and the Carmelite Rule,” http://www.ocd.pcn.net/nuns/n10_en.htm (accessed 10/12/13), paragraph 24.

Prior - that is from the brother he appoints to this task - taking into account the age and needs of each one.”⁴⁴⁵

Like the hermits on Mt. Carmel, the environment for Teresa’s nuns would allow them to be often in prayer, “estando muchas veces tratando a solas con quien sabemos nos ama,”⁴⁴⁶ and this form of enclosed community life would move them ever closer to their aim, union with God: “el gran aparejo *que* ay para bivar sienpre en el las *que* a solas quisieren goçar de su esposo cristo *que* esto es sienpre lo *que* an de pretender y solas con el solo.”⁴⁴⁷

This rule was not the very first rule of St. Albert (1206-1214), but it is the one termed “primera” in Teresa’s writings (*Vida* 36.26-27).⁴⁴⁸ After her first foundation, St. Joseph’s, was established in 1562, Teresa finally got to enjoy spending time there with her new community of nuns. She reports that while the strict observance of this *Rule* requires a more austere lifestyle, the rewards are worth the effort:

que es para mi grandisimo consuelo de verme aqui metida con almas tan desasidas su trato es entender como yran adelante en el servicio de dios la soledad es su consuelo y

⁴⁴⁵ Kees Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, translated by John Vriend (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 32. We use Pope Innocent’s text (1247) in this dissertation, and all excerpts of the Carmelite Rule are taken from Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 29-38.

⁴⁴⁶ *VidaTR*, 8.5. “estando muchas veces tratando a solas con quien sabemos nos ama” *OC*, *Vida* 8.5. “taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us” *CWST*, *Life* 8.5.

⁴⁴⁷ *VidaTR*, 36.29. “El gran aparejo que hay para vivir siempre en él las que a solas quisieren gozar de su esposo Cristo; que esto es siempre lo que han de pretender, y solas con El solo.” *OC*, *Vida* 36.29. “The main disposition required for always living in this calm is the desire to rejoice solely in Christ, one’s Spouse. This is what they must always have as their aim: to be alone with Him alone.” *CWST*, *Life* 36.29.

⁴⁴⁸ See “Saint Teresa and the Carmelite Rule,” http://www.ocd.pcn.net/nuns/n10_en.htm (accessed 9/15/13), paragraphs 16-18.

pensar de ver a nadie *que* no sea *para* ayvdarlas a ençender mas el amor de su esposo les es trabajo *anque* sean muy devdos y ansi no viene nadie a esta casa sino quien trata de esto *porque* ni las contenta ni los contenta no es su lenguaje otro sino ablar de dios y ansi no entienden ni las entiende sino quien abla el mesmo guardamos la rregla de nuestra señora de el carmen y cunplida esta sin rrelajaçion sino como la ordeno fray hvgo cardenal de santa sabina *que* fue dada a IVccxlvihi años en el año v del pontificado del papa ynnocençio quarto me pareçe seran bien enpleados todos los trabajos *que* se an pasado aora *anque* tiene algun rrigor *porque* no se come jamas carne sin neçesidad y ayvno de o ocho meses y otras cosas como se ve en la mesma primera rregla en muchas an se les açe poco a las hermanas y guardan otras cosas *que para* cunplir esta con mas perfeçion nos an pareçido neçesarias y espero en el señor a de yr muy adelante lo començado como su majestad me lo a dicho⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁹ *VidaTR*, 36.26-27. “Que es para mí grandísimo consuelo de verme aquí metida con almas tan desasidas. Su trato es entender cómo irán adelante en el servicio de Dios. La soledad es su consuelo . . . Guardamos la Regla de nuestra Señora del Carmen, y cumplida ésta sin relajación, sino como la ordenó fray Hugo, Cardenal de Santa Sabina, que fue dada a 1248 años, en el año quinto del Pontificado del Papa Inocencio IV. Me parece serán bien empleados todos los trabajos que se han pasado. Ahora, aunque tiene algún rigor, porque no se come jamás carne sin necesidad y ayuno de ocho meses y otras cosas, como se ve en la misma primera Regla, en muchas aun se les hace poco a las hermanas y guardan otras cosas que para cumplir ésta con más perfección nos han parecido necesarias. Y espero en el Señor ha de ir muy delante lo comenzado, como Su Majestad me lo ha dicho.” *OC, Vida* 36.26-27. “It is the most wonderful consolation for me to be able to live with souls so detached. Their conversation is about how they can make progress in the service of God. Solitude is their comfort . . . We observed the rule of our Lady of Mt. Carmel and keep it without mitigation as ordained by the Friar Cardinal Hugo of Saint Sabina and given in 1248, in the fifth year of the pontificate of Pope Innocent IV. It seems to me that all the trials suffered were well worth it. Now, although there is some austerity because meat is never eaten without necessity and there is an eight-month fast and other things, as are seen in the first rule, this is still in many respects considered small by the Sisters; and they have other observances which seemed to us necessary in order to observe the rule with greater perfection. I hope in the Lord that what has been begun will prosper, as His Majesty has told me it would.” *CWST, Life* 36.26-27.

Work in the Carmelite *Rule*

The Carmelite *Rule* is organized as a formal letter, with an opening, an initial statement of purpose, an exposition, a request and a conclusion.⁴⁵⁰ After an opening greeting from St. Albert to the hermits on Mt. Carmel, he states that they, like all Christians, should live “in allegiance to Jesus Christ and serve him faithfully from a pure heart and good conscience.” Following this there is a statement of the purpose of the document, which is “to give you a formula of life in keeping with your purpose.”⁴⁵¹ This is followed by the specific behaviors to be followed, along with the reasons for them, and the *Rule* closes with a request that the prior and the brothers serve each other humbly and remember that it is Christ who put the prior in charge, which is followed by a closing in which the purpose is re-stated.

The main body of the *Rule*, the formula of life, consists of sixteen short chapters, covering government and oversight, location of the monastery, management of individual cells, eating and fasting, ownership of goods, prayer, meditation, work and silence. The sections of primary interest here are Chapter VII on the primary daily activity of the brothers, “Let each remain in his cell or near it, meditating day and night on the Word of the Lord, and keeping vigil in prayer, unless he is occupied with other lawful activities,”⁴⁵² and Chapter XV on work:

Some work has to be done by you, so that the devil may always find you occupied, lest on account of your idleness he manage to find some opportunity to entering into your

⁴⁵⁰ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 6.

⁴⁵¹ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 30.

⁴⁵² Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 31.

souls. In this matter you have both the teaching and example of the blessed apostle Paul, in whose mouth Christ spoke, who was appointed and given by God as preacher and teacher of the nations in faith and truth; if you follow him you cannot go astray. Labouring and weary we lived among you, he says, working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you; not that we had no right to do otherwise, but so as to give you ourselves as an example, that you might imitate us. For when we were with you we used to tell you, if someone is unwilling to work, let him not eat. For we have heard that there are certain people among you going about restlessly and doing no work. We urge people of this kind and beseech them in the Lord Jesus Christ to earn their bread, working in silence. This way is holy and good; follow it.⁴⁵³

The brothers should “meditate day and night on the Word of the Lord,” and “[keep] vigil in prayer,” unless otherwise occupied with “lawful activities” (Ch. VII). These were activities that needed be done in the ordinary course of the everyday routine of the monastery, such as greeting visitors and doing “whatever needs to be done” for them (Ch. VI), caring for animals, and preparing food (Ch. IX). Brothers were to meet daily for Mass (Ch. X) and on Sundays or other days for community discussions (Ch. XI). They also needed to beg and to travel (Ch. XIII).

However, the brothers also were required to take on “some work” (*aliquid operis*) so that “the devil may always find you occupied” (Ch. XV). According to Waaijman, work here means “to be engaged in doing something with attention and concentration,” something that “requires concentration.” The word “some” is not a limiting factor, rather a qualifier, indicating that the work that is meant is something other than what needs to be done “anyway.” Work, in the Carmelite *Rule*, “must deserve the name of *work*; it must qualify as labor; it must really be some sort of *work*.”⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵³ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 35-6.

⁴⁵⁴ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 202-3.

Waaijman goes on to explain that this work is a participation in the work of the community, and as such it is situated in the order of creation (Gen 3:17-19).⁴⁵⁵ The spiritual significance is “so that the devil may always find you occupied, lest on account of your idleness, he manage to find some opportunity of entering into your souls” (Ch. XV). “‘Some work,’ in sum, has a single clear goal: to keep the devil absolutely outside the door.”⁴⁵⁶

The chapter on work in the Carmelite *Rule* dwells at such length on St. Paul’s ideas in order to remind Carmelites that they are working not only for their own well-being in their earthly lives, but also for the benefit of God and others in eternity. There is a practical aspect as well as an eschatological aspect to the work of a Christian, and Carmelites are to follow Paul’s example. They are to keep occupied and work with attention and concentration to keep from giving the devil a foothold due to idleness, and they are to contribute to the well-being of the community while focusing on their eternal end.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁵ “To the man he said: because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, you shall not eat from it, cursed is the ground because of you! In toil you shall eat its yield all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles it shall bear for you, and you shall eat the grass of the field. By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread, until you return to the ground, from which you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return (Gen 3:17-19).”

⁴⁵⁶ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 204.

⁴⁵⁷ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 210.

The Monastery of St. Joseph in Avila

In order to provide the type of atmosphere that would support life according to the Carmelite *Rule* of 1247, Teresa came to realize that she would need to move away from the busy atmosphere of the Incarnation and establish a new, smaller house with fewer nuns, where the *Rule* could be followed more strictly. She began to discuss this possibility with her friends at the Incarnation around 1560, after she had the vision of herself in hell and had “los ynpetus grandes de aprovechar almas.”⁴⁵⁸ Teresa recounts the early discussions about the first new foundation in Chapter 32 of the *Vida*, and she describes how prayer was at the heart of this new direction for her life and work:

ofreçiose vna vez estando con vna persona deçirme a mi y a ‘otras *que* si no seriamos para ser monjas de la manera de las descalças *que* an posible era poder açer vn monesterio⁴⁵⁹ yo como andava en estos deseos començelo a tratar con aquella señora mi compañera bivda *que* ya e dicho [Doña Guiomar de Ulloa]⁴⁶⁰ *que* tenia el mesmo deseo ella començo a dar traças para darle rrenta *que* aora veo yo *que* no llevavan mucho camino y el deseo *que* de ello teniamos nos açia parecer *que* si mas yo por otra parte como tenia tan grandisimo contento en la casa *que* estava [la Encarnación]⁴⁶¹ porque era muy a mi gusto y la çelda en *que* estava echa muy a mi proposito todavia me detenia con todo conçertamos de encomendarlo mucho a dios aviendo vn dia comulgado mandome mucho su majestad lo procurase con todas mis fuerças açiendome grandes promesas de

⁴⁵⁸ *VidaTR*, 32.6. “los ímpetus grandes de aprovechar almas” *OC, Vida* 32.6. “great impulses to help souls” *CWST, Life* 32.6.

⁴⁵⁹ According to Kavanaugh, “The person who first mentioned the idea of a new foundation was María de Ocampo, and almost all of the members of this first group were relatives of Teresa. Some were Carmelites, others were lay friends, and they gathered in Teresa’s cell to discuss the possibility of a new foundation, inspired by the discalced Franciscans in Avila who followed Peter of Alcántara’s reform. and by early desert monasticism.” *CWST, Life* 32.10, 1:483n5.

⁴⁶⁰ *CWST, Life* 32.10, 1:484n6.

⁴⁶¹ *CWST, Life* 32.10, 1:484n7.

que no se dejaria de açer el monasterio y que se serviria mucho en el y que se llamase san josef y que a la vna puerta nos guardaria el y nuestra señora la otra y que cristo andaria con nosotras y que seria vna estrella que diese de si gran rresplandor y que anque las rrelisiones estavan rrelajadas que no pensase se servia poco en ellas que que seria de el mundo si no fuese por los rrelisiosos que dijese a mi confesor esto que me mandava y que le rrogava el que no fuese contra ello ni me lo estorvase /era esta vision con tan grandes efetos y de tal manera esta abla que me açia el señor que yo no podia dudar que era el⁴⁶²

These discussions with the small group from the Incarnation coincided with the arrival of St. Peter of Alcántara to Avila in 1560. He had worked to reform the Franciscan Order and he

⁴⁶² *VidaTR*, 32.10-12. “Ofrecióse una vez, estando con una persona, decirme a mí y a otras que si no seríamos para ser monjas de la manera de las descalzas, que aun posible era poder hacer un monasterio. Yo, como andaba en estos deseos, comencé a tratar con aquella señora mi compañera viuda que ya he dicho, que tenía el mismo deseo. Ella comenzó a dar trazas para darle renta, que ahora veo yo que no llevaban mucho camino y el deseo que de ello teníamos nos hacía parecer que sí. Mas yo, por otra parte, como tenía tan grandísimo contento en la casa que estaba, porque era muy a mi gusto y la celda en que estaba hecha muy a mi propósito, todavía me detenía. Con todo concertamos de encomendarlo mucho a Dios. Habiendo un día comulgado, mandóme mucho Su Majestad lo procurase con todas mis fuerzas, haciéndome grandes promesas de que no se dejaría de hacer el monasterio, y que se serviría mucho en él, y que se llamase San José, y que a la una puerta nos guardaría él y nuestra Señora la otra, y que Cristo andaría con nosotras, y que sería una estrella que diese de sí gran resplandor, y que, aunque las religiones estaban relajadas, que no pensase se servía poco en ellas; que qué sería del mundo si no fuese por los religiosos; que dijese a mi confesor esto que me mandaba, y que le rogaba El que no fuese contra ello ni me lo estorbase. Era esta visión con tan grandes efectos, y de tal manera esta habla que me hacía el Señor, que yo no podía dudar que era El.” *OC, Vida* 32.10-12. “It happened once while I was with someone that she mentioned to me and to the others in the group that if we couldn’t be nuns like the discalced, it would still be possible to found a monastery. Since I was having these desires, I began to discuss the matter with that lady companion of mine, the widow I mentioned, who had the same desires. She began to draw up plans to provide the new house with income. Now I see that there was little chance these plans would succeed, but our desire made us think they would. Yet since, on the other hand, I was so perfectly content in the house in which I was because it was very much to my liking and the cell in which I lived was just what I wanted, I was still delaying. Nevertheless, we agreed to pray fervently to God over the matter. One day after Communion, His Majesty earnestly commanded me to strive for this new monastery with all my powers, and He made great promises that it would be founded and that He would be highly served in it. He said it should be called St. Joseph and that this saint would keep watch over us at one door, and our Lady at the other, that Christ would remain with us, and that it would be a star shining with great splendor. He said that even though religious orders were mitigated one shouldn’t think He was little served in them; He asked what would become of the world if it were not for religious and said that I should tell my confessor what He commanded, that He was asking him not to go against this or hinder me from doing it. This vision had such great effects, and this locution the Lord granted was of such a nature, that I couldn’t doubt it was from God.” *CWST, Life* 32.10-12.

lived a life of extreme austerity which Teresa very much admired (*Vida* 27.16-20; *Vida* 30.2). He was an inspiration to her, and he assured her that her visions were from God.⁴⁶³ Teresa was impressed with his holy and ascetic way of life, and she writes about him that “guardo la primera regla del bienaventurado san *francisco* con todo rrigor.”⁴⁶⁴ Also, in 1561, on St. Clare’s feast day,⁴⁶⁵ Teresa had a vision of St. Clare, who promised to help her: “el dia de santa clara yendo a comulgar se me apareçio con mucha hermosura dijome *que* me esforçase y fuese adelante en lo comenzado *que* ella me ayvdaria.”⁴⁶⁶ The Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph also confirmed Teresa’s efforts to establish a new foundation in a vision on the Feast of the Assumption in 1561.⁴⁶⁷ While Teresa was praying at the monastery of Santo Tomás in Avila, she was given to understand that her foundation would be accomplished and that the Lord would be well served in the new monastery. She was robed with white and given a golden necklace with a valuable cross as a sign.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶³ Kavanaugh, “A Teresian Chronology,” 85.

⁴⁶⁴ *VidaTR*, 30.2. “Guardó la primera Regla del bienaventurado San Francisco con todo rigor.” *OC*, *Vida* 30.2. “He observed the first rule of the blessed St. Francis in all its rigor.” *CWST*, *Life* 30.2.

⁴⁶⁵ Kavanaugh’s note provides the date: “August 12, 1561.” *CWST*, *Life* 33.13, 1:484n12.

⁴⁶⁶ *VidaTR*, 33.13. “El día de Santa Clara, yendo a comulgar, se me apareció con mucha hermosura. Díjome que me esforzase y fuese adelante en lo comenzado, que ella me ayudaría.” *OC*, *Vida* 33.13. “On her feast day, while I was going to Communion, St. Clare appeared to me with striking beauty. She told me to take courage and to continue on with what I had begun, that she would help me.” *CWST*, *Life* 33.13.

⁴⁶⁷ According to Kavanaugh, “St. Teresa received this mystical experience in the Christ chapel of the Dominican church of St. Thomas, outside the walls of Avila, August 15, 1561.” *CWST*, *Life* 33.14, 1:484-5n14.

⁴⁶⁸ “estando en estos mesmos dias el de nuespra señora de la asuncion en vn monasterio de la orden del glorioso santo domingo estava considerando los muchos pecados *que* en tienpos pasados avia

en aquella casa confesado y cosas de mi rruyn vida vinome vn arrobamiento tan grande *que* casi me saco de mi senteme y an pareçeme *que* no pude ver alçar ni oyr misa *que* despues *quede* con escrupulo de esto pareçiome estando ansi *que* me via vestir vna rropa de mucha blancura y claridad y al principio no via quien me la vestia despues vi a nuestra señora açia el lado derecho y a mi padre san josef a el izquierdo *que* me vestian aquella rropa dyoseme a *entender que* estava ya linpia de mis pecados acabada de vestir y yo con grandisimo deleyte y gloria luego me pareçio asirme de las manos nuestra señora dijome *que* la dava mucho contento en servir al glorioso san josef *que* creyese *que* lo *que* pretendia de el monesterio se aria y en el se serviria mucho el señor y ellos dos *que* no temiese avria quiebra en esto jamas aunque la obediencia *que* dava no fuese a mi gusto porque ellos nos guardarian y *que* ya su yjo nos avia prometido andar con nosotras *que* para señal *que* seria esto verdad me dava aquella joya pareçiame averme echado a el cuello vn collar de oro muy hermoso asida vna cruz a el de mucho valor este oro y piedras es tan diferente de lo de aca *que* no tiene comparacion porque es su ermosura muy diferente de lo *que* podemos aca ymajinar *que* no alcança el entendimiento a entender de *que* era la rropa ni como ymajinar el blanco *que* el señor quiere *que* se rrepresente *que* pareçe todo lo de aca como vn dibujo de tyzne a manera de deçir.” *VidaTR*, 33.14. “Estando en estos mismos días, el de nuestra Señora de la Asunción, en un monasterio de la Orden del glorioso Santo Domingo, estaba considerando los muchos pecados que en tiempos pasados había en aquella casa confesado y cosas de mi ruin vida. Vínome un arrobamiento tan grande, que casi me sacó de mí. Sentéme, y aun paréceme que no pude ver alzar ni oír misa, que después quedé con escrúpulo de esto. Parecióme, estando así, que me veía vestir una ropa de mucha blancura y claridad, y al principio no veía quién me la vestía. Después vi a nuestra Señora hacia el lado derecho y a mi padre San José al izquierdo, que me vestían aquella ropa. Dióseme a entender que estaba ya limpia de mis pecados. Acabada de vestir, y yo con grandísimo deleite y gloria, luego me pareció asirme de las manos nuestra Señora: *díjome que la daba mucho contento en servir al glorioso San José, que creyese que lo que pretendía del monasterio se haría y en él se serviría mucho el Señor y ellos dos; que no temiese habría quiebra en esto jamás, aunque la obediencia que daba no fuese a mi gusto, porque ellos nos guardarían, y que ya su Hijo nos había prometido andar con nosotras; que para señal que sería esto verdad me daba aquella joya.* Parecíame haberme echado al cuello un collar de oro muy hermoso, asida una cruz a él de mucho valor. Este oro y piedras es tan diferente de lo de acá, que no tiene comparación; porque es su hermosura muy diferente de lo que podemos acá imaginar, que no alcanza el entendimiento a entender de qué era la ropa ni cómo imaginar el blanco que el Señor quiere que se represente, que parece todo lo de acá como un dibujo de tizne, a manera de decir.” *OC, Vida* 33.14. “On one of these same days, the feast of the Assumption of our Lady while at a monastery of the order of the glorious St. Dominic, I was reflecting upon the many sins I had in the past confessed in that house and many things about my wretched life. A rapture came upon me so great that it almost took me out of myself. I sat down; it still seems to me I couldn’t see the elevation or hear Mass, and afterward I had a scruple about this. It seemed to me while in this state that I saw myself vested in a white robe of shining brightness, but at first I didn’t see who was clothing me in it. Afterward I saw our Lady at my right side and my father St. Joseph at the left, for they were putting that robe on me. I was given to understand that I was now cleansed of my sins. After being clothed and while experiencing the most marvelous delight and glory, it seemed to me then that our Lady took me by the hands. She told me I made her very happy in serving the glorious St. Joseph, that I should believe that what I was striving for in regard to the monastery would be accomplished, that the Lord and those two would be greatly served in it, that I shouldn’t fear there would ever be any failure in this matter even though the obedience which was to be given was not to my liking, because they would watch over us, and that her Son had already promised us He would be with us, that as a sign that this was true she was giving me a jewel. It seemed to me she placed around my neck a very beautiful golden

Even before St. Joseph's was formally established in 1562, the discalced way of life may be seen in how Teresa and her friends began to live according to the stricter, "primitive" *Rule* in her rooms at the Incarnation.

La deliciosa experiencia de vivir en una comunidad pequeña y fraternal también la tuvo en su celda de la Encarnación. En su misma celda habitaban otras carmelitas que compartían con ella la lumbre, el pan, la amistad y el sueño. En un ambiente sencillo y familiar. Y así su celda terminó por convertirse en un pequeño convento dentro de la Encarnación. El tiempo suficiente para descubrir que la clave de la felicidad de una casa de carmelitas estaba en ser pocas y en vivir como en una familia.⁴⁶⁹

To establish a new foundation required the cooperation of many authorities, including civil leaders, ecclesial authorities and the leaders of the Carmelite Order. Ecclesial authorities were involved in the Council of Trent (1545-1564), as well as reforming existing religious orders and embracing new ones. One important new group was the Society of Jesus, which was founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola in 1540, and which emerged as a powerful force for reform and for education in Spain in the 16th century.

necklace to which was attached a highly valuable cross. This gold and these stones are incomparably different from earthly ones. Their beauty is very different from what is imaginable here below. And the intellect cannot attain to an understanding of the nature of the robe that the Lord desires to have represented, nor can one imagine its whiteness; everything here on earth in comparison is like a sketch made from soot, so to speak." *CWST, Life* 33.14.

⁴⁶⁹ "She also had the delightful experience of living in a small and fraternal community in her cell at the Incarnation. In her own cell lived other Carmelite sisters, who shared with her the fire, the bread, friendship and sleep, in a simple and familiar atmosphere. And so her cell eventually was converted into a small convent within the Incarnation, long enough to discover that the key to happiness of a house of Carmelite sisters was to be few in number and to live as a family. [Translation mine.]" Nicolás González y González, *Historia del Monasterio de la Encarnación de Avila* (Madrid: Editorial de Espiritualidad, 1995), 230-1.

In addition to Trent's focus on doctrine, we have seen that there was an increased focus on spiritual practices in religious houses.⁴⁷⁰ The Carmelite Order had slipped into practices of laxity, gradually drifting away from the original intent of the *Rule* including its focus on work and there was resistance by existing Carmelites to the changes proposed by Teresa. There was resistance, also, to the idea of founding a new religious house in poverty. This was due to the economic crisis associated with urbanization and the need of the government to fund its many wars, which led to the loss of much of the wealth of the nobility and its increasing reliance on government bonds such as *juros* and *censos*. The great expenses associated with war and global expansion had resulted in the inability of the government to repay many of its citizens who had purchased the government bonds. These economic problems were drains on society, and the citizens of Avila were worried that a another new religious house that would rely on their generosity in the form of alms would put a further drain on their resources.

Kavanaugh highlights money as the first concern of the new house:

As the half jest turned into an idea worth pursuing Teresa's first consideration, paradoxically, concerned money. Such a venture would need an assured income, enough to allow the community to live without anxieties. The Council of Trent, as a matter of fact, was at the same time legislating that religious communities, with the exception of the Franciscans, should have an income, one that would be in proportion to the number of religious. After further information from María de Jesús about the rule of St. Albert and encouragement from Peter of Alcántara, Teresa changed her opinion about money and resolved to found her house in poverty, that is without a fixed income, with trust in God's providence.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁷⁰ See Ch. 2 above, and Hubert Jedin, "Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation?" 39.

⁴⁷¹ Kavanaugh, "*The Foundations* – Introduction," 3:23-24.

Teresa laments the lack of means and the fact that she is not free to carry out the details herself.

She must proceed in secrecy, and she receives help from her sister and the Lord:

torno mi confesor a darme liçençia *que* pusiese en ello todo lo *que* pudiese yo bien via a el trabajo *que* me ponía por ser muy sola y tener poquisima posibilidad conçertamos se tratase con todo secreto y ansi procure *que* vna hermana mia *que* bivia fuera de aqui conprase la casa y la labrase como *que* era para si con dineros *que* el señor dio por algunas vias para conprarla *que* seria largo de contar como el señor lo fue proveyendo porque yo traya gran cuenta de no açer cosa contra obediencia /mas sabia *que* si lo deçia a mis perlados era todo perdido como la vez pasada y an ya fuera peor en tener los dineros en procurarlo en conçertarlo y açerlo labrar pase tantos trabajos y algunos bien a solas aunque mi compañera açia lo *que* podia mas podia poco y tan poco *que* era casi nonada mas de açerse en su nonbre y con su favor y todo el mas trabajo era mio de tantas maneras *que* aora me espanto como lo pude sufrir algunas veçes aflijida deçia señor mio como me mandays cosas *que* parecen ynposibles *que* aunque fuera mujer si tuviera libertad mas atada por tantas partes sin dineros ni de donde los tener ni para breve ni para nada *que* puedo yo açer señor⁴⁷²

⁴⁷² *VidaTR*, 33.11. “Tornó mi confesor a darme licencia que pusiese en ello todo lo que pudiese. Yo bien veía al trabajo que me ponía, por ser muy sola y tener poquísima posibilidad. Concertamos se tratase con todo secreto, y así procuré que una hermana mía que vivía fuera de aquí comprase la casa y la labrase como que era para sí, con dineros que el Señor dio por algunas vías para comprarla, que sería largo de contar cómo el Señor lo fue proveyendo; porque yo traía gran cuenta de no hacer cosa contra obediencia; mas sabía que, si lo decía a mis prelados, era todo perdido, como la vez pasada, y aun ya fuera peor. En tener los dineros, en procurarlo, en concertarlo y hacerlo labrar, pasé tantos trabajos y algunos bien a solas, aunque mi compañera hacía lo que podía, mas podía poco, y tan poco que era casi nonada, más de hacerse en su nombre y con su favor, y todo el más trabajo era mío, de tantas maneras, que ahora me espanto cómo lo pude sufrir. Algunas veces afligida decía: ‘Señor mío, ¿cómo me mandáis cosas que parecen imposibles? que, aunque fuera mujer, ¿si tuviera libertad...!; mas atada por tantas partes, sin dineros ni de dónde los tener, ni para Breve, ni para nada, ¿qué puedo yo hacer, Señor?’” *OC*, *Vida* 33.11. “My confessor gave me permission again to dedicate myself entirely to this foundation. I saw clearly the toil it would bring upon me since I was very much alone and had hardly any means. We agreed to carry on in total secrecy, and so I got one of my sisters who lived outside this city to buy the house and fix it up, as though it were for herself, with money the Lord provided, in certain ways, for its purchase. It would take long to recount how the Lord was looking after it, for I took great care not to do anything against obedience. But I knew that if I said anything to my superiors, everything would be lost as happened the previous time, and things would even be worse. In procuring the money, acquiring the house, signing the contract for it, and fixing it up, I went through so many trials of so many kinds that now I’m amazed I was able to suffer them. In some of them I was completely alone; although my companion did what she could. But she could do little, and so little that it almost amounted to nothing more than to have everything done in her name and as her gift and all the rest of the trouble was mine. Sometimes in distress I said: ‘My Lord, how is it You command things that seem impossible? For if I were at least free, even though I am a woman! But bound on so many sides, without money or the means to raise it or to obtain the brief or anything, what can I do, Lord?’” *CWST, Life* 33.11.

Teresa was responsible for paying the men working on the new foundation, but she didn't have the money. She relied on St. Joseph: “vna vez estando en vna necesidad *que* no sabia *que* me açer ni con *que* pagar vnos ofiçiales me apareçio san josef mi verdadero padre y señor y me dio a entender *que* no me faltarian *que* los conçertase y ansi lo yçe sin ninguna blanca y el señor por maneras *quese* espantavan los *que* lo ‘oyan me proveyo.”⁴⁷³ The money to pay the workers arrived from her brother, Lorenzo, in Ecuador.⁴⁷⁴

The nobility in Avila thought of wealth not in terms of work at a trade or a business, but in terms of assets such as land holdings. The city council consisted primarily of wealthy landowners who did not think in terms of what the nuns would do (as work) to earn a living, but rather in terms of what land they would own (which would be taken out of circulation). The discalced Carmelite devotion to the principle of poverty disrupted the values of the faithful wealthy. For the Church to support Teresa and others who lived in poverty *on purpose* was a scandal to the existing system. After the Church awarded Teresa permission to found a new monastery in poverty, the City of Avila instituted a lawsuit against her.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷³ *VidaTR*, 33.12. “Una vez estando en una necesidad que no sabía qué me hacer ni con qué pagar unos oficiales, me apareció San José, mi verdadero padre y señor, y me dio a entender que no me faltarían, que los concertase. Y así lo hice sin ninguna blanca, y el Señor, por maneras que se espantaban los que lo oían, me proveyó.” *OC, Vida* 33.12. “Once when in need, for I didn't know what to do or how to pay some workmen, St. Joseph, my true father and lord, appeared to me and revealed to me that I would not be lacking, that I should hire them. And so I did, without so much as a penny, and the Lord in ways that amazed those who heard about it provided for me.” *CWST, Life* 33.12.

⁴⁷⁴ Kavanaugh adds details about Teresa's brother: “She is referring to the money received from her brother Lorenzo, who was living in Quito (Ecuador).” *CWST, Life* 33.14, 1:484-5n10.

⁴⁷⁵ Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 139-140.

However, Teresa's return to a stricter form of the *Rule* was welcomed by those who wanted to see beneficial religious reform in Spain, and this type of change in religious life was in line with Trent's goals of reform. In addition, she had strong support from some wealthy citizens, for example, Doña Luisa de la Cerda (*Vida* 34-35), and she also felt it was definitely God's will for her to proceed with the foundation, which was confirmed by others such as St. Peter of Alcántara. So Teresa decided to go ahead and establish her foundation in poverty.

In 1562, despite much opposition and many obstacles, St. Joseph's Monastery was finally established. The following passage demonstrates Teresa's determination and her leadership and administrative abilities, while working in what she felt was a necessary secrecy:

pase arto trabajo en procurar con vnos y con 'otros *que* se admitiese y con el enfermo y con ofiçiales *para que* se acabase la casa a mucha priesa *para que* tuviese forma de monesterio *que* faltava mucho de acabarse y la mi compañera [Doña Guiomar de Ulloa]⁴⁷⁶ no estava aqui *que* nos pareçio era mijor estar avsenste *par* mas disimular y yo via *que* yva el todo en la brevedad por muchas cavsas y la vna era porque cada 'ora temia me avian de mandar yr fueron tantas las cosas de trabajos *que* tuve *que* me yço pensar si era esta la cruz /*unque* todavia me pareçia era poco *para* la gran cruz *que* yo avia entendido de el señor avia de pasar //pues todo conçertado fue el señor servido *que* dia de san bartolome tomaron abito algunas y se puso el santisimo sacramento con toda avtoridad y fuerça quedo echo nuestro monesterio de el gloriosisimo padre nuestro san josef año de mil y quinientos y sesenta y dos⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ CWST, *Life* 36.4, 1:487n7.

⁴⁷⁷ *VidaTR*, 36.4-5. "Pasé harto trabajo en procurar con unos y con otros que se admitiese, y con el enfermo, y con oficiales para que se acabase la casa a mucha prisa, para que tuviese forma de monasterio, que faltaba mucho de acabarse. Y la mi compañera no estaba aquí, que nos pareció era mejor estar ausente para más disimular, y yo veía que iba el todo en la brevedad por muchas causas; y la una era porque cada hora temía me habían de mandar ir. Fueron tantas las cosas de trabajos que tuve, que me hizo pensar si era esta la cruz; aunque todavía me parecía era poco para la gran cruz que yo había entendido del Señor había de pasar. Pues todo concertado, fue el Señor servido que, día de San Bartolomé, tomaron hábito algunas y se puso el Santísimo Sacramento, y con toda autoridad y fuerza quedó hecho nuestro monasterio del gloriosísimo padre nuestro San José, año de mil y quinientos y sesenta y dos." *OC, Vida* 36.4-5. "I had a lot of trouble with some persons at times -- and with others at other times -- that the monastery be accepted. I had trouble with my sick brother-in-law and with the workmen to get them to convert the house into a monastery and make it ready quickly, for there was still much to be done.

Early in the morning of August 24, 1562, in an atmosphere of secrecy due to the strong opposition of city officials, the Bishop of Avila, and others to the new monastery, Teresa and four new Carmelite novices held their first Mass at St. Joseph's Monastery in Avila. The four nuns who received the habit that day were "Antonia Henao (del Espíritu Santo), María de la Paz (de la Cruz); Ursula Revilla (de los Santos), and María de Avila (de San José)."⁴⁷⁸ This marked the transition from a long period of preparation to the formal foundation of the first Discalced Carmelite Monastery, which would follow what was known as the primitive Carmelite *Rule* (the *Rule* of 1247).

Teresa was called back to the Incarnation the same day of the first Mass at St. Joseph's, to give an account of the new foundation to the prioress there and to the entire community of 180 nuns. She would remain at the Incarnation until the following March, 1563, due to complications surrounding St. Joseph's which arose when the leaders of the city launched a lawsuit against the monastery only five days after its foundation, on August 29, 1562.

Some of the Jesuits in Avila were in favor of Teresa's new monastery, founded in poverty, but they were not outspoken in their defense of her during meetings of the City Council,

Moreover, my companion was not here; it seemed to us we could better conceal what we were doing if she were absent. For many reasons I was taking care that everything be done in a hurry; one of the reasons for this was that I feared by the hour they would make me return to my own monastery. There were so many trying things that I wondered if this wasn't the cross; although it still seemed to me small in comparison with the great cross I learned from the Lord I would have to suffer. When everything was ready the Lord was pleased that on St. Bartholomew's day the habit was received by some and the Blessed Sacrament was reserved, and with all due authority and power our monastery of our most glorious father St. Joseph was founded, in 1562." *CWST, Life* 36.4-5.

⁴⁷⁸ *CWST, Life* 36.5, 1:487n10.

perhaps due to the fear of jeopardizing their own work in the city.⁴⁷⁹ The one defender whose voice carried significant weight in the discussions was Dominican Fr. Domingo Báñez, teacher of theology at the Monastery of Saint Thomas in Avila, and an “acute and profound thinker, humble, discreet, and amiable, much given to prayer and mortification.”⁴⁸⁰

Bañez had not yet met Teresa, and he offered his opinion based on the merits of her innovative reform alone.⁴⁸¹ On September 7, 1562, the Council agreed to permit the foundation to remain, if it were to be established with a financial endowment, rather than based on poverty. This option was appealing to Teresa, who was still at the Incarnation, but a letter from Peter of Alcántara (probably his last) encouraged her to stay true to her intent to found the house in poverty, and her experiences in prayer confirmed this.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁹ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 235. For a discussion of this period in St. Joseph’s history, see Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 177-265, and Bilinkoff, *Avila of St. Teresa*, 123-151.

⁴⁸⁰ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 235.

⁴⁸¹ Báñez supported Teresa’s reform in this speech to Avila’s City Council in an important meeting of the City Council and others on Sunday, August 30, 1562: “If the trees are not new when they are seen in the spring, nor the sun when it rises each day, why will it be a blameworthy innovation in religious orders to renew themselves? Which is more reprehensible in them: to lose their ancient splendor or to recover it? If the first does not frighten us, why should the second scandalize us? That, gentlemen, is reprehensible innovation which opposes itself to virtue and the greater service of God. The Convent of Carmelites, recently founded, is a restoration of what has been lost, to the great improvement of that holy Order, and the edification rather to be favored, and especially by the heads of Christian republics, to whom it belongs to encourage such praiseworthy deeds. May many imitate her! Oh, how much praise would Ávila deserve, and all our kingdoms and the whole Church, if we followed after this heroic virgin!” Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 231-237.

⁴⁸² “estando la noche antes *que* se avia de tratar en oraçion y ya se avia comenzado el conçepto dijome el señor *que* no yçiese tal *que* si se comenzasemos a tener renta *que* no nos dejarían despues *que* lo dejasemos y otras algunas cosas la mesma noche me apareçio el santo fray pedro de alcantara *que* era ya muerto y antes *que* muriese me escrivio como supo la gran contradiccion y persecucion *que* teniamos *que* se olgava fuese la fundacion con contradiccion tan grande *que* era señal se avia el señor servir muy mucho en este monesterio pues el demonio tanto ponía en *que* no se yçiese y *que* en ninguna manera viniese en tener renta y an dos v tres veçes me persuadio en la carta y *que* como esto yçiese ello vernia a

Teresa would remain firm. Later, there would be prudent exceptions to this rule, but in the beginning she understood both from God and from Peter of Alcántara and others who valued her reform efforts, that she should not give in on this point at this time, in the very beginning of the reform, because it would weaken the integrity and strength of her reform efforts.

A turning point came when Fr. Pedro Ibañez arrived in Avila as the prior of the Dominican monastery of St. Thomas. He had met and approved of Teresa in 1560, and it was he who had written to Rome for the first bull of authorization for the new monastery. “He was so universally loved and respected in Ávila that when it became known that he was on the side of San José, the opposition began to wither away.”⁴⁸³

In March, 1563, after agreeing to tear down a hermitage whose shadow blocked the town fountain in exchange for alms with which to construct another, Teresa was finally able to return

açerse todo como yo queria” *VidaTR*, 36.20. “Estando la noche antes que se había de tratar en oración, y ya se había comenzado el concierto, díjome el Señor que no hiciese tal, que si comenzásemos a tener renta, que no nos dejarían después que lo dejásemos, y otras algunas cosas. La misma noche me apareció el santo fray Pedro de Alcántara, que era ya muerto, y antes que muriese me escribió -como supo la gran contradicción y persecución que teníamos- que se holgaba fuese la fundación con contradicción tan grande, que era señal se había el Señor servir muy mucho en este monasterio, pues el demonio tanto ponía en que no se hiciese, y que en ninguna manera viniese en tener renta; y aun dos o tres veces me persuadió en la carta, y que, como esto hiciese, ello vendría a hacerse todo como yo quería.” *OC, Vida* 36.20. “While I was in prayer the night before this matter was to be discussed, and I had already begun to agree, the Lord told me not to agree, that if in the beginning we accepted an income they wouldn’t allow us afterward to renounce it, as well as some other things. That same night the holy Friar Peter of Alcántara appeared to me, for he was already dead. And before he died he had written to me -- since he had known about the strong opposition and persecution we were undergoing, -- that he rejoiced the foundation was being so vehemently opposed, that that was a sign the Lord would be very much served in this monastery in that the devil was interfering so much to prevent it, and that I should in no way decide to receive an income. And in the letter he urged me as much as two or three times not to accept an income, and that if I followed this advice everything would come about as I desired.” *CWST, Life* 36.20.

⁴⁸³ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 241.

to St. Joseph's. She was permitted to bring four nuns from the Incarnation with her. At that time, Teresa changed her name from "Doña Teresa de Ahumada" to simply "Teresa of Jesús."⁴⁸⁴

Teresa first lived at St. Joseph's as one of the members of the community under Sister Ana de San Juan, whom she had chosen to replace Sister Ursula as prioress. But when Sister Ana's health began to fail, she was sent back to the Incarnation and Teresa became the prioress of St. Joseph's in July of 1563.⁴⁸⁵

In her work of establishing the first Carmelite monastery of her reform, we see Teresa's dedication to God in prayer and her obedience to trusted authorities in the face of much resistance. Teresa balanced the work of leadership and reform with humility, prudence and prayer. She established meaningful relationships with those who could help her and she did not hesitate to give sincere accounts of her spiritual life and mystical experiences to her confessors. Despite cultural, economic and religious opposition, Teresa emerged as a leader, stayed true to her vision and went forward with the reform.

Work in the New Monastery

The number of nuns at St. Joseph's soon rose to thirteen, the limit set by Teresa, and the lives of the sisters involved a variety of different types of work:⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ Kavanaugh, *The Foundations* – Introduction," 3:24.

⁴⁸⁵ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 244.

⁴⁸⁶ "When in the beginning she had set the number at thirteen, she had in mind nuns healthy and young enough to share in the work. As nuns grew older and some became sick, requiring much care and

There were no lay sisters in the monastery at that time, and the thirteen Carmelites took turns by weeks at the cooking, laundry, and other menial labors. Teresa refused to exempt herself. On the contrary, she brought to the most lowly tasks a desire for perfection, and gave such a memorable example that the nuns, long after, remembered that their food had been most tasty when she had the preparing of it, and that never had the clothes been so immaculate as when she was in the laundry.⁴⁸⁷

Raptures would sometimes interrupt Teresa at her work, such as when Sister Isabel de Santo Domingo “saw her become motionless, her face illuminated and beautiful, when she was standing at the stove with a frying pan of eggs in her hand. She, too, was taken into rapture when she tried to steady Teresa, and both stood completely still as the community discovered them and watched them until the rapture passed.”⁴⁸⁸

The nuns at St. Joseph’s earned some money by spinning and sewing. “Each one would spin, as a rule, five ‘bundles’ of wool a day. La Madre set the example in this, as in everything. When she was not at prayer she was always busy at something. Even if it was necessary to receive a visitor, she would keep occupied with her distaff while she talked.”⁴⁸⁹

Gardening was part of life at the monastery. “As time went on Teresa began covering the barrenness of the surrounding landscape with bloom and foliage. A hazelnut tree that she planted gave abundant fruit for many years.”⁴⁹⁰ To extend the garden, Teresa bought an adjacent plot that at first the owner didn’t want to sell. When it was discovered he was using water illegally, he lost

time from others, adaptations had to be made in the numbers.” Kavanaugh, “*The Foundations – Introduction*,” 3:29.

⁴⁸⁷ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 246.

⁴⁸⁸ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 246.

⁴⁸⁹ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 247.

⁴⁹⁰ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 250.

his water source and no longer wanted the land, which Teresa then purchased for additional garden space.⁴⁹¹

The nuns slept on “rude bags of straw” and their days were long. The nuns rose at 5:00 a.m. in the summer, or 6:00 in the winter, spent an hour in mental prayer together and then said the morning prayers of the Divine Office. Each would then “go to her own particular tasks until Mass,” which was at 8:00 or 9:00. Special care was taken to have immaculate altar cloths and very large Hosts. The main meal, dinner, was at 10:00 or 11:00, and a second meal, supper, was at sundown, both eaten in silence.⁴⁹²

After dinner each day the nuns had an hour of recreation together, followed by an hour of rest in the summer months. At 2:00 they said Vespers together, followed by spiritual reading. “Work and prayer (and the routine was flexible enough to allow a sister to practice mental prayer or contemplation whenever the Spirit moved her) took up the rest of the afternoon.”⁴⁹³ At 5:00 or 6:00, the nuns recited Compline, followed by general conversation if allowed by the prioress. This is one example in which the *Rule* was relaxed to allow for conversation among the sisters to promote a sense of community.⁴⁹⁴ Matins was recited together at 9:00 p.m., followed by an examination of conscience and a reading for the following day’s meditation. The nuns retired at 11:00 p.m.

⁴⁹¹ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 251.

⁴⁹² See CWST, *Const*, especially paragraphs 1-7, and Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 251-3.

⁴⁹³ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 254.

⁴⁹⁴ See CWST, *Const* 28.

Teresa did not want excessive austerities to distract her communities from “the more essential matters of the rule.”⁴⁹⁵ In her day, members of religious communities sometimes did too much penance and sat too long absorbed in prayer simply due to the physical weakness brought on by excessive austerity. Teresa asks prioresses not to impose too much penance on the nuns and she encourages them to rely on the *Constituciones* and the *Rule* for guidance:

If by today’s measure the austerities of the lifestyle Teresa established might appear extreme, in her day they were often considered insufficient. In the Madre’s view the balanced life of prayer, work, and solitude, arrived at through the nuns’ experience, set down and approved in her constitutions, along with the spirituality expounded in *The Way of Perfection*, provided all that was necessary for reaching the goal of the spiritual life. This goal consists in conformity with the will of God.⁴⁹⁶

During the first five years of her first reformed monastery, Teresa’s work consisted not only in balancing competing needs and objections brought up by various stakeholders in the project - city officials, church authorities and family members - but also in choosing nuns for the foundation, arranging for them to be admitted, and establishing the daily routine for members of the household. She wrote documents and books of guidance for the nuns, including *Const* in 1563 and *Camino* in 1566. She communicated with civil and ecclesial leaders, friends and family, through letters and in person, while listening to various advisors, enduring pressure to abandon her goals, attending to her prayer life, and wrestling with uncertainty.

Teresa’s work as foundress and prioress during this time consisted of all of the administrative and personnel management decisions which today we would associate with an entrepreneur or a business executive, including determining the organization’s financial

⁴⁹⁵ Kavanaugh, “*The Foundations* – Introduction,” 3:32.

⁴⁹⁶ Kavanaugh, “*The Foundations* – Introduction,” 3:32.

structure, obtaining funding, recruiting the necessary people, addressing the concerns of various stakeholders, ethical considerations (whether the house should be founded in poverty), managing the books, guiding the work and establishing day-to-day routines and functions. By the end of 1563, she had overcome the many obstacles to the new foundation and had established a community of Carmelite nuns who followed the primitive Carmelite *Rule* (1247) oriented toward her vision for the monastery, for the Carmelite Order and for the world: to provide an environment and a system which would foster a life of prayer, silence and work, and lead to union with God and the salvation of souls.

During her first year as the prioress of St. Joseph's, Teresa wrote the *Constituciones* for the new foundation, which were approved by Pius IV in 1565.⁴⁹⁷ The *Constitutions* contain many details about work in the reformed houses and are discussed in more depth below.

The principles of the new foundation address themes we have seen throughout Teresa's life, including humility, nobility, poverty, detachment, money and equality:

The poverty of spirit of the gospels, like a powerful magnet, drew her. "But the one who is from nobler lineage should be the one to speak least about her father. All the Sisters must be equal."⁴⁹⁸ Poverty was to be the insignia of Teresa's nuns: "in houses, clothing, words, and most of all in thought."⁴⁹⁹ And closely linked with detachment from money is detachment from honor because "honor and money always go together; anyone who wants honor doesn't despise money, and anyone who despises money doesn't care much about honor."⁵⁰⁰ This life of equality and humility was meant, as Teresa envisioned it, to blossom into a life of authentic sisterly love, the love Christ insisted upon for His followers. As she puts it, "in this house where there are no more than thirteen -- nor must

⁴⁹⁷ Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 86.

⁴⁹⁸ *CWST*, *Way* 27.6.

⁴⁹⁹ *CWST*, *Way* 2.8.

⁵⁰⁰ *CWST*, *Way* 2.6.

there be any more -- all must be friends, all must be loved, all must be held dear, all must be helped.”⁵⁰¹

Teresa’s family had suffered greatly due to the persecution of the Jews in Spain in the 15th and 16th centuries, and she had direct experience of her brothers, father and grandfather filing lawsuits and establishing themselves as *hidalgos* of the nobility class. This exempted them from paying taxes, and it led them to base their wealth on inheritance and land holdings instead of working as artisans or merchants.

Teresa’s monastery would return to holding everything in common, without distinction of class or heredity. She would use religious names rather than family names to identify her nuns, and she would return to work as described in the primitive *Rule*. In doing this Teresa was able to recapture an element of her own family that had served it well for generations - work - but which they had abandoned largely due to pressure from the religious establishment. The very establishment that had caused her grandfather so much trouble and had forced him to abandon long-held principles of work and business, supported Teresa in her re-establishment of those same principles through her reform, in which work played a large role. However, the purpose of the work of the nuns and friars in reformed houses would not be for material profit, but rather for the profit of their souls and the glory of God.

⁵⁰¹ CWST, Way 4.7. Entire quote is from Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “*The Way of Perfection* – Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980), 2:27-28.

More Foundations

In 1566, a Franciscan missionary to Mexico, Alonso Maldonado, visited Teresa at St. Joseph's monastery and described the great need for the salvation of souls in the New World.⁵⁰²

His visit moved Teresa deeply and led her to want to do something about this problem:

començome a contar de los muchos millones de almas *que* alli se perdian por falta de doctrina / y yconos vn sermon y platica animando a la penitencia y fuese yo *quede* tan lastimada de la perdition de tantas almas *que* no cabia *en* mi fuyme a vna ermita con artas lagrimas clamava a nuestro señor suplicandole diese medio como yo pudiese algo para ganar algun alma para su servicio pues tantas llevaba el demonio y *que* pudiese mi oracion algo ya *que* yo no era para mas⁵⁰³

Eventually Teresa would come to establish a total of seventeen foundations, in which prayer for the salvation of souls would comprise a large part of the work of nuns and friars. Teresa would give all the credit to God:

pues andando yo con esta pena *tan* grande / vna noche estando *en* oracion rrepresentoseme nuestro señor de la manera *que* suele y mostrandome mucho amor a manera de *quererme* consolar me dijo / espera vn poco yja y veras grandes cosas / quedaron *tan* fijadas *en* mi coraçon estas palabras *que* no las podia quitar de mi y *unque* no podia atinar por mucho *que* pensava *en* ello *que* podria ser ni via camino para poderlo ymajinar *quede* muy consolada y con gran çertidunbre *que* serian verdaderas estas

⁵⁰² Kavanaugh, "A Teresian Chronology," 87.

⁵⁰³ *FundTR*, 1.7. "Comenzóme a contar de los muchos millones de almas que allí se pedían por falta de doctrina, e hízonos un sermón y plática animando a la penitencia, y fuese. Yo quedé tan lastimada de la perdición de tantas almas, que no cabía en mí. Fuime a una ermita con hartas lágrimas. Clamaba a nuestro Señor, suplicándole diese medio cómo yo pudiese algo para ganar algún alma para su servicio, pues tantas llevaba el demonio, y que pudiese mi oración algo, ya que yo no era para más." *OC*, *Fund* 1.7. "He began to tell me about the many millions of souls that were being lost there for want of Christian instruction, and before leaving he gave us a sermon, or conference, encouraging us to do penance. I was so grief-stricken over the loss of so many souls that I couldn't contain myself. I went to a hermitage with many tears. I cried out to the Lord, begging him that he give me the means to be able to do something to win some souls to His service, since the devil was carrying away so many, and that my prayer would do some good since I wasn't able to do anything else." *CWST*, *Foundations* 1.7.

palabras mas el medio como nunca vino a mi ymajinacion *ansi* se paso a mi parecer otro medio año y despues de este suçedio lo *que* aora dire⁵⁰⁴

When the prior general Juan Bautista Rubeo (Giovanni Battista Rossi)⁵⁰⁵ was making his formal visitations in Spain in 1567, he visited Teresa at St. Joseph's and, after seeing her way of life there, asked her to found more monasteries:

⁵⁰⁴ *FundTR*, 1.8. "Pues andando yo con esta pena tan grande, una noche, estando en oración, representóseme nuestro Señor de la manera que suele, y mostrándome mucho amor, a manera de quererme consolar, me dijo: *Espera un poco, hija, y verás grandes cosas*. Quedaron tan fijadas en mi corazón estas palabras, que no las podía quitar de mí. Y aunque no podía atinar, por mucho que pensaba en ello, qué podría ser, ni veía camino para poderlo imaginar, quedé muy consolada y con gran certidumbre que serían verdaderas estas palabras; mas el medio cómo, nunca vino a mi imaginación. Así se pasó, a mi parecer, otro medio año, y después de éste sucedió lo que ahora diré." *OC*, *Fund* 1.8. "Well, going about with such great affliction, while I was in prayer one night, our Lord represented Himself to me in His usual way. He showed me much love, manifesting His desire to comfort me, and said: 'Wait a little, daughter, and you will see great things.' These words remained so fixed in my heart that I could not forget them. No matter how much I thought about this promise I couldn't figure out how it would be possible, nor was there a way of even imagining how it could come about. Nevertheless, I remained very much consoled and certain that these words would prove true. But the means by which they eventually did never entered my mind. Thus another half year, I think, passed, and afterward there took place what I shall now describe." *CWST*, *Foundations* 1.8.

⁵⁰⁵ "Rubeo, Juan Bautista (Giovanni Battista Rossi) (1507-1578). An untiring apostle, he was born in Ravenna and entered the Carmelites at the age of ten. He received his doctorate in Padua. In 1546 he was named procurator general of the order and began lecturing at the Sapienza in Rome. The Carmelite general chapter in 1564, under the presidency of St. Charles Borromeo, unanimously elected him general of the order. He lost no time in obtaining faculties from the Holy See to visit, reform, and correct the houses of the order. His cherished desires were to bring the order back to its origins, to stress solitude, affective prayer, devotion to Mary, and the apostolate. This appealed to him much more than merely promoting fulfillment of the laws newly set forth by the Council of Trent. In 1564 he began his visit to Spain, and on 10 June 1566 he had an audience with Philip II. Proceeding to Andalusia, where the Carmelites were torn by rival factions and resistance to reform, he convoked a provincial chapter for 22 September at which over 200 Carmelites took part. His efforts to correct abuses angered the guilty parties and caused them to make appeals to the king, complaining of Rossi and calling on the king himself to set up a visitation. As a result, Philip II lost confidence in Rossi and initiated his own plans for the reform of religious orders in Spain. Unaware of the king's attitude, Rossi began his visitation of Castile and on 27 April 1567 authorized Teresa to found other houses for her nuns, provided they be under the jurisdiction of the order, and the number in each community be restricted to no more than twenty-five nuns. A month later he limited the region where the new houses could be founded to Castile." Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Biographical Sketches," in *The Collected Letters of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2001-07), 1:659-60.

alegrese de ver la manera de bivar y vn retrato *unque* ynperfeto del principio de nuestra orden y como la regla primera se guardava *en* todo rigor porque en toda la orden no se guardava *en* ningun monesterio sino la mitigada / y con la voluntad *que* tenia de *que* fuese muy adelante este principio diome muy cumplidas patentes *para que* se yçiesen mas monesterios con çensuras *para que* ningun provincial me pudiese yr a la mano estas yo no se las pedi puesto *que* entendio de mi manera de proçeder en la oraçion *que* eran los deseos grandes de ser parte *para que* algun alma se llegase mas a dios⁵⁰⁶

Below we describe highlights of three foundations which shed light on Teresa's administrative and management skills as well as her determination to continue the work she felt called by God to do. Any number of examples could be used to highlight the themes of most interest to us here, which include her approach to leadership of others both inside and outside the monastery, her skills in negotiation and administration, and her recognition and support of the work of the nuns and friars. In a letter to her brother in 1570, she comments on how skilled she had become in the business activities associated with establishing new houses: "Estoy tan baratona y negociadora que ya sé de todo con estas casas de Dios y de la Orden."⁵⁰⁷ However, managing money and business affairs was not enjoyable for her, as she says later in the same

⁵⁰⁶ *FundTR*, 2.3. "Alegróse de ver la manera de vivir y un retrato, aunque imperfecto, del principio de nuestra Orden, y cómo la Regla primera se guardaba en todo rigor, porque en toda la Orden no se guardaba en ningún monasterio, sino la mitigada. Y con la voluntad que tenía de que fuese muy adelante este principio, diome muy cumplidas patentes para que se hiciesen más monasterios, con censuras para que ningún provincial me pudiese ir a la mano. Estas yo no se las pedí, puesto que entendió de mi manera de proceder en la oración que eran los deseos grandes de ser parte para que algún alma se llegase más a Dios." *OC, Fund* 2.3. "He rejoiced to see our manner of life, a portrait, although an imperfect one, of the beginnings of our order, and how the primitive rule was being kept in all its rigor, for it wasn't being observed in any monastery in the entire order; only the mitigated rule was observed. And with the desire he had that this beginning go forward, he gave me very extensive patent letters, so that more monasteries could be founded, along with censures to prevent any provincial from restraining me. I did not ask for these, but he understood from my way of prayer that my desires to help some soul come closer to God were great." *CWST, Foundations* 2.3.

⁵⁰⁷ *Cartas*, 24.5. "I have become so adept at bargaining and managing business affairs for these houses of God and of the order that I am abreast of everything." *Letters*, 24.5.

letter: “Así que, a tiempo que tenía aborrecidos dineros y negocios, quiere el Señor que no trate en otra cosa, que no es pequeña cruz.”⁵⁰⁸ Several examples of her foundations are chosen to demonstrate how Teresa approached her business affairs in a variety of situations. The examples we will draw from are Salamanca, Malagón and Burgos.

Salamanca

The Salamanca foundation was established in 1570, eight years after St. Joseph’s in Avila. It was Teresa’s seventh foundation, and it was requested via letter by Fr. Martín Gutiérrez, S.J., who had met Teresa during her efforts to establish a house in Toledo.⁵⁰⁹ Teresa traveled to Salamanca through Avila from Toledo during the hot summer of 1570. The details of making the new foundation were prepared in Avila, where Julián of Avila procured the necessary licenses and arranged to rent a house occupied by students, who promised to leave the house before November, 1570. Teresa and her five postulants traveled in an open cart from Avila to Salamanca in the final days of October, 1570. With the help of Gutiérrez and two other Jesuits, as well as a carpenter and an official of the city, the house was transformed quickly into a

⁵⁰⁸ *Cartas*, 24.12. “So, just at a time when I have come to abhor money and business affairs, the Lord desires that I deal with nothing else, which is no small cross.” *Letters*, 24.12.

⁵⁰⁹ Emilio Miranda, *Teresa de Jesús: Vida, fundaciones, escritos*, 2nd ed. (Avila: Asociación Educativa Signum Christi, 1986), 99.

monastery. The new foundation, San José, was formally established on November 1, 1570, at the inaugural Mass celebrated by Padre Gutiérrez himself.⁵¹⁰

Teresa describes the process of making this foundation in *Fund*, Chapters 18-19. The following excerpt describes her concerns about founding the house in poverty, and it says that the work of the nuns will help to support them:

me escrivio vn rretor de la conpania de jesus de salamanca diciendome *que* estaria alli muy bien vn monesterio de estos dandome de ello rraçones *anque* por ser muy pobre el lugar me avia detenido a açer alli fundaçion de pobreza / mas considerando *que* lo es tanto avila y nunca le falta ni creo faltara dios a quien le sirviere puestas las cosas tan / *en* rraçon como se pone siendo tan pocas y ayvdandose del trabajo de sus manos me determine a açerlo⁵¹¹

Teresa felt that the foundation would be easy to establish, but there were some problems at the beginning, and many more to follow. As with St. Joseph's, resistance and problems are interpreted as signs that the devil knew that God will be very much served there:

ya tengo espiriençia lo *que* el demonio pone por estorvar vno de estos monesterios y *anque en* este no le dio dios liçençia para ponerlo a los prinçipios porque quiso *que* se fundase despues *an* sido tantos los trabajos y contradiciones *que* se *an* pasado *que* *an* no

⁵¹⁰ Miranda, *Teresa de Jesús: Vida, fundaciones, escritos*, 101.

⁵¹¹ *FundTR*, 18.1. "Me escribió un rector de la Compañía de Jesús de Salamanca, diciéndome que estaría allí muy bien un monasterio de éstos, dándome de ello razones; aunque por ser muy pobre el lugar, me había detenido a hacer allí fundación de pobreza. Mas considerando que lo es tanto Avila y nunca le falta, ni creo faltará Dios a quien le sirviere, puestas las cosas tan en razón como se pone, siendo tan pocas y ayudándose del trabajo de sus manos, me determiné a hacerlo." *OC, Fund* 18.1. "A rector of the Society of Jesus wrote me from Salamanca, telling me that it would be very good to have one of these monasteries there, giving me reasons for this. But since the town was very poor, I resisted founding a monastery there in poverty. In considering that Avila is just as poor, and the monastery there is never in want, nor do I believe that God will fail those who serve Him, if they live as moderately as we do, and that the nuns are so few and help themselves through the labor of their hands, I decided to make the foundation." *CWST, Foundations* 18.1.

esta acabado del todo de allanar con aver algunos años *que* esta fundado quando esto escribo y *ansi* creo se sirve dios *en* el mucho pues el demonio no le pupede sufrir⁵¹²

Teresa was ill and she had only one other nun with her at first. A number of changes will have to be made to the house in order for it to be suitable for a monastery. Teresa is proceeding, as usual, in secrecy, and she explains why:

pues auida la licencia y tyniendo çierta la casa / confiada de la misericordia de dios *porque* alli ninguna personal avia *que* me pudiese ayvdar con nada *para* lo mucho *que* era menester *para* acomodar la casa me parti *para* alla llevando sola vna compañera por yr mas secreta *que* allava por mejor esto y no llevar las monjas asta tomar la posesion *que* estava escarmentada de lo *que* me avia acaecido *en* medina del canpo *que* me vi alli en mucho trabajo *porque* si vuiese estorvo le pasase yo sola el trabajo con no mas de la *que* no podia excusar llegamos bispera de todos santos aviendo andado arto del camino la noche antes con arto frio y dormido *en* vn lugar estando yo bien mala⁵¹³

⁵¹² *FundTR*, 18.2. “Ya tengo experiencia lo que el demonio pone por estorbar uno de estos monasterios. Y aunque en éste no le dio Dios licencia para ponerlo a los principios, porque quiso que se fundase, después han sido tantos los trabajos y contradicciones que se han pasado que aún no está acabado del todo de allanar, con haber algunos años que está fundado cuando esto escribo, y así creo se sirve Dios en él mucho, pues el demonio no le puede sufrir.” *OC, Fund* 18.2. “I already have experience of what the devil stirs up to hinder one of these monasteries. And although with this one God, desiring it to be founded, did not allow him to cause trouble in the beginning, the trials and contradictions were so great afterward that they are still not completely overcome -- and some years have passed between the time it was founded and my writing this account. Thus, I believe that God is served very much in it since the devil cannot bear it.” *CWST, Foundations* 18.2.

⁵¹³ *FundTR*, 18.3. “Pues habida la licencia y teniendo cierta la casa, confiada de la misericordia de Dios, porque allí ninguna persona había que me pudiese ayudar con nada para lo mucho que era menester para acomodar la casa, me partí para allá, llevando sola una compañera, por ir más secreta, que hallaba por mejor esto y no llevar las monjas hasta tomar la posesión; que estaba escarmentada de lo que me había acaecido en Medina del Campo, que me vi allí en mucho trabajo; porque, si hubiese estorbo, le pasase yo sola el trabajo, con no más de la que no podía excusar. Llegamos víspera de Todos Santos, habiendo andado harto del camino la noche antes con harto frío, y dormido en un lugar, estando yo bien mala.” *OC, Fund* 18.3. “Well now, having obtained the permission and being certain of a house to rent, I left for Salamanca. I trusted in the mercy of God because there wasn’t a person there who could in any way help me with the great deal that had to be done in order to make the proper adaptations in the house. For the sake of secrecy, I took with me only one other nun as companion, for I found this to be better than bringing the nuns before taking possession. I had learned from experience through what had happened to me in Medina del Campo; there I got myself into much trouble. Thus, if there were some obstacle, I could undergo the trial alone, with no one other than the one required companion. We arrived on the vigil of All Saints. The previous night we had traveled a good deal before coming to a place to sleep. The weather was cold; and I, very sick.” *CWST, Foundations* 18.3.

In the course of establishing the foundation at Salamanca, Teresa talks about leadership, especially the importance of each prioress honoring each nun's individual spiritual path, even if it differs from her own. Teresa shows much insight into human nature and describes how an organization often takes on the characteristics of the person in charge. She also emphasizes the importance of the *Rule* and *Constituciones*:

porque como ay diferentes talentos y virtudes en las perladas por aquel camino quieren llevar a sus monjas la *que* esta muy mortificada pareçe façil qualquiera cosa *que* mande para doblar la voluntad como lo seria para ella / y *an* por ventura se le aria muy de de [sic] mal esto emos de mirar mucho *que* lo *que* a nosotras se nos aria aspero no lo emos de mandar la discreçion es gran cosa para el gobierno y *en* estas casas muy neçesaria / estoy por deçir mucho mas *que* *en* otras porque es mayor la cuenta *que* se tiene con las suditas *ansi* de lo ynterior como de lo exterior / otras prioras *que* tienen mucho espiritu todo gustarian *que* fuese rreçar *en* fin lleva el señor por diferentes caminos mas las perladas *an* de mirar *que* no las ponen alli para *que* escojan el camino a su gusto sino para *que* lleven a las suditas por el camino de su regla y costituçion / *anque* ellas se fuerçen y querrian açer otra cosa

Porque como hay diferentes talentos y virtudes en las preladas, por aquel camino quieren llevar a sus monjas: la que está muy mortificada, parécele fácil cualquiera cosa que mande para doblar la voluntad, como lo sería para ella, y aun por ventura se le haría muy de mal. Esto hemos de mirar mucho, que lo que a nosotras se nos haría áspero no lo hemos de mandar. La discreción es gran cosa para el gobierno, y en estas casas muy necesaria; estoy por decir “mucho más que en otras”, porque es mayor la cuenta que se tiene con las súbditas, así de lo interior como de lo exterior. Otras prioras que tienen mucho espíritu todo, gustarían que fuese rezar. En fin, lleva el Señor por diferentes caminos. Mas las preladas han de mirar que no las ponen allí para que escojan el camino a su gusto, sino para que lleven a las súbditas por el camino de su Regla y Constitución, aunque ellas se fuercen y querrían hacer otra cosa.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹⁴ *FundTR*, 18.6. “Porque como hay diferentes talentos y virtudes en las preladas, por aquel camino quieren llevar a sus monjas: la que está muy mortificada, parécele fácil cualquiera cosa que mande para doblar la voluntad, como lo sería para ella, y aun por ventura se le haría muy de mal. Esto hemos de mirar mucho, que lo que a nosotras se nos haría áspero no lo hemos de mandar. La discreción es gran cosa para el gobierno, y en estas casas muy necesaria; estoy por decir ‘mucho más que en otras’, porque es mayor la cuenta que se tiene con las súbditas, así de lo interior como de lo exterior. Otras prioras que tienen mucho espíritu todo, gustarían que fuese rezar. En fin, lleva el Señor por diferentes caminos. Mas las preladas han de mirar que no las ponen allí para que escojan el camino a su gusto, sino

After Teresa and her traveling companion arrive in Salamanca, they got help to see if the students were still living in the house the nuns had rented (they were). and to tell the students to leave. The person who helped them was Nicolás Gutiérrez, “arto siervo de dios.”⁵¹⁵

Teresa and the nun with whom she was traveling worked very hard to get the house ready for the first Mass of the new foundation:

fue la primera *que* funde sin poner el santísimo sacramento *porque* yo no pensava era tomar la posesion si no se ponía y avia ya sabido *que* no ynportava *que* fue arto consuelo para mi segun avia mal aparejo / de los estudiantes como no deven tener esa curiosidad estava de suerte toda la casa *que* no se trabajo poco *aquella* noche / otro dia por la mañana se dijo la primera misa / y procure *que* fuesen por mas monjas *que* avian de venir de medina del canpo⁵¹⁶

para que lleven a las súbditas por el camino de su Regla y Constitución, aunque ellas se fuercen y querrían hacer otra cosa.” *OC, Fund* 18.6. “Since the prioresses have different talents and virtues, they seek to lead their nuns along their own way. The one who is very mortified thinks that anything she commands is easy to submit to, as it would be for her, but perhaps it would be very harmful for the nun to whom she gives the orders. We must be careful about this. If for ourselves something would be harsh, we must not order others to do it. Discretion is an important aspect of government, and very necessary in these houses. I would say much more necessary than in other houses, for the account one must render concerning one’s subjects is greater. This applies in interior as well as exterior matters. Other prioresses, who are very spiritual, would like to reduce everything to prayer; in sum, the Lord leads souls by different paths. But the prioresses must remember that they are not there for the purpose of choosing a path for others according to their own liking but so as to lead subjects by the path of the rule and constitutions even though they themselves might desire and feel urged to do something else.” *CWST, Foundations* 18.6.

⁵¹⁵ *FundTR*, 19.2. “harto siervo de Dios.” *OC, Fund* 19.2. “a great servant of God.” *CWST, Foundations* 19.2.

⁵¹⁶ *FundTR*, 19.3. “Fue la primera que fundé sin poner el Santísimo Sacramento, porque yo no pensaba era tomar la posesión si no se ponía; y había ya sabido que no importaba, que fue harto consuelo para mí, según había mal aparejo de los estudiantes. Como no deben tener esa curiosidad, estaba de suerte toda la casa, que no se trabajó poco aquella noche. Otro día por la mañana se dijo la primera misa, y procuré que fuesen por más monjas que habían de venir de Medina del Campo.” *OC, Fund* 19.3. “It was the first monastery I founded without reserving the Blessed Sacrament, for I had previously thought that a foundation was not official until the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. And I had now learned that this wasn’t necessary. That was a great consolation to me, for the house was in bad condition because of those students who had previously occupied it. Since they must not have had a gift for cleanliness, the whole

One example from this foundation shows how Teresa maintained a focus on the matters at hand in order to stave off fears and avoid unnecessary worries about the future or problems that may never come to pass. Teresa describes a night she spent in the house when she first arrived there with her companion: “*quedamos la noche de todos santos mi conpañera y yo solas yo os digo ermanas que quando se me acuerda el miedo de mi conpañera que era maria del sacramento vna monja de mas edad que yo y arto sierva de dios que me da gana de rreyr.*”⁵¹⁷ Teresa’s companion was worried about the students who had been living there, and the bells tolling for All Souls’

Day escalated their worries as their thoughts turned to death:

la casa era muy grande y desbaratada y con muchos desvanes y mi conpanera no avia quitarsele del pensamiento los estudiantes pareçiendole *que* como se avian enojado tanto de *que* salieron de la casa *que* alguno se avia ascondido en ella ellos lo pudieran muy bien açer segun avia adonde / eçerramonos *en* vna pieça adonde estava paja *que* era lo primero *que* yo proveya para fundar la casa porque tiniendola no nos faltava cama en ello dormimos esa noche con vnas dos mantas *que* nos prestaron . . . como mi conpañera se vio çerrada *en aquella* pieça pareçe sosego algo quanto a lo de los estudiantes *anque* no açia sino mirar a vna parte y a otra todavia con temores y el demonio *que* la devia ayvdar con rrepresentarla pensamientos de peligro para turvarme a mi *que* con la flaqueça de coraçon *que* tengo poco me solia bastar yo la dije *que que* mirava *que* como alli no podia entrar nayde dijome madre estoy pensado si aora me muriese yo aqui *que* ariades vos sola / *aquello* si fuera me pareçia rreçia cosa / y començe a pensar vn poco *en* ello y an aver miedo porque sienpre los cuerpos muertos *anque* yo no le e me enflaqueçen el coraçon *anque* no este sola y como el doblar de las canpanas ayvdava *que* como e dicho

house was in such a state that we did no small amount of work that night. The next morning the first Mass was said, and I arranged for more nuns to come from Medina del Campo.” *CWST, Foundations* 19.3.

⁵¹⁷ *FundTR*, 19.3. “Quedamos la noche de Todos Santos mi conpañera y yo solas. Yo os digo, hermanas, que cuando se me acuerda el miedo de mi conpañera, que era María del Sacramento, una monja de más edad que yo, y harto sierva de Dios, que me da gana de reír.” *OC, Fund* 19.3. “My companion and I spent the night of All Saints alone. I tell you, daughters, I have to laugh when I recall the fear of my companion, who was María del Sacramento, a nun older than I and a great servant of God.” *CWST, Foundations* 19.3.

era noche de las animas buen principio llevaba el demonio para açernos perder el pensamiento con niñerías⁵¹⁸

Teresa was no stranger to worries and fears, which she often attributed to the devil. Teresa's approach was not to give in to fears about the future: "quando entiende *que* de el no se a miedo busca otros rrodeos yo la dije ermana de *que* eso sea pensare lo *que* e de açer a'ora dejeme dormir como aviamos tenido dos noches malas presto quito el sueño los miedos 'otro día

⁵¹⁸ *FundTR*, 19.4-5. "La casa era muy grande y desbaratada y con muchos desvanes, y mi compañera no había quitársele del pensamiento los estudiantes, pareciéndole que como se habían enojado tanto de que salieron de la casa, que alguno se había escondido en ella; ellos lo pudieran muy bien hacer, según había adónde. Encerrámonos en una pieza adonde estaba paja, que era lo primero que yo proveía para fundar la casa, porque teniéndola no nos faltaba cama; en ello dormimos esa noche con unas dos mantas que nos prestaron . . . Como mi compañera se vio cerrada en aquella pieza, parece sosegó algo cuanto a lo de los estudiantes, aunque no hacía sino mirar a una parte y a otra, todavía con temores, y el demonio que la debía ayudar con representarla pensamientos de peligro para turbarme a mí, que con la flaqueza de corazón que tengo, poco me solía bastar. Yo la dije que qué miraba, que cómo allí no podía entrar nadie. Díjome: 'Madre, estoy pensando, si ahora me muriese yo aquí, ¿qué haríais vos sola?'. Aquello, si fuera, me parecía recia cosa; y comencé a pensar un poco en ello, y aun haber miedo; porque siempre los cuerpos muertos, aunque yo no le he, me enflaquecen el corazón, aunque no esté sola. Y como el doblar de las campanas ayudaba, que -como he dicho- era noche de las Animas, buen principio llevaba el demonio para hacernos perder el pensamiento con niñerías." *OC*, *Fund* 19.4-5. "The house was very large, was in a mess, and had many garrets. My companion couldn't get the students out of her mind, thinking that since they were so angry for having had to leave the house, one of them may have hidden there. They could have done this very easily, for there were many possibilities. We locked ourselves in a room where there was some straw, which was the first thing I provided for the founding of the house, because in having straw we would have a bed. We slept there that night with two borrowed blankets . . . Once my companion was locked in that room, it seems she calmed down a little with regard to the students, although she didn't do anything but look about from side to side, still fearful. And the devil must have helped by bringing to her mind thoughts about the danger. Her thoughts then began to disturb me, for with my weak heart, not much was needed. I asked her why she was looking around since no one could get in there. She answered: 'Mother, I was wondering what would happen if I were to die now; what would you do here all alone?' If that had happened it would have been a hard thing for me to take. And I began to think a little about it and even become afraid. Because as for dead bodies, although I am not afraid of them, my heart gets weak even when I'm not alone. And since the tolling of the bells helped matters along, for, as I said, it was the vigil of All Souls, the devil had a good means of making us squander our thoughts on trifles." *CWST*, *Foundations* 19.4-5.

vinieron mas monjas con *que* se nos quitaron.”⁵¹⁹ Teresa’s ability to keep from worrying about problems that might not come to pass and to focus only on the present moment served her well as she managed the various situations she encountered during the process of establishing new foundations. She didn’t waste time thinking about troubles in the future, rather she dealt with problems when they came.

Once the nuns were established in the house, Teresa continued to work hard to have everything in order for the way of life she envisioned for her Sisters. The house was well-positioned to receive alms, but the location was too cold and humid, which made the nuns sick. Here she writes with the tenacity of a mother and the vision of a foundress:

estuvo el monesterio *en* esta casa cerca de tres años y *an* no me acuerdo si quatro *que* avia poca memoria de el porque me mandaron yr a la encarnación de avila *que* nunca asta dejar casa propia y rrecojida y acomodada a mi *querer* dejara nengun monesterio ni le e dejado *que* en esto me açia dios mucha *merced* *que* en el trabajo gustava ser la primera y todas las cosas *para* su descanso y acomodamiento procurava asta las muy menudas como si toda mi vida vuiera de bivar *en aquella* casa y *ansi* me dava gran alegria quando quedavan muy bien senti arto ver lo *que* estas ermanas padeçieron aqui *anque* no de falta de mantenimiento *que* de esto yo tenia cuydado desde donde estava porque estava muy desviada la casa *para* las limosnas sino de poca salud porque era vmeda y muy fria *que* como era *tan* grande no se podia rreparar⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁹ *FundTR*, 19.5. “Cuando entiende que de él no se ha miedo, busca otros rodeos. Yo la dije: ‘Hermana, de que eso sea, pensaré lo que he de hacer; ahora déjeme dormir’. Como habíamos tenido dos noches malas, presto quitó el sueño los miedos. Otro día vinieron más monjas, con que se nos quitaron.” *OC*, *Fund* 19.5. “When he sees that one has no fear of him, he looks for other devices. I said to her: ‘Sister, when this happens, I’ll think about what to do; now, let me sleep.’ Since we had just spent two bad nights, sleep came soon and took away our fears. The next day more nuns arrived, and with them present, the fears left.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 19.5.

⁵²⁰ *FundTR*, 19.6. “Estuvo el monasterio en esta casa cerca de tres años, y aun no me acuerdo si cuatro, que había poca memoria de él, porque me mandaron ir a la Encarnación de Avila; que nunca hasta dejar casa propia y recogida y acomodada a mi querer, dejara ningún monasterio, ni le he dejado. Que en esto me hacía Dios mucha merced, que en el trabajo gustaba ser la primera, y todas las cosas para su descanso y acomodamiento procuraba hasta las muy menudas, como si toda mi vida hubiera de vivir en aquella casa, y así me daba gran alegría cuando quedaban muy bien. Sentí hartito ver lo que estas hermanas padecieron aquí, aunque no de falta de mantenimiento (que de esto yo tenía cuidado desde donde estaba,

Due to the humidity and the health problems, the nuns arranged for the purchase of a different house a few years later, but it had legal issues surrounding its ownership. Nonetheless, the owner agreed to let the nuns live there and Teresa came to Salamanca from Avila with Fr. Julián to see what she could do, because “la espirienciã açia *que* entendiese yo bien de estas cosas.”⁵²¹ The new house was much better because it was in a good location, and people from the town “començaron a conoçerla y tener devoçion.”⁵²² But when the owner returned from out of town, he was angry with Teresa and her nuns. The reasons for this weren’t clear because Teresa’s part of the agreement had been fulfilled; the money for the house had been deposited with a third party pending resolution of legal issues (*Fund* 19.10). However, the problems never were resolved and the nuns had to move again shortly after Teresa’s death in 1582.

The problems at Salamanca highlight Teresa’s problem-solving abilities and her ability to handle complex purchase and legal arrangements, her concern for the well-being of the nuns, and

porque estaba muy desviada la casa para las limosnas), sino de poca salud, porque era húmeda y muy fría, que como era tan grande, no se podía reparar.” *OC, Fund* 19.6. “The monastery was in this house for about three years -- I don’t recall whether or not it was four, for I don’t remember well since they sent me to the Incarnation in Avila. I never would, or did, leave any monastery until it was in fit condition, had a spirit of recollection, and was adapted according to my wishes. In this matter God greatly favored me, for when there was question of work to be done I enjoyed being the first. And as though I were to live in that house for the rest of my life, I sought to obtain everything, even the smallest thing that would contribute to the tranquility suitable for the life, and so it gave me great happiness to see that everything was in good shape. I very much regretted to see what these Sisters suffered, although not from a lack of sustenance (I took care of this from where I was, for the house was not located in a place suitable for receiving alms), but from a location that was unhealthy because of the humidity and cold. Since it was so large a house it could not be repaired.” *CWST, Foundations* 19.6.

⁵²¹ *FundTR*, 19.7. “La experiencia hacía que entendiese yo bien de estas cosas.” *OC, Fund* 19.7. “Experience has taught me much about these things.” *CWST, Foundations* 19.7.

⁵²² *FundTR*, 19.10. “comenzaron a conocerla y tener devoción.” *OC, Fund* 19.10. “began to know about it and be devoted to it.” *CWST, Foundations* 19.10.

her willingness to go out of her way to travel and make arrangements that would benefit the nuns and the new foundation. She displayed great sensitivity to the needs of her religious sisters and she overcame a number of complex obstacles. In *Fund* 19.12 she praises the sisters' accepting attitudes and their cooperation in the midst of difficulties. She uses this situation as an opportunity to reflect on the homelessness of Christ:

lo *que* se es *que* en ningun monesterio de los *que* el señor aora a fundado de esta primera rregla no *an* pasado las monjas con mucha parte *tan* grandes trabajos / aylas alli *tan* buenas por la misericordia de dios *que* todo lo llevan con alegria plega a su *magestad* esto les lleve adelante *que* en tener buena casa v no la tener va poco *antes* es gran plaçer quando nos vemos *en* casa *que* nos pueden echar de ella acordandonos como el señor del mundo no tuvo nenguna / esto de estar *en* casa no propia como *en* estas fundaçiones se ve nos a acaeçido algunas veçes y es verdad *que* jamas e visto a monja con pena de ello plega a la divina *magestad* *que* no nos falten las moradas eternas por su *yn*finita bondad y misericordia amen amen⁵²³

⁵²³ *FundTR*, 19.12. "Lo que sé es que en ningún monasterio de los que el Señor ahora ha fundado de esta primera Regla no han pasado las monjas, con mucha parte, tan grandes trabajos. Haylas allí tan buenas, por la misericordia de Dios, que todo lo llevan con alegría. Plega a Su Majestad esto les lleve adelante, que en tener buena casa o no la tener, va poco; antes es gran placer cuando nos vemos en casa que nos pueden echar de ella, acordándonos cómo el Señor del mundo no tuvo ninguna. Esto de estar en casa no propia, como en estas fundaciones se ve, nos ha acaecido algunas veces; y es verdad que jamás he visto a monja con pena de ello. Plega a la divina Majestad que no nos falten las moradas eternas, por su infinita bondad y misericordia. Amén, amén." *OC*, *Fund* 19.12. "What I do know is that in none of the monasteries of the primitive rule that up to now the Lord has founded did the nuns come near to suffering trials as great as these. Through the mercy of God, those who are there are so good, for they bear everything happily. May it please His Majesty to lead them on, for whether or not they have a good house matters little. Rather, it gives us great pleasure to find we are in a house that we can be thrown out of, for we remember how the Lord of the world didn't have any. It has happened to us at times in these foundations that we were in a house that we didn't own, and the truth is that I never saw a nun distressed about that. May it please His Majesty that through His infinite goodness and mercy we will not be in want of the eternal dwelling places, amen, amen." *CWST*, *Foundations* 19.12.

Malagón

At Malagón, Teresa established the initial monastery in 1568, and she returned there in 1579 to supervise construction on a monastery of her own design. This is of particular interest with regard to work because it shows Teresa's creativity in architecture and design, as well as her sensitivity to all phases of the project, including managing construction workers, which was necessary in order to bring the project to completion when the work was taking too long.

The initial foundation at Malagón, Teresa's third, was made in 1568. Teresa received confirmation in prayer shortly after its formal establishment on Palm Sunday, 1568, that God would be served in this foundation: "despues de aver comulgado *en* oraçion / entendi de nuestro señor *que* se avia de servir *en* aquella casa mucho."⁵²⁴ For Teresa, prayer and work were deeply intertwined.

The original house in Malagón was too near the busy marketplace, and soon another site was found on which to build a new monastery. The funding would come from Teresa's benefactor, Doña Luisa de la Cerda who had a large palace in that city: "The monastery in Malagón, endowed by Doña Luisa de la Cerda, is the only building Teresa was able to design according to her own wishes and have constructed completely new; otherwise, adaptation of what already existed was the rule."⁵²⁵

⁵²⁴ *FundTR*, 9.5. "Después de haber comulgado, en oración, entendí de nuestro Señor que se había de servir en aquella casa." *OC, Fund* 9.5. "While in prayer after having received Communion, I understood from our Lord that He would be served in that house." *CWST, Foundations* 9.5.

⁵²⁵ Kavanaugh, "The Foundations - Introduction," 3:27.

After all of the discussions about St. Joseph's regarding establishing new foundations in poverty, to accept an endowment here was a challenge for Teresa. Malagón was a poor place, and it was likely that alms would not be sufficient to support the monastery. Doña Luisa de la Cerda wanted to provide an endowment, but Teresa was against it at first. However, after she discussed the situation with others she decided to go ahead and establish this foundation with Doña Luisa's help. Among her reasons were the following: the income from the endowment would be sufficient for the nuns, the practice of endowments for monasteries was permitted by the Council of Trent, and God would be served there:

*tratado con letrados y confesor mio me dijeron que açia mal que pues el santo conçilio dava liçençia de tenerla que no se avia de dejar de açer vn monesterio adonde se podia tanto el señor servir por mi opinion con esto se juntaron las muchas ynportunaçiones de esta señora por donde no pude açer menos de admitirle dio bastante rrenta porque sienpre soy amiga de que sean los monesterios v del todo pobres v que tengan de manera que no ayan menester las monjas ynportunar a nadie para todo lo que fuere menester*⁵²⁶

In a letter to Gracián toward the end of her life, Teresa again brought up the subject of accepting an income in reformed monasteries, in preparation for the drafting of new constitutions at Alcalá in 1581: "En nuestras constituciones dice sean de pobreza y no puedan tener renta. Como ya veo que todas llevan camino de tenerla, mire si será bien se quite esto y todo lo que

⁵²⁶ *FundTR*, 9.3. "Tratado con letrados y confesor mío me dijeron que hacía mal, que pues el santo concilio daba licencia de tenerla, que no se había de dejar de hacer un monasterio adonde se podía tanto el Señor servir, por mi opinión. Con esto se juntaron las muchas importunaciones de esta señora, por donde no pude hacer menos de admitirle. Dio bastante renta; porque siempre soy amiga de que sean los monasterios, o del todo pobres, o que tengan de manera que no hayan menester las monjas importunar a nadie para todo lo que fuere menester." *OC*, *Fund* 9.3. "Both my confessor and other learned men with whom I discussed the matter told me that I was doing wrong, that since the holy Council had given permission to have an income, I shouldn't, because of my own opinion, fail to found a monastery where God could be so much served. To this were added the many urgings of this lady which I could not resist. She provided a sufficient income, for I am always in favor of monasteries being either completely poor or maintained in such a way that the nuns will not need to beg from anyone for their needs." *CWST*, *Foundations* 9.3.

hablare en las constituciones de esto, porque a quien las viere no parezca se han relajado tan presto, o que diga el padre comisario que, pues el concilio da licencia, la tengan.”⁵²⁷ Since Malagón was only the third reformed foundation, Teresa was worried about appearing lax by accepting an income so soon after arguing so strongly for poverty as a basis for her foundations, but in this as in other situations, she maintained a flexible approach after gaining a clear understanding of Church teachings and consulting with learned advisors.

Teresa had established two new foundations prior to Malagón - Avila and Medina - and she had spent over 30 years in the religious communities of the Incarnation and St. Joseph's, so she had a good idea what would contribute to the architectural and design considerations of a monastery in order to support the kind of Carmelite lifestyle that she envisioned. Her benefactor supported her creativity in this endeavor: “Doña Luisa allowed Teresa complete freedom in the design, building and furnishing of this monastery. The original accounts and other documentation concerning it are still in the convent safe to prove it. Work began immediately, but it was eleven years before she could return for the solemn transfer from old monastery to new.”⁵²⁸

⁵²⁷ *Cartas*, 376.7. “Our constitutions say that our monasteries should be founded in poverty and not have an income. Since I now see that they are all on the way to having an income, consider if it would not be better to remove this and anything else in the constitutions that might refer to it so that no one on seeing them will think our monasteries have grown lax so quickly. Or, Father Commissary could say that since the council gives permission for an income, we should allow for one.” *Letters*, 376.7.

⁵²⁸ Tomás Álvarez, CD, and Fernando Domingo, CD, *Saint Teresa of Avila: A Spiritual Adventure*, tr. Cristopher O'Mahoney (Burgos: Editorial Monte Carmelo, and Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1981), 30.

After over a decade had passed, the construction still had not been completed, so Teresa came to Malagón on the 25th of November, 1579, to try to get the new building ready for the nuns to move into by December:

As soon as the builders reported that the work would take about another six months, she was up at dawn the following day to see for herself. She inspected what had been done, made her calculations regarding the remainder, and announced that it was to be ready for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception - just twelve days away!

Leaving masons and friends to recover from that shock as best they could, she went on site from morning till night - skipping prayer time, meals and rest - and when she was not lending a hand herself, she directed operations from a stone “podium” which is still preserved to this day. Needless to say, the builders met her deadline!⁵²⁹

The granite podium from which Teresa supervised the construction has long been venerated by visitors and local residents alike:

En un reducido recinto religioso, de gran arraigo y devoción popular, muy próximo al convento actual, se venera un fragmento de piedra de granito en que se sentaba la Madre para vigilar y acelerar las obras del actual monasterio en la última fase de su construcción (noviembre-diciembre de 1579) y que recibió a las religiosas en sus estancias el 8 de diciembre, festividad de la Inmaculada Concepción: la tradición en torno a esta piedra es de gran arraigo popular en Malagón.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁹ Álvarez and Domingo, *Saint Teresa of Avila: A Spiritual Adventure*, 31.

⁵³⁰ “In a small religious enclosure, deeply rooted in popular devotion, close to the present monastery, a fragment of granite stone is venerated, on which Mother [Teresa] sat to oversee and speed up the work of the present monastery in the last phase of its construction (November-December 1579), so that the nuns could receive their rooms on December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception: the tradition around this stone is deeply rooted in popular tradition in Malagón. [Translation mine.]” Miranda, *Teresa de Jesús: Vida, fundaciones, escritos*, 89.

This building “expresses fully what Teresa thought was suitable for her nuns - the kind of building, the lay-out, the space required,” and for that reason its plans are often used as guides for other Carmelite monasteries today.⁵³¹

In her letter to Gracián from Malagón in December, 1579, Teresa describes how happy the nuns were finally to move into their new quarters (“like little lizards”), even though the monastery was not yet completely finished:

Fue la pasada con mucho regocijo, porque vinieron en procesión y con el Santísimo Sacramento que se trajo de la otra. Hanse holgado mucho, que no parecían sino lagartijas que salen al sol en verano. Ciertamente han padecido mucho allí; y aunque aquí no hay cosa acabada del todo sino once celdas, están muy para vivir hartos años, aunque no se haga más.⁵³²

Their joy was also due to the fact that they now had “ample living space, in contrast with the crowded quarters in which they had been living.”⁵³³

The Malagón foundation is unique in that Teresa had the nuns provide services for the townspeople “by funding a sewing workshop for girls, and by paying a priest and an assistant to teach boys.”⁵³⁴ Also, it was here that she first admitted lay sisters who “undertook the manual work in the house; they had no choral obligations themselves and greatly facilitated the heavy

⁵³¹ Álvarez and Domingo, *Saint Teresa of Avila: A Spiritual Adventure*, 27, 31-2.

⁵³² OC, *Cartas* 316.2. “The move took place with much rejoicing, for they came in procession with the Most Blessed Sacrament from the other house. The nuns were very happy; they seemed like little lizards that come out into the sun in summer. Certainly they suffered a lot there; and even though nothing is finished except eleven cells, they could go on living here for many years even if nothing more were done.” CWST, *Letters* 316.2

⁵³³ Kavanaugh, “*The Foundations* - Introduction,” 3:27.

⁵³⁴ Álvarez and Domingo, *Saint Teresa of Avila: A Spiritual Adventure*, 32-3.

liturgical commitment of the rest of the community.”⁵³⁵ Elsewhere in her writings Teresa refers to lay sisters with much admiration (Fund 6.9, 11.1, 29.10). However, there should not be too many lay sisters admitted to a monastery (*Modo* 27). A lay sister could become a choir sister and even prioress, as was the case with Blessed Anne of St. Bartholomew, who Teresa describes as “vna compañera *que a dias que anda conmigo freyla mas tan gran sierva de dios y discreta que me puede ayvdar mas que otras que son del coro.*”⁵³⁶

Both the initial foundation at Malagón and Teresa’s return there to supervise the construction on the monastery of her own design demonstrate Teresa’s creativity, intelligence, leadership, confidence and management skills, as well as her continuing care for her nuns and the townspeople, and her indefatigable promotion of the reformed Carmelite way of life.

⁵³⁵ Álvarez and Domingo, *Saint Teresa of Avila: A Spiritual Adventure*, 33.

⁵³⁶ *FundTR*, 29.10. “una compañera que ha días que anda conmigo, freila, mas tan gran sierva de Dios y discreta, que me puede ayudar más que otras que son del coro.” *OC*, *Fund* 29.10. “a companion who has for some time been going about with me. She is a great and discreet servant of God who can help me more than others who are choir Sisters.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 29.10. Kavanaugh provides additional biographical details: “This lay Sister was Blessed Anne of St. Bartholomew (1549-1626). Having entered St. Joseph’s in Avila, she learned to write in order to serve as secretary to Teresa. After Teresa broke her arm on Christmas Eve, 1577, Blessed Anne accompanied her on her journeys, nursed her in her illnesses and was with her when she died. Eventually Blessed Anne went to France with a group of Sisters to make foundations there. She became a choir Sister and later prioress. She founded convents at Tours (1608) and at Antwerp (1612) where she remained till her death.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 29.10, 3:438-9n12.

Burgos

Teresa records the events of making the foundation at Burgos in Ch. 31 of *Fundaciones*. It is the final foundation, established in 1582, the same year that she died, and it is the final chapter in the book of the Foundations, except for a short Epilog.

The first problems in Burgos arose because a suitable house could not be found at first. Teresa finally located one which would work for their present needs, and they could always sell it later. Although it was currently occupied, the owner, who was away, was willing to sell it to her, and the power to sell it was in the hands of “vn clerigo siervo de dios a quien su magestad puso deseo de vendernosla y tratar con mucha llaneça con nosotras.”⁵³⁷ With her friend, Dr. Aguiar, helping to make the arrangements, Teresa bought the house for a very low price (*Fund* 31.35-36). This aggravated various people in Burgos, including members of other religious orders who had seen the house and passed up the opportunity to buy it (*Fund* 31.37-38).

The archbishop there had not yet given her final permission to establish the foundation, and the house would need some adaptations before he would approve it. Teresa and her nuns moved into one room of the house prior to the existing occupant leaving, because it was difficult to get rid of him. This angered the archbishop, as did the fact that the nuns had quickly installed grates and a turn (a revolving door that preserved privacy and enclosure while permitting items

⁵³⁷ *FundTR*, 31.34. “un clérigo siervo de Dios, a quien Su Majestad puso deseo de vendérnosla y tratar con mucha llaneza con nosotras.” *OC*, *Fund* 31.34. “a priest, a servant of God whom His Majesty inspired with a desire to sell it to us and deal with us very honestly.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 31.34.

to be exchanged). The archbishop later seemed pleased after he visited the house, but he did not grant the license (*Fund* 31.39-40).

Teresa describes one hostile administrator who requested “muchas ynportunidades,”⁵³⁸ and when he finally went out of town on a trip it allowed the nuns to make greater progress toward getting the license (*Fund* 31.42). A generous benefactor, Catalina de Tolosa, provided the furnishings for the house. Teresa wrote to the Bishop of Palencia to ask that he write to the Archbishop of Burgos, to facilitate the license, but the letter he wrote was so scathing (“de tal manera *que* a darsela lo echamos todo a perder”),⁵³⁹ that Teresa asked him to write another in a more moderate tone, and with that letter the license was granted:

torne a suplicar a el obispo por las mejores rraçones *que* pude *que* le escriviese otra con mucha amistad puniendole delante el serviçio *que* era de dios / el yço lo *que* le pedi *que* no fue poco mas como vïo era serviçio de dios y açer merced *que* tan *en vn* ser me las a echo sienpre *en fin* se forço y me escrivio *que* todo lo *que* avia echo por la orden no era nada *en conparaçion* de esta carta *en fin* ella vino de suerte . . . *que* nos la dio⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁸ *FundTR*, 31.42. “muchas importunidades.” *OC*, *Fund* 31.42. “many vexing demands.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 31.42.

⁵³⁹ *FundTR*, 31.43. “de tal manera, que, a dársela, lo echáramos todo a perder.” *OC*, *Fund* 31.43. “in such a way that if I had given it to him we would have ruined everything.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 31.43.

⁵⁴⁰ *FundTR*, 31.44. “Torné a suplicar al Obispo, por las mejores razones que pude, que le escribiese otra con mucha amistad, poniéndole delante el servicio que era de Dios. El hizo lo que le pedí, que no fue poco; mas como vio era servicio de Dios y hacer merced, que tan en un ser me las ha hecho siempre, en fin, se forzó y me escribió que todo lo que había hecho por la Orden no era nada en comparación de esta carta. En fin, ella vino de suerte . . . que nos la dio.” *OC*, *Fund* 31.44. “I begged the bishop again, with the best reasons I could think of, that he write another very friendly letter to the archbishop and remind him of the service the monastery would render to God. He did what I asked him, which was no trifle. But since he saw that writing the letter was for the service of God and a favor to me, which he has always been ready to grant, he finally forced himself. He wrote to me afterward that of all the things he had done for the order nothing compared with his having had to write this letter. In short, this letter was so effective . . . that the archbishop gave us the license.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 31.44.

“[C]asi . . . toda la çivdad” was pleased when the license was finally granted.⁵⁴¹ The people of the city had been critical of the archbishop when they had heard what the nuns were going through, and the first Mass was celebrated “con mucha solenidad de ministriles, *que sin llamarlos se vinieron.*”⁵⁴²

Teresa writes how happy the nuns were at receiving permission to live in this foundation:

si no es por quien pasa no se creera el contento *que* se rreçibe *en* estas fundaçiones quando nos vemos ya con clavsura . . . pareçeme *que* es como quando *en* vna rred se sacan muchos peçes del rrio *que* no pueden bivar si no los tornan al agua *ansi* son las almas mostradas a estar *en* las corrientes de las aguas de su esposo *que* sacadas de alli a ver las rredes de las cosas de el mundo verdaderamente no se bive asta tornarse a ver alli⁵⁴³

Teresa’s experiences at Burgos demonstrate once again her shrewd and tactful methods of handling business and administrative matters, as well as her very great determination. This echoes her writings on determination in the life of prayer:

aora tornādo a los q̄ quieren yr por el y no parar asta el fin q̄ es llegar a beber de esta agua de vida como an de començar digo que ynporta mucho y el todo vna grāde y muy

⁵⁴¹ *FundTR*, 31.45. “casi . . . toda la ciudad.” *OC*, *Fund* 31.45. “almost the whole city.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 31.45.

⁵⁴² *FundTR*, 31.45. “con mucha solemnidad de ministriles, que sin llamarlos se vinieron.” *OC*, *Fund* 31.45. “with much solemnity provided by musicians who came unrequested with their wind instruments.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 31.45.

⁵⁴³ *FundTR*, 31.46. “Si no es por quien pasa, no se creará el contento que se recibe en estas fundaciones cuando nos vemos ya con clausura . . . Paréceme que es como cuando en una red se sacan muchos peces del río, que no pueden vivir si no los tornan al agua; así son las almas mostradas a estar en las corrientes de las aguas de su Esposo, que sacadas de allí a ver las redes de las cosas del mundo, verdaderamente no se vive hasta tornarse a ver allí.” *OC*, *Fund* 31.46. “No one but those who experience it will believe the joy that is felt in these foundations once we are enclosed . . . It seems to me comparable to taking many fish from the river with a net; they cannot live until they are in the water again. So it is with souls accustomed to living in the running streams of their Spouse. When taken out of them and caught up in the net of worldly things, they do not truly live until they find themselves back in those waters.” *CWST*, *Foundations* 31.46.

determinada determinación de no parar asta llegar a ella venga lo q̄ viniere suçada lo q̄ suçediere travajese lo q̄ se travajare mormure quiē mormurare siquiera llege alla siquiera se muera en el camino v no tenga coraçon pa los trabajos q̄ ay en el siquiera se vnda el mundo⁵⁴⁴

The resolution of the problems in Burgos, near the end of her life and while Teresa was ill, again demonstrate her determination to succeed, her ability to communicate with ecclesiastical leaders and others in the process of procuring licenses and houses, and her motherly care that everything be in order for her nuns. Indeed, “The Mother Foundress never cared to leave a new foundation until the major obstacles were surmounted, the nuns’ basic needs were provided for, and everything was in order.”⁵⁴⁵

Foundations: Conclusion

In the process of establishing new monasteries, several key aspects of Teresa’s work emerge as themes:

- Teresa spent considerable time and effort thinking about how the new monasteries would be organized and managed, what activities would go on there, how visitors would be

⁵⁴⁴ *CaminoTR-V*, 21.2. “Ahora, tornando a los que quieren ir por él y no parar hasta el fin, que es llegar a beber de esta agua de vida, cómo han de comenzar, digo que importa mucho, y el todo, una grande y muy determinada determinación de no parar hasta llegar a ella, venga lo que viniere, suçada lo que suçediere, trabájese lo que se travajare, murmure quien murmurare, siquiera llegue allá, siquiera se muera en el camino o no tenga corazón para los trabajos que hay en él, siquiera se hunda el mundo.” *OC, Camino* 21.2. “Now returning to those who want to journey on this road and continue until they reach the end, which is to drink from this water of life. I say that how they are to begin is very important -- in fact, all important. They must have a great and very resolute determination to persevere until reaching the end, come what may, happen what may, whatever work is involved, whatever criticism arises, whether they arrive or whether they die on the road, or even if they don’t have courage for the trials that are met, or if the whole world collapses.” *CWST, Way* 21.2.

⁵⁴⁵ Kavanaugh, “*The Foundations* - Introduction,” 3:47.

handled, what rules would govern enclosure, and clarifying her vision for the best environment to foster growth toward the aim of union with God.

- Her reform embodied conclusions reached through long years of seeing what did and didn't work, both in her family and in religious life, especially with regard to matters related to heredity, honor, poverty and the work of making and selling handmade goods.
- Her monasteries radically differed from existing religious houses by returning to earlier rules of ownership of goods in common and by inaugurating equality in working and living conditions.
- Reading and ongoing education were important aspects of religious life for nuns and friars.
- Authorities who would visit the houses for the purposes of oversight were expected to acknowledge and respect the work of the nuns, and guidelines for oversight of the houses were written down in order to preserve the vision and management style of the foundress.
- The personalities and talents of individual nuns and friars, as well as priors and prioresses, were taken into account when staffing monasteries, especially when making choices for the initial foundations, and guidelines for determining the best fit (or rejecting applicants) were written down.

In her work of reform and establishing new foundations, Teresa had a well-defined vision and a strong sense of mission, and she used writing to make her guidelines definite. She was process-oriented, including providing instructions for leaders that would remain in effect during her absence and would preserve a common form of governance in order to provide the best type of environment to achieve the aim of the order, as originally articulated by the Carmelite *Rule*. In this she carried on the tradition of earlier monastic founders, who, like St. Benedict, provided written guidelines for a rule of life, and she included guidelines for the leaders as well as for the members of the communities.

In Teresa's reform activities may be seen the seeds which she had developed in her early years: administrative capabilities, an understanding of legal documents and processes, the

importance of treating authorities with respect, especially while negotiating agreements, and the delicacy of religious matters in 16th-century Spain. All of this she handled masterfully while staying in touch with God in a deep and familiar friendship, trusting “Su Majestad” to guide her in prayer and in circumstances, and yielding to His will when events transpired differently from what she had expected.

Teresa’s Writings on Work and Management

Throughout Teresa’s writings there are numerous examples of advice for prioresses, nuns and visitators, but the writings which most directly address our exploration of the theme of work are *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* (1576) and the *Constituciones* (1563). These two writings are discussed in depth below.

Modo de Visitar los Conventos

Teresa wrote *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* while she was in Toledo in 1576.⁵⁴⁶ The purpose of this 55-paragraph document is to advise apostolic visitators in their dealings with nuns and prioresses as they make their rounds of visitation for the purpose of oversight of the discalced Carmelite foundations. According to Kavanaugh, these instructions primarily refer to

⁵⁴⁶ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “On Making the Visitation – Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:335-36.

the foundations described in Chapters 20-27 of *Fund*, which are Alba de Tormes, Segovia, Beas, Seville and Caravaca.⁵⁴⁷

Modo was written 15 years after the foundation of St. Joseph's of Avila in 1562, and Teresa had significant leadership experience in managing new foundations from which to draw in order to advise the visitators how a strong community should function. Her insight into human nature and her advice on personnel issues reflect Teresa's experience with prioresses and nuns, and her usual emphasis on politeness, respect and warmth is evident in these guidelines.

Visitators were to be kind but firm: "Presupuesto primero que al prelado le conviene grandísimamente haberse de tal manera con las súbditas, que aunque por una parte sea afable y las muestre amor, por otra dé a entender que en las cosas sustanciales ha de ser riguroso y por ninguna manera blandear."⁵⁴⁸ This was to strengthen religious observance and to lead toward greater perfection and service of God: "Es mucho menester que entiendan hay cabeza, y no piadosa para cosa que sea menoscabo de la Religión, y que el juez sea tan recto en la justicia, que las tenga persuadidas no ha de torcer en lo que fuere más servicio de Dios y más perfección, aunque se hunda el mundo."⁵⁴⁹

⁵⁴⁷ Kavanaugh, "*The Foundations* - Introduction," 81.

⁵⁴⁸ *OC, Modo* 3. "First, let it be presupposed as extremely appropriate that the visitor so behave toward the nuns that even though on the one hand he is affable and loving, on the other hand he makes it known that in essential matters he will be strict and by no means lenient." *CWST, Visitation* 3.

⁵⁴⁹ *OC, Modo* 4. "It is very necessary that they understand there is some one in command, who is not tenderhearted, when it comes to matters that would weaken the religious observance. The judge must be so upright in administering justice that they become convinced he will not turn aside from whatever might be more perfect and for the greater service of God even if the whole world crumbles." *CWST, Visitation* 4.

Visits must be regular in order to correct faults and prevent laxity: “Porque como las visitas no son más de una vez en el año, para con amor poder corregir y quitar faltas poco a poco . . . mas temerosa de lo que el tiempo suele relajar en los monasterios por no se mirar estos principios.”⁵⁵⁰ Visitors also must not hesitate to remove prioresses who are not well-suited to that position: “En esto particularmente es menester no haber ninguna piedad, porque muchas serán muy santas y no para preladas, y es menester remediarlo de presto . . . No es posible que todas las que eligieren por preladas han de tener talentos para ello.”⁵⁵¹

This shows great insight into the importance of good leadership and the necessity of authorities to address the office of prioress with firmness, not hesitating to remove an inept leader from office when necessary.

The visitor must attend to the financial matters of the houses, and should guard against going into debt:

Se mire con mucho cuidado y advertencia los libros del gasto, no se pase ligeramente por esto. En especial, en las casas de renta conviene muy mucho que se ordene el gasto conforme a la renta, aunque se pasen como pudieren; pues, gloria a Dios, todas tienen bastantemente las de renta para, si se gasta con concierto, pasar muy bien; y si no, poco a poco, si se comienzan a adeudar, se irán perdiendo.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵⁰ *OC, Modo 5-6*. “The official visitation should take place once a year so that with love faults may be gradually corrected and removed . . . It is my fear that makes me say this, a fear stemming from the fact that with time, through a lack of carefulness at the beginning, laxity usually creeps into monasteries.” *CWST, Visitation 5-6*.

⁵⁵¹ *OC, Modo 7-9*. “There must be no pity, because many prioresses will be very holy but not suited for the office of prioress, and it’s necessary to remedy the matter quickly . . . It’s impossible that all those elected prioresses will have the talent for the office.” *CWST, Visitation 7-9*.

⁵⁵² *OC, Modo 10*. “The visitor should examine very carefully and attentively the financial records and not pass over them lightly. Especially in houses having an income, it is very important that the expenses not exceed the income even though the community may have to go without something. For if they spend in accordance with their means, those houses founded with an income will have enough and

Teresa may be recalling the problems of poverty at the Incarnation when she advises visitators not to let the houses fall into poverty. In Teresa's new foundations this is perhaps even more important, because all now would share everything in common, in accordance with the primitive

Rule:

En habiendo mucha necesidad, parecerá inhumanidad a los preladados no les dar sus labores y que a cada una provean sus deudos y cosas semejantes, que ahora se usan; que querría yo más ver deshecho el monasterio, sin comparación, que no que venga a este estado. Por eso dije que de lo temporal suelen venir grandes daños a lo espiritual, y así es importantísimo esto. En los de pobreza, mirar y avisar mucho no hagan deudas, porque si hay fe y sirven a Dios, no les ha de faltar, como no gasten demasiado.⁵⁵³

We may recall here that Teresa thought at one time that houses experiencing the situation of poverty *produced* spiritual distractedness (prevented recollection), but she later realized that houses in which recollection is well-practiced would not be in need because God's providence would always provide for them: "via algunos monesterios pobres no muy rrecojidos y no mirava que el no serlo era cavsá de ser pobres y no la pobreza de la destrayción porque esta no açe mas rricas ni falta dios jamas a quien le sirve en fin tenia flaca la fe."⁵⁵⁴ Along the same lines, the

get along very well, glory to God. Otherwise, if the community begins to go into debt, it will gradually be ruined." *CWST, Visitation 10*.

⁵⁵³ *OC, Modo 10-11*. "In the event of great need, it will seem inhuman to major superiors to forbid individuals to keep money earned from their work or that relatives provide for them or similar things that are the practice now in different monasteries. I would unquestionably prefer to see a monastery dissolved than to see it reach such a state. This is why I said that a lack of care in temporal matters can cause great harm in spiritual matters, and thus this advice is most important. In the monasteries founded in poverty, the visitator should examine carefully and advise strongly so that the nuns do not go into debt, because if they have faith and serve God, they will not be in want -- unless they spend too much." *CWST, Visitation 10-11*.

⁵⁵⁴ *VidaTR, 35.2*. "Veía algunos monasterios pobres no muy recogidos, y no miraba que el no serlo era causa de ser pobres, y no la pobreza de la distracción; porque ésta no hace más rricas, ni falta Dios jamás a quien le sirve. En fin tenía flaca la fe." *OC, Vida 35.2*. "I observed certain poor monasteries

visitators should check on the rations of food for the nuns, but “nunca para esto deja el Señor de darlo, como haya ánimo en la prelada y diligencia; ya se ve por experiencia.”⁵⁵⁵

With regard to work, Teresa states that the visitators should take note of the work the nuns are doing and thank them for it:

Advertir en los unos y en los otros⁵⁵⁶ la labor que se hace, y aun contar lo que han ganado de sus manos; aprovecha para dos cosas: lo uno, para animarlas y agradecer a las que hicieron mucho; lo otro, para que en las partes que no hay tanto cuidado de hacer labor, porque no tendrán tanta necesidad, se les diga lo que ganan en otras partes; que este traer cuenta con la labor, dejado el provecho temporal, para todo aprovecha mucho. Y esles consuelo cuando trabajan ver que lo ha de ver el prelado; que aunque esto no es cosa importante, hanse de llevar mujeres tan encerradas y que todo su consuelo está en contentar al prelado, a las veces condescendiendo a nuestras flaquezas.⁵⁵⁷

Modo continues to advise the visitor to be concerned about the houses (their size, their quality), the chaplain, and the requests of nuns to be transferred. Nuns should not be allowed to transfer at their own request, but only for the good of the order if, for example, they are needed

in which there wasn't much recollection. I failed to reflect that this lack of recollection was the cause of their being poor and that it was not the practice of poverty that caused their distraction. For distraction won't make monasteries richer; nor does God ever fail anyone who serves Him. In sum, I had weak faith.” *CWST, Life* 35.2.

⁵⁵⁵ *OC, Modo* 11. “The Lord never fails to provide for these needs as long as the prioress has courage and diligence; experience teaches this.” *CWST, Modo* 11.

⁵⁵⁶ Kavanaugh explains this phrase: “In those having an income (no. 10) and in those founded in poverty (no. 8).” *CWST, Modo* 12, 3:455n4.

⁵⁵⁷ *OC, Modo* 12. “In both kinds of monasteries he should take note of the work that is being done and even record what the nuns have earned by the work of their hands. This is useful for two reasons: first, so as to encourage and thank those who have done a great deal; second, so that in those monasteries where there is not so much care taken about work because there is not so much need the nuns may be told about what others earn. This keeping record of the handwork that is done, apart from the temporal advantages, has advantages in every other respect. And it is very consoling to the nuns when they are at work to know that it will be seen by the visitor. Even though this is not an important matter, we women who live so enclosed a life and whose consolation is found in pleasing the visitor should be treated at times with a sensitive understanding of our weaknesses.” *CWST, Modo* 12.

elsewhere (*Modo* 18). Otherwise, if a nun believes she is being transferred because she wants it, “aquella nunca asentará en ninguna parte, y harás mucho daño a las otras.”⁵⁵⁸ The prioress should not show favoritism to any of the nuns in her charge (*Modo* 19).

Visitors should see that the nuns observe the *Constituciones* (*Modo* 21) and that the prioress fosters observance of the *Rule* (*Modo* 22). Teresa places great store on the constitutions and the rule, because if those are followed, everything will run smoothly (*Modo* 23): “Concluyo en esto con que como se guarden las Constituciones, andará todo llano. Y si en esto no hay gran aviso y en la guarda de la Regla, poco aprovecharán visitas.”⁵⁵⁹

Visitors must attend to whether to accept new nuns, and they should try to see if new nuns are friends of the prioress. New postulants should consider delaying their professions until the visitor makes the visitation (*Modo* 26). Lay sisters should be accepted only if there is a need for them and if they can contribute to the work of the house: “En el tomar de las freilas, es menester advertir mucho, porque casi todas las prioras son muy amigas de muchas freilas, y cárganse las casas, y a las veces con las que pueden trabajar poco. Y así es mucho menester no condescender luego con ellas si no se viere notable necesidad.”⁵⁶⁰

Visitors should inquire about how prioresses handle money and gifts:

⁵⁵⁸ *OC*, *Modo* 18. “She will never settle down anywhere, and much harm will be done to the other nuns.” *CWST*, *Modo* 18.

⁵⁵⁹ *OC*, *Modo* 23. “I conclude this matter by saying that if the constitutions are observed everything will run smoothly. If there is no great care for their observance or that of the rule, visitations will be of little avail.” *CWST*, *Modo* 23.

⁵⁶⁰ *OC*, *Modo* 27. “In the receiving of lay Sisters, it is necessary to take careful note because almost all the prioresses are fond of having many lay Sisters, and the houses become filled up, and sometimes with those who can do little work. Thus it’s very necessary for him not to yield right away if he sees no notable need.” *CWST*, *Modo* 27.

Informarse si entra algún dinero en poder de la prelada, sin que lo vean las clavarias, que importa mucho, que sin advertir lo pueden hacer, ni que ella lo posea jamás, sino como manda la Constitución.⁵⁶¹

Y en regalos y cumplimientos, si no fuere muy poco, se tenga gran aviso, aunque alguna vez no se podrá excusar alguna cosa.⁵⁶²

También es menester avisar a las prioras no sean muy largas y cumplidas, sino que traigan delante que están obligadas a mirar cómo gastan, pues son no más de como un mayordomo, y no han de gastar como cosa propia suya, sino como fuere razón, con mucho aviso que no sea cosa demasiada.⁵⁶³

Lawsuits should be avoided, and the personal qualities of new members should be valued more than money or a dowry: “Lo más que fuere posible, excusar que no tengan pleitos, si no fuere a más no poder, porque el Señor les dará por otro cabo lo que perdieren por esto.”⁵⁶⁴ Also, “Así, en las que recibieren, les vaya amonestando que tengan en más los talentos de las personas que lo que trajeren.”⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶¹ *OC, Modo 35*. “It is very important that he inquire whether any money gets into the hands of the prioresses without the knowledge of the key-bearers, for this could happen without her adverting to it, or even whether she possesses anything except in conformity with the constitutions.” *CWST, Modo 35*.

⁵⁶² *OC, Modo 39*. “And the prioress should be very careful with regard to giving gifts and complimentary presents, unless they are very small; although sometimes one cannot avoid giving something.” *CWST, Modo 39*.

⁵⁶³ *OC, Modo 40*. “It is also necessary to counsel the prioresses not to be too generous and liberal but to keep in mind that they are obliged to reflect on how they spend money. They are no more than stewards and must not spend as if the money were their own but according to reason and with great care so that their expenditures are not excessive.” *CWST, Modo 40*.

⁵⁶⁴ *OC, Modo 43*. “Insofar as possible they should avoid lawsuits, for the Lord will by other means grant them what they might lose by foregoing a lawsuit.” *CWST, Modo 43*.

⁵⁶⁵ *OC, Modo 44*. “He should warn them, with respect to new members being received into the community, to esteem the personal talents of aspirants more than what they bring with them.” *CWST, Modo 44*.

This again speaks to Teresa's interest in the personal qualities of the new members, over and above their heredity or wealth. In an exchange with Gracián in 1576, Gracián asked some questions and Teresa responded in the right-hand column of the same letter. In this letter, Gracián argues for admitting novices who are beneficial for the monastery and motivated toward holiness, even if they have few belongings to offer: "En aquella casa de Segovia dimos ahora el hábito a una, aunque es muy bonita, y no llegará a más de esto. La casa es muy pobre y hay muchas monjas, y muy pocas. Y aun en estotros monasterios, aunque hay mucha santidad no hay mucha ropa . . . más vale buena esperanza que ruin posesión."⁵⁶⁶ Teresa agrees and replies that she wishes there were less greed in some of the houses: "Verdaderamente me dará gusto quitarme de este cansancio; sino que he miedo que hay más codicia en algunas casas de lo que yo querría."⁵⁶⁷

In the same letter, almost as an aside, Teresa makes a comment that the writing of the *Modo de Visitar los Conventos* was as though taught by God: "La manera del visitar las descalzas está como enseñada de Dios. Sea por todo bendito."⁵⁶⁸ Again we see Teresa's devotion

⁵⁶⁶ OC, *Cartas* 116.2. "In the house in Segovia, we just gave the habit to someone who is nice but has brought nothing else. The house is very poor and there are many nuns whose dowries are of little worth. And even in the other monasteries, although there is much holiness, there are few belongings . . . a worthwhile hope is better than a worthless possession." CWST, *Letters* 116.2.

⁵⁶⁷ OC, *Cartas* 116.2. "To tell the truth, I will be happy not to have to bother with such tiring matters. The only thing is that I fear that in some houses there is more greed than I would like." CWST, *Letters* 116.2.

⁵⁶⁸ OC, *Cartas* 116.1. "*On Making the Visitation* came as though taught by God. May He be blessed for everything." CWST, *Letters* 116.1, 1:305n5. Kavanaugh remarks: "Although probably referring to her own work, she could have had in mind the criteria followed by Gracián in his official visitations." CWST, *Letters* 116.1.

to God deeply intertwined with her work as a foundress and as a writer, including her writing on management of the foundations.

A visitorator should not have any special friendships with individuals in the community (*Modo* 45-46, 50), and if he wants to talk to the nuns he should do so “at the grille in the parlor” rather than informally at the dinner table (*Modo* 47). With regard to problems in the monastery, the visitorator should be sure to get a number of perspectives from different people and remain impartial (*Modo* 51-53). Teresa acknowledges the good will in each person’s point of view, but she also knows that strife and division can arise in communities and there needs to be a way to provide a remedy:

Yo me espanto de ver la sutileza del demonio y cómo hace parecer a cada una que dice la mayor verdad del mundo; por esto he dicho que ni se dé entero crédito a la priora ni a una monja particular, sino que se informe de más cuando sea cosa que importe, porque se provea acertadamente el remedio. Póngale nuestro Señor en darnos siempre el prelado avisado y santo, que como esto tenga, Su Majestad le dará luz para que en todo acierte y nos conozca, que con esto irá todo muy bien gobernado y creciendo en perfección las almas para honra y gloria de Dios.⁵⁶⁹

Teresa closes by complimenting Gracián’s humility, who was the one for whom she likely wrote *Modo*.⁵⁷⁰ She asks him to add to the recommendations by writing more counsels for

⁵⁶⁹ *OC, Modo* 53. “I am amazed to see the subtlety of the devil and how he makes each one think she is telling the greatest truth in the world. This is why I have said that complete trust should not be given to the prioress or to any nun in particular but that information should be gathered from a greater number, when dealing with something important, so that an effective remedy may be provided. May our Lord provide such a remedy by always giving us a holy and prudent visitorator, for if he possesses these qualities, he will be enlightened by His Majesty so as to do the right thing in all and come to know us. In this way the government will be very good, and souls will grow in perfection for the honor and glory of God.” *CWST, Modo* 53.

⁵⁷⁰ Kavanaugh remarks, “Although nothing is expressly stated concerning the identity of the one who gave her the orders to write this treatise, there is no lack of evidence to the fact that it was Gracián. The visitorator for whom she was writing (no. 54) was in fact the one who had ordered her to write her

visitors (*Modo* 54-55), and she says that it's more important to establish proper visitation procedures when the foundation is first established, because "sólo a los principios será menester el mayor cuidado, que como entiendan ha de ser de esta suerte, se dará poco trabajo en el gobierno."⁵⁷¹

Constituciones

The complex history of the text of the *Constituciones* was covered in Chapter 1. The purpose of *Const* was to govern life in the reformed monasteries, beginning with St. Joseph's in Avila. Because the Carmelite *Rule* was so important for Teresa's foundations, *Const* had to be closely aligned with the *Rule* in its purpose and content.

The *Constituciones* consist of 59 paragraphs devoted to various aspects of living together in community and practicing the primitive Carmelite *Rule*. In the Kavanaugh translation there are eleven sections:

1. *On the Order to Be Observed in Spiritual Matters*
2. *The Days for Receiving the Lord*
3. *On Temporal Matters*
4. *On Fasting*
5. *On the Enclosure*
6. *On Accepting Novices*
7. *On the Humble Offices*
8. *On the Sick*

Foundations, and this latter was by Teresa's own admission, Gracián (*Foundations*, ch. 27, no. 22)." Kavanaugh, "On Making the Visitation – Introduction," 3:335.

⁵⁷¹ OC, *Modo* 54. "Greater care is necessary only at the beginning. If the nuns understand that the visitation will be carried out in this way, there will be little trouble in governing them." CWST, *Modo* 54.

- 9. *On the Deceased*
- 10. *On the Obligations of Each Office*
- 11. *Deo Gratias*

Regarding the theme of work, *On Temporal Matters* contains the most detailed information about manual labor and selling items produced in the houses. The work of members of the community according to their roles and responsibilities are covered in *On the Humble Offices* and *On the Obligations of Each Office*.

Const opens with instructions on prayer and reciting the hours of the Divine Office in common (*CWST*, *Const* 1-4). Prayer is the most important aspect of the *Rule* and constitutes the primary purpose for and activity in the reformed monasteries. This is aligned with what she will write in *Camino* three years later (1566):

dice en la primera rregla nuestra q̄ oremos sin cesar con q̄ se aga esto con todo el cuydado q̄ pudieremos q̄ es lo mas ynportante no se dejarā de cunplir los ayvnos y diçiplinas y silençio q̄ manda la orden porq̄ ya sabeys q̄ pa ser la ‘oraçion verdadera se a de ayvdar con esto q̄ rregalo y oraçion no se conpadeçe⁵⁷²

The short description of the prayer schedule is followed by more details of the daily schedule, including eating, examination of conscience, receiving Communion, reading and the practice of silence (*CWST*, *Const* 6-7). Silence is to be observed carefully: “En dando las ocho,

⁵⁷² *CaminoTR-V*, 4.2. “Dice en la primera Regla nuestra que oremos sin cesar. Con que se haga esto con todo el cuidado que pudiéremos, que es lo más importante, no se dejarán de cumplir los ayunos y disciplinas y silencio que manda la Orden. Porque ya sabéis que para ser la oración verdadera se ha de ayudar con esto; que regalo y oración no se compadece.” *OC*, *Camino* 4.2. “Our primitive rule states that we must pray without ceasing. If we do this with all the care possible -- for unceasing prayer is the most important aspect of the rule -- the fasts, the disciplines, and the silence the order commands will not be wanting. For you already know that if prayer is to be genuine, it must be helped by these other things; prayer and comfortable living are incompatible.” *CWST*, *Way* 4.2.

en invierno y en verano, se taña a silencio y se guarde hasta otro día salidas de prima. Esto se guarde con mucho cuidado.”⁵⁷³

Good books should be available to the nuns, and all of their spare time should be spent in solitude, reading or working, in accordance with the *Rule*:

Tenga cuenta la priora con que haya buenos libros, en especial *Cartujanos*, *Flos Sanctorum*, *Contemptus Mundi*, *Oratorio de Religiosos*, los de fray Luis de Granada y del padre fray Pedro de Alcántara; porque es en parte tan necesario este mantenimiento para el alma, como el comer para el cuerpo. Todo el tiempo que no anduvieren con la comunidad o en oficios de ella, se esté cada una por sí, en las celdas o ermitas que la priora las señalare; en fin, en el lugar de su recogimiento, haciendo algo los días que no fueren de fiesta; llegándonos en este apartamiento a lo que manda la Regla, de que esté cada una por sí.⁵⁷⁴

Thus silence and solitude are linked with work and prayer. These aspects of eremitical spirituality, as prescribed in the *Rule*, are embodied in the first few paragraphs of the rules for reformed nuns and friars in *Const*, succinctly and with an economy of language that leaves little room for misunderstanding, while it allows space for practicing one’s own approach to work and prayer, in the silence of one’s cell.

The corresponding text of the *Rule* demonstrates Teresa’s close alignment of what she wrote in *Const* with the primitive Carmelite *Rule*: “Let each remain in his cell or near it,

⁵⁷³ OC, *Const* II.5. “In both winter and summer the bell is rung for silence at eight o’clock, and the silence is kept until after Prime of the following day. This silence should be observed with great care.” CWST, *Const* 7.

⁵⁷⁴ OC, *Const* II.7-8. “The prioress should see to it that good books are available, especially *The Life of Christ* by the Carthusian, the *Flos Sanctorum*, *The Imitation of Christ*, *The Oratory of Religious*, and those books written by Fray Luis de Granada and by Father Fray Pedro de Alcántara. This sustenance for the soul is in some way as necessary as is food for the body. All of that time not taken up with community life and duties should be spent by each Sister in the cell or hermitage designated by the prioress; in sum, in a place where she can be recollected and, on those days that are not feast days, occupied in doing some work. By withdrawing into solitude in this way, we fulfill what the rule commands: that each one should be alone.” CWST, *Const* 8.

meditating day and night on the Word of the Lord and keeping vigil in prayer, unless he is occupied with other lawful activities.”⁵⁷⁵ Teresa further encourages silence and solitude by prohibiting sisters from visiting each other’s rooms, and by eliminating the common workroom, which could foster too much talking and the formation of cliques: “Ninguna hermana pueda entrar en celda de otra sin licencia de la priora, so pena de grave culpa. Nunca haya casa de labor.”⁵⁷⁶

Working in solitude would be more in line with the eremitical spirit of the primitive *Rule* and it would help the nuns develop a sense of detachment from any friendships which might distract them from recollection or serving God, as she will write in *Camino* three years later (1566):

en atajar estas parçialidades es menester grā cuidado desde el prinçipio q̄ se comiēce la amistad esto mas con yndustria y amor q̄ con rrigor pa rremedio desto es grā cosa no estar juntas sino las oras señaladas ni ablarse conforme a la costunbre q̄ aora llevamos q̄ es no estar juntas como māda la rregla sino cada vna apartada en su celda librense en san josef de tener casa de lavor porq̄ anq̄ es loable costunbre con mas façylidad se guarda el silēçio cada vna por si y acostunbrarse a soledad es grā cosa pa la oraçion y pues este a de ser el çimiento de esta casa es menester traer estudio ē aficionarnos a lo q̄ a esto mas nos ayvda⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁵ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 31.

⁵⁷⁶ *OC, Const II.9*. “No Sister, under pain of a grave fault, may enter the cell of another without the prioress’ permission. Let there never be a common workroom.” *CWST, Const 8*.

⁵⁷⁷ *CaminoTR-V*, 4.9. “En atajar estas parcialidades es menester gran cuidado desde el principio que se comience la amistad; esto más con industria y amor que con rigor. Para remedio de esto es gran cosa no estar juntas sino las horas señaladas, ni hablarse, conforme a la costumbre que ahora llevamos, que es no estar juntas, como manda la Regla, sino cada una apartada en su celda. Librense en San José de tener casa de labor; porque, aunque es loable costumbre, con más facilidad se guarda el silencio cada una por sí, y acostumbrarse a soledad es gran cosa para la oración; y pues éste ha de ser el cimiento de esta casa, es menester traer estudio en aficionarnos a lo que a esto más nos ayuda.” *OC, Camino 4.9*. “To break away from these friendships involving a particular fondness, great care is necessary at the outset of the friendship. This breaking away should be done delicately and lovingly rather than harshly. In providing a remedy it is important that the friends avoid being together and speaking to each other save at

The question of poverty in relation to work is handled next:

Hase de vivir de limosna siempre, sin ninguna renta. Y mientras se pudiere sufrir, no haya demanda; mucha sea la necesidad que les haga traer demanda; sino ayúdense con la labor de sus manos, como hacía san Pablo, que el Señor las proveerá de lo necesario. Como no quieran más y se contenten sin regalo, no les faltará para poder sustentarla vida. Si con todas sus fuerzas procuraren contentar al Señor, Su Majestad tendrá cuidado que no les falte su ganancia.

No sea en labor curiosa, sino hilar o coser, o en cosas que no sean tan primas, que ocupen el pensamiento para no le tener en Nuestro Señor. No cosas de oro ni plata. Ni se porfie en lo que han de dar por ello, sino que buenamente tomen lo que les dieren; y si ven que no les conviene, no hagan aquella labor.⁵⁷⁸

The one thing Teresa did not want was for the nuns to become merchants:

Lo que sí prohíbe con toda claridad y extensión es el *trabajo mercantil* en sus monasterios, el trabajo directamente orientado a producir para vender, el trabajo de los talleres artesanales de la manufactura rural o de las casas de misericordia y de pobres de la época, porque ella no pretende ser “reformadora de mujeres pobres” ni resolver el problema social de la pobreza . . . Lo cierto es que cuando ella comienza a fundar

the designated hours. This would be in conformity with the custom we now follow, which is that we are not to be together but each one alone in her own cell, as the rule commands. At St. Joseph’s the nuns should be excused from having a common workroom, for although having one is a laudable custom, silence is better observed when each nun is by herself; and to get used to solitude is a great help for prayer. Since prayer must be the foundation of this house, it is necessary that we strive to dedicate ourselves to what most helps us in prayer.” *CWST, Way* 4.9.

⁵⁷⁸ *OC, Const* III.1-2. “Let them live always on alms and without any income, but insofar as possible let there be no begging. Great must be the need that makes them resort to begging. Rather, they should help themselves with the work of their hands, as St. Paul did; the Lord will provide what they need. Provided they want no more than this and are content to live simply, they will have what is necessary to sustain life. If they strive with all their might to please the Lord, His Majesty will keep them from want. Their earnings must not come from work requiring careful attention to fine details but from spinning and sewing or other unrefined labor that does not so occupy the mind as to keep it from the Lord. Nor should they do work with gold or silver. Neither should there be any haggling over what is offered for their work. They should graciously accept what is given. If they see that the amount offered is insufficient, they should not take on the work.” *CWST, Const* 9.

monasterios, más de 50% de la población de las ciudades europeas y españolas es pobre.⁵⁷⁹

Buying and selling in the interest of financial or other gain can lead to entanglement and favors.

Here Teresa shows extra kindness to a problematic priest because he helped her with the

purchase of a house. She admits that she could be bribed with something as small as a sardine:

Por amor de nuestro Señor la pido, hija, que sufra y calle, y no traten de que echen de ahí ese padre por más trabajos y pesadumbres que con él tengan . . . no puedo sufrir que nos mostremos desagradecidas con quien nos ha hecho bien. Porque me acuerdo que, cuando nos querían engañar con una casa que nos vendían, él nos desengañó . . . bien veo que no es perfección en mí esto que tengo de ser agradecida; debe ser natural, que con una sardina que me den me sobornarán.⁵⁸⁰

Teresa would come to have some flexibility on the question of founding houses with endowments, especially in locations where they could not easily be supported with alms. In Malagón in 1568 a monastery was established with an endowment, and “in 1576, Gracián ordained that in towns where the nuns could not be sustained through alms an income would be permissible.”⁵⁸¹

Const next treats about ownership of goods in common, emphasizing detachment (*CWST*, *Const* 10). Fasting is discussed, along with the Carmelite habit and sleeping materials, which are to be coarse and unadorned, in the interest of remaining focused on the spiritual life (*CWST*,

⁵⁷⁹ José Antonio Álvarez Vázquez, *Trabajos, dineros y negocios: Teresa de Jesús y la economía del siglo XVI (1562-1582)* (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2000), 284.

⁵⁸⁰ *OC*, *Cartas* 264. “For love of our Lord I beg you, daughter, to suffer and be silent and not try to send that *padre* away from there, no matter how many trials and troubles he causes . . . I cannot bear our seeming to be ungrateful to someone who has helped us. For I remember that when others wanted to deceive us about a house they were selling, he alerted us to their deceit . . . I see clearly that this need in me to show gratitude is not a sign of perfection. It must be a natural trait, for I could be bribed with a sardine.” *CWST*, *Letters* 264.

⁵⁸¹ *CWST*, *Const* 9, 3:446n10.

Const 11-13): “Esto todo es de Religión, que ha de ser así; y nómbrese, porque con el relajamiento olvidase lo que es de Religión y de obligación algunas veces. En vestido y en cama jamás haya cosa de color, aunque sea cosa tan poca como una faja.”⁵⁸²

Questions of enclosure and visitors are handled next. Members of the community are to “pay no attention to the affairs of the world, nor should they speak about them,” unless they can offer some remedy, help others find the truth, or console them (*CWST, Const* 13). They should avoid speaking with relatives and keep visits short (*CWST, Const* 15-20).

New aspirants should be those who “tengan salud y entendimiento y que tengan habilidad para el rezar el oficio divino y ayudar en el coro.”⁵⁸³ Nuns who might look to newcomers for the funds they might bring in should remember their profession of poverty and that “que no es esto lo que las ha de sustentar, sino la fe y perfección y fiar de solo Dios.”⁵⁸⁴ The new applicants should spend at least a year to see whether they can “bear up” with the demands of this life, and “sean tratadas con toda caridad y hermandad, y provéanlas del comer y vestir como a todas.”⁵⁸⁵

These provisions demonstrate the care Teresa takes not to repeat some of the problems she saw at the Incarnation. Those included admitting too many relatives and servants along with

⁵⁸² *OC, Const* IV.4-5. “These are all matters of proper religious observance. They are mentioned here because with relaxation there comes sometimes a forgetfulness of what pertains to religious life and its obligations. Colored clothing or bedding must never be used, not even something as small as a ribbon.” *CWST, Const* 13.

⁵⁸³ *OC, Const* VI.1. “healthy, intelligent, and able to recite the Divine Office and assist in choir.” *CWST, Const* 21.

⁵⁸⁴ *OC, Const* VI.3. *CWST, Const* 21. “It is not money that will sustain them but faith, perfection, and trust in God alone.”

⁵⁸⁵ *OC, Const* VI.3. “They should be treated with complete sisterly charity, and food and clothing should be provided for them just as they are for all.” *CWST, Const* 21.

the professed nuns, causing a drain on the resources there, and the unequal treatment of different classes of nuns within its walls. Here a greater equality would be observed, and “cuando se tomare alguna, siempre sea con parecer de la mayor parte del convento; y cuando hagan profesión, lo mismo.”⁵⁸⁶ Regarding household work, “la tabla del barrer se comience desde la madre priora, para que en todo dé buen ejemplo.”⁵⁸⁷ Older nuns and the sick should be cared for graciously, but not pandered to.

In keeping with Teresa’s approach to work in accordance with the primary focus of the community on prayer, recollection and solitude, certain types of work were to be preferred over others, and the work of the nuns was not the primary means of support:

The kind of work recommended by Madre Teresa was the peaceful, uncomplicated labor of spinning, without the pressure of deadlines. But women’s work, especially, was poorly paid, and a perusal of account books shows that the income derived from the nuns’ work amounted to little when compared to the donations. The latter became the real means of support for the communities. In any case, though the usual donations and the income from labor took care of the nuns’ daily needs, additional income was needed to cover the cost of other eventualities such as improvements on a house, erecting new ones, or paying off debts. In these latter instances, generous benefactors usually came forward.⁵⁸⁸

The nuns should engage in some work, in accordance with the *Rule*, but it should not be “tarea,” or tasks associated with a time limit:

Tarea no se dé jamás a las hermanas. Cada una procure trabajar para que coman las demás. Téngase mucha cuenta con lo que manda la Regla “que quien quisiere comer, que ha de trabajar” y con lo que hacía san Pablo. Y si alguna vez por su voluntad quisiere

⁵⁸⁶ *OC, Const VI.4*. “When someone is accepted, it should always be done in accordance with the majority opinion of the community, and the same holds for profession.” *CWST, Const 21*.

⁵⁸⁷ *OC, Const VII.2*. “The Mother Prioress should be the first on the list for sweeping so that she might give good example to all.” *CWST, Const 22*.

⁵⁸⁸ Kavanaugh, “*The Foundations* - Introduction,” 3:40.

tomar labor tasada para acabarla cada día, que lo pueda hacer, más no se les dé penitencia aunque no la acaben.⁵⁸⁹

The term *tarea* was defined in 16th- or 17th-century Castilian as “la labor y destajo de un día,” and it was originally an Arabic noun.⁵⁹⁰ *Destajer* was “dividiendo la obra por partes” for the purposes of taxation or billing. Teresa wanted the nuns to work in order to follow the *Rule* and its biblical instruction from St. Paul (2 Thess 3:10), but to divide the work up into daily segments for the purposes of accounting was against the principle of remaining vigilant and available for Christ, ready to respond to him attentively in prayer at any moment. We have seen that Teresa herself experienced sometimes was swept up into periods of rapture in the midst of daily occupations such as frying eggs.⁵⁹¹

There must also be financial transparency, and gifts should be received in a spirit of gratefulness: “Cada día después de cenar o colación, cuando se junten las hermanas, diga la turnera lo que hubieren dado de limosna aquel día, nombrando a las personas que lo han enviado, para que tengan todas cuidado de suplicar a Dios se lo pague.”⁵⁹²

⁵⁸⁹ *OC, Const IX.1*. “Work with a time limit should never be given to the Sisters. Each one should strive to work so that the others might have food to eat. They should take into careful account what the rule ordains (that whoever wants to eat must work) and what St. Paul did. If someone should volunteer to take on a fixed daily amount of work, she may do so but ought not be given a penance if she fails to finish it.” *CWST, Const 24*.

⁵⁹⁰ Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana o Española (según la impresión de 1611, con las adiciones de Benito Remigio Noydens publicadas en la de 1674)*, edited by Martín de Riquer (Barcelona: S.A. Horta, I.E., 1943), 954.

⁵⁹¹ Walsh, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 246

⁵⁹² *OC, Const IX.2*. “Each day after supper, or collation, when the Sisters are gathered together, the turnkeeper should announce what was given that day in alms, naming the donors so that all may take care to pray that God will repay them.” *CWST, Const 25*.

Mortifications (allowed with permission) and games (not allowed) are discussed next, as are meals (no eating outside of specified times) and conversation (silence may be dispensed with at the Mother Prioress' discretion, "que todas juntas puedan hablar en lo que más gusto les diere, como no sean cosas fuera del trato que ha de tener la buena religiosa; y tengan todas allí sus ruecas").⁵⁹³ Sisters may talk together later in the evening, and they should bring their work with them: "Después de completas y oración, como arriba está dicho, en invierno y en verano pueda dispensar la madre que hablen juntas las hermanas, teniendo sus labores, como queda dicho; y el tiempo sea como le pareciere a la madre priora."⁵⁹⁴ Teresa wanted a spirit of joy and friendship in her monasteries, and she encouraged friendly conversation, even at night after Compline (when permitted by the prioress), in order to promote a congenial, family atmosphere in the houses of her reform. This is one area in which Teresa was more flexible than the *Rule*, which specifies the observance of silence "from after compline until prime of the following day."⁵⁹⁵

The duties of a variety of offices are discussed next, including monitors, who observe faults (*CWST*, *Const* 30), the mother prioress, the mother subprioress, key bearers, the sacristan, the treasurer and elder portress (same person), the novice mistress and the nuns themselves (*CWST*, *Const* 34-42). Teresa goes into some detail over each role, specifying responsibilities

⁵⁹³ *OC*, *Const* IX.6. ". . . so that all may converse together on whatever topic pleases them most as long as it is not one that is inappropriate for a good religious. And they should all have their distaffs with them there." *CWST*, *Const* 26.

⁵⁹⁴ *OC*, *Const* IX.8. "After Compline and prayer, as was mentioned above, in both winter and summer, the Mother may allow the Sisters to talk together, each one having her work, as was mentioned. The amount of time should be determined by the Mother Prioress." *CWST*, *Const* 28.

⁵⁹⁵ Waaijman, *The Mystical Space of Carmel: A Commentary on the Carmelite Rule*, 36.

and the importance of each one's work. Keys are important to Teresa, and there must be three people to open the chest in which the *Constituciones* are kept (*CWST, Const 57*). Money, too, is to be placed in a chest or given to a specific key-bearer, and the rules of sharing details about financial matters are precise:

La limosna que diere el Señor en dinero se ponga siempre en el arca de las tres llaves luego; salvo si no fuere de nueve o diez ducados abajo, que se darán a la clavaría que a la priora le pareciere, y ella dé a la procuradora lo quedijere la priora que gaste. Y cada noche, antes que tañan a silencio, dé cuenta a la priora o a la dicha clavaría por menudo. Y hecha la cuenta, póngase por junto en el libro que haya en el convento, para dar cuenta al visitador cada año. Deo gracias.⁵⁹⁶

This detailed emphasis on roles and responsibilities spells out who is to do what with such clarity and precision, and financial checks and balances, that present-day business managers and accountants should marvel. Teresa's early years at home and her middle years at the Incarnation gave her a great sensitivity to the temptation to greed, particularly when times are tough, and for a house founded in poverty there could be great temptations indeed. She established foundations that would have a steady stream of newcomers mixing in with experienced personnel, not unlike present-day corporations, and habituation to the practices of the monastery (formation) had to be done while processes and responsibilities continued uninterrupted. The careful documentation of internal business processes today is often associated with organizations of excellence and quality, and Teresa was aware that written documentation,

⁵⁹⁶ *OC, Const XVIII.2*. "Alms in the form of money that the Lord might give should always be placed at once in the chest of three keys save when it amounts to less than nine or ten ducats. In this latter case it should be given to the key-bearer designated by the prioress, and she in turn will give the procuratrix what the prioress has told the latter to spend. Each night before the bell is rung for silence, the procuratrix should give a detailed account to either the prioress or the key-bearer. And when the accounting is made, they should together record it in the monastery book so as to render a yearly account to the visitor." *CWST, Const 58*.

to which all would adhere, could provide a guiding force and limit transgressions as well as provide remedies for problems.

By writing her *Constituciones* so closely aligned with the primitive *Rule*, reformed Carmelites had two documents they could consult which would be in harmony with each other and helpful for governing the monasteries. Teresa's writing skills were matched by her leadership skills in determining what was most important to write down, while leaving room for what could be interpreted by the individuals or communities who would express their own individuality within the guidelines of the reform. Kavanaugh points out that "what stands out in these guidelines for the Teresian life is balance. We find an interweaving of eremitism and cenobitism, of work and contemplation, of liturgical and extra-liturgical prayer. Even the apostolic life is integrated into the contemplative life . . . The practice of asceticism and enclosure are tempered by a family spirit and by gardens and pleasant views."⁵⁹⁷

Chapter Summary

The work that blossomed in Teresa's later years emerged from seeds in her early years which gestated during her middle years. Her familiarity with legal, business and administrative matters in her family's business and household estate provided her with a backdrop on which to view her experiences at the Incarnation when it was plunged into poverty. This enabled her to see what might be changed in terms of governance and financial management in order to

⁵⁹⁷ Kavanaugh, "*The Constitutions* - Introduction," 3:314.

improve conditions for future religious houses: fewer members in each household (maximum 13, although in practice she was flexible on this); equality of work, living conditions and distribution of goods; foundations made in poverty and holding everything in common; and adherence to the strict form of the *Rule* and return to the original charism of eremitical life. Some practices in her foundations may be traced to household family customs in her early years, including reading and education as foundational (reminiscent both of her earliest years at home with her parents and her time at Our Lady of Grace during her youth) and wise management of the domestic household economy with an awareness of contextual cultural constraints and fortitude in handling obstacles such as prejudice, heredity and social status.

Teresa's strong prayer life kept her united to God throughout the struggles to establish reformed monasteries and as she grew closer to God inwardly, it seemed to increase her capacity to serve Him outwardly. Teresa's later years show her as a vibrant administrator and leader, visionary in her management style and deeply rooted in her commitment to restore the Carmelite order to its original contemplative, eremitical tradition, and returning work to its appropriate role in the life of the community.

CONCLUSION

This conclusion first highlights themes and insights from our study of the theme of work in the life and writings of Teresa of Avila, and then suggests ideas for further research.

Development of Teresa's Approach to Work

The development of Teresa's approach to work may be seen throughout the three major phases of her life. Her early years consisted primarily of work at home with her parents, in the context of socio-economic change and ecclesial reform in 16th-century Spain. Teresa learned household tasks and administrative tasks associated with managing a large estate, as well as lessons of social importance, such as treating household workers with respect and initiating legal action when necessary to preserve the family's social standing (i.e., *pleitos de hidalguía*). Her introduction to religious life and her formal education as a young girl at Our Lady of Grace Monastery were helpful not only for her spiritual and intellectual formation, but also to introduce her to work and life in the context of a religious community.

Teresa developed her ideas about how work should be conducted in religious life during her middle years, including everyday tasks as well as the management of people, property and money. She did this through attentive observation, thoughtful reflection, prayer, reading and consultation with friends, learned men and advisors. Also, Teresa developed patience and perseverance during this period by enduring long periods of severe illness.

By the time Teresa reached her later years, the experiences and formation of her early and middle years emerged in bold ideas and practical initiatives which enabled her to undertake the work of reform of the Carmelite Order and the establishment of new foundations for both nuns and friars. Teresa's extensive work as a writer emerged most significantly during her later years, and her books, letters and other writings give us clues to her thinking and approach not only to external, active work but also to her continual internal conversation with God, which required discipline and attentiveness in prayer.

The Importance of Context

This study has demonstrated the importance of socio-economic, political, ecclesial, philosophical and intellectual context to the development and practice of a meaningful life of work rooted in strong faith. Teresa took into account her surroundings as she developed into a strong and sensitive leader, weighing details as sensitive as how to address a letter and what tone it should convey, to larger issues such as where to establish houses such that they are well-situated to provide financial support and healthy environments for religious communities. The philosophical and intellectual environment preceding Teresa included efforts by Cardinal Cisneros and others to include *devotio moderna* and ancient languages into theological and spiritual studies, and universities at Salamanca and Alcalá provided a rich intellectual climate for spiritual seekers in Spain in the 16th century. The printing press and the availability of theological and spiritual writings in Spanish assisted Teresa in her spiritual and intellectual

development, as did the emphasis on education by religious orders such as the Jesuits and Dominicans, and their presence and availability to consult with her.

Teresa effectively balanced the complex network of jurisdictional, doctrinal and socio-economic forces that emerged in this time of growth and change in Spain as she navigated the requirements of her reform activities. Teresa's early years and later education provided her with the skills in communication, writing, reading, negotiation, management and administration which allowed her to establish her reform and accomplish her writing with finesse, faith, sensitivity, intelligence, strength, determination and perseverance.

Education

Teresa's education included both formal education, at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, and informal education, reading on her own and discussing issues and insights with learned and gifted others. An important early influence on her was her mother, who loved reading and likely taught Teresa to read, and her father and uncle, who encouraged her to read spiritual and theological books. Teresa continued to develop intellectually and spiritually through ongoing reflection and study, and through consulting with Jesuit, Dominican and other advisors, many of whom were very well-educated in the schools and universities of her time. The combination of prayer, thoughtful study, and keen observation of the world around her led to the development of her own vision and sense of mission for her reform work. An understanding of books and writing provided her with tools to produce a large volume of letters and deeply insightful spiritual books,

which expressed her own sentiments and thoughts using helpful metaphors and exhibiting sensitivity toward her readers, whether members of royalty, members of her family or her fellow Carmelites. Discussions with learned advisors also provided her with social skills and insights into working with people in key leadership positions such that she could use these skills and information successfully to implement her reform, including managing other leaders and writing about how to handle complex personnel issues.

Work, Culture and Jewish Heritage

One of the most interesting accomplishments of Teresa's life which connects her family background and the cultural context of the time to her innovations with respect to work is her use of both manual labor and business-related skills in the monasteries of her reform. She grew up in a situation in which traditional methods of work for Jewish families - as artisans or merchants - were being replaced by agricultural and rental income from land holdings, careful control over inheritance and taxes (associated with changes in social status), and forming connections with Old Christian families, often through marriage. However, Teresa brought manual work back into the lifestyle of her reform by establishing monasteries which would provide income from manual labor as well as alms, which would eliminate titles of honor and status, and which would promote equality among members of the community. Teresa's business skills were part of her reform not only in negotiating legal agreements for the purchase of houses for new communities, but also in managing people and determining the best job fit for people under her care, especially

those in leadership positions (i.e., prioresses and priors) and group membership (i.e., recruiting the best small groups to initiate new foundations). She also managed building construction projects to oversee the completion of renovations necessary for her new locations, and in one case (Medina del Campo) supervised the construction of a monastery she had designed herself.

Teresa used many of the very same aspects of her family's traditional approach to work - artisanry and business - which were negatively viewed in the culture of her day, to provide income, equality and well-being for the members of her reformed Carmelite communities. Teresa successfully integrated elements of her ancestral heritage into her life and reform while fully supporting the goals of Trent and her understanding of Christian doctrine and spirituality which she had developed through many years of prayer, reading and consultation with advisors.

Recollection and Poverty in Monasteries

One interesting connection Teresa made as she embarked on her reform was that poverty did not seem to be lacking in houses where recollection was practiced. Teresa had been worried that in excessive poverty, it would be difficult to practice prayerful recollection, but she writes that she has observed the opposite - where recollection is faithfully practiced, poverty is not a problem. This is because God takes care of those who serve Him:

grandes deseos de pobreza ya me los avia dado su majestad ansi *que para* my no dudava ser lo mejor . . . mas temia *que* si a las demas no dava el señor estos deseos bivirian descontentas y tambien no fuese cavsa de alguna destrayçion porque via algunos monesterios pobres no muy rrecojidos y no mirava *que* el no serlo era cavsa de ser pobres

y no la pobreza de la destrayción porque esta no açe mas rricas ni falta dios jamas a quien le sirve en fin tenia flaca la fe.⁵⁹⁸

Poverty was a major concern for Teresa because she had seen the problems associated with extreme poverty at the Incarnation when it housed close to 200 inhabitants. She established her new foundations in poverty, despite widespread opposition, and her writing confirms her faith that God will take care of those who serve Him. Later she was flexible about accepting endowments for some houses, but she clearly makes a distinction in *Vida* between poverty and recollection, emphasizing that recollection should be practiced in any situation, and that those who faithfully practice prayer will be provided for by God.

This view is confirmed in *Const* when Teresa advises the nuns not to go out begging, but to work with their hands and trust that God will provide whatever is lacking:

1. Hase de vivir de limosna siempre, sin ninguna renta. Y mientras se pudiere sufrir, no haya demanda; mucha sea la necesidad que les haga traer demanda; sino ayúdense con la labor de sus manos, como hacía san Pablo, que el Señor las proveerá de lo necesario. Como no quieran más y se contenten sin regalo, no les faltará para poder sustentarla vida. Si con todas sus fuerzas procuraren contentar al Señor, Su Majestad tendrá cuidado que no les falte su ganancia.

2. No sea en labor curiosa, sino hilar o coser, o en cosas que no sean tan primas, que ocupen el pensamiento para no le tener en Nuestro Señor. No cosas de oro ni plata. Ni se

⁵⁹⁸ *VidaTR*, 35.2. “Grandes deseos de pobreza ya me los había dado Su Majestad. Así que para mí no dudaba ser lo mejor . . . Mas temía que, si a las demás no daba el Señor estos deseos, vivirían descontentas, y también no fuese causa de alguna distracción, porque veía algunos monasterios pobres no muy recogidos, y no miraba que el no serlo era causa de ser pobres, y no la pobreza de la distracción; porque ésta no hace más ricas, ni falta Dios jamás a quien le sirve. En fin tenía flaca la fe.” *OC, Vida* 35.2. “His Majesty had already given me great desires for poverty. Thus I didn’t doubt that poverty was the best thing for me . . . But I feared that if the Lord didn’t give the others these desires, their lives would be unhappy. I also feared that poverty would be the cause of some distraction since I observed certain poor monasteries in which there wasn’t much recollection. I failed to reflect that this lack of recollection was the cause of their being poor and that it was not the practice of poverty that caused their distraction. For distraction won’t make monasteries richer; nor does God ever fail anyone who serves Him. In sum, I had weak faith.” *CWST, Life* 35.2.

porfíe en lo que han de dar por ello, sino que buenamente tomen lo que les dieren; y si ven que no les conviene, no hagan aquella labor.⁵⁹⁹

The instructions here about not haggling over prices, accepting what is given graciously and doing simple work that allows the mind to remain occupied with the Lord are consistent with her view of recollection and her faith that the Lord will provide what they need. Nothing should separate the nuns or friars from their lives of prayer and recollection.

Business and Administration

Teresa was a pioneer in the area of management, in that she promoted greater equality in work among members of her communities, ignoring heredity and social status when tasks were assigned. She was sensitive to the qualities and competencies necessary for leadership, as when she advised visitators about how to choose prioresses who would be suitable for leadership positions (and those who would not). She also gave instructions about when transfers between houses should be permitted, and she established new foundations with careful attention to the personalities and qualifications of their founding members.

⁵⁹⁹ *OC, Const* III.1-2. “Let them live always on alms and without any income, but insofar as possible let there be no begging. Great must be the need that makes them resort to begging. Rather, they should help themselves with the work of their hands, as St. Paul did; the Lord will provide what they need. Provided they want no more than this and are content to live simply, they will have what is necessary to sustain life. If they strive with all their might to please the Lord, His Majesty will keep them from want. Their earnings must not come from work requiring careful attention to fine details but from spinning and sewing or other unrefined labor that does not so occupy the mind as to keep it from the Lord. Nor should they do work with gold or silver. Neither should there be any haggling over what is offered for their work. They should graciously accept what is given. If they see that the amount offered is insufficient, they should not take on the work.” *CWST, Const* 9.

The institution of her reform left her in charge of a multi-location enterprise, and her administration and oversight capabilities were more than equal to the task. In addition, she rooted her work in her understanding of God's will, in alignment with Church teachings and the vision of reform promoted by the Council of Trent. She successfully negotiated jurisdictional boundaries among civil, ecclesial and Carmelite officials, and she established new monasteries which were true to her vision of reform and yet flexible in their specific needs. Throughout her leadership her monasteries were established with careful thought to financial matters, incorporating a balanced approach among reliance on alms, the work of nuns and friars, and endowments. She related success not only to profitability but also to the development of the members of her communities, encouraging visitators to appreciate the work of nuns and friars, and yet not over-emphasizing work performance but including it in the overall structure of the monastery. A balance was established among work, prayer and reliance on God, such that the whole person was developed, and work was an important part of that development.

For us today, it's helpful to remember that we can manage both religious and secular businesses and organizations in full alignment with Church teachings, while maintaining a rich, meaningful and intense life of prayer. In Teresa we see a leader who inspires us to perform all of our tasks, including not only manual labor but also administrative and management tasks, with sensitivity to God's leadership within, while externally working toward the vision we perceive as his will for us and our organizations. The intensity of a deep, inner life of prayer is harmonious and important in all of our undertakings and in many different types of work.

Future Research

Intensity in Contemplation and Activity

As Teresa's inner life of prayer became more intense in her later years, with increasing visions and locutions and a greater sense of the presence of God, her outer life also became more intense, in both her writing and the implementation of her reform. Often activity may seem like the opposite of contemplation, because the former involves external work and the latter seems more passive. However, for Teresa, her most important outward work - writing and establishing foundations - occurred precisely during the most intense period of her profound, inward contemplative experiences. As the intensity of her interior connectedness with God increased, so did the intensity of her exterior work for and with Him.

This may suggest a change in how we view spirituality in terms of contemplative/active balance. For Teresa, the question seemed not to have been how to acquire balance, but rather how to serve God wholeheartedly, in action or in contemplation. Activity was a necessary and definite outcome of inner prayerful intensity, and so prayer must always result in works: “*pa esto es la oraçiõ yjas mias de esto sirve este matrimonio espiritual de q̄ nazcan siēpre obras (obras [sic].*”⁶⁰⁰

⁶⁰⁰ *CastilloTR*, VII.4.6. “Para esto es la oración, hijas mías; de esto sirve este matrimonio espiritual: de que nazcan siempre obras, obras.” *OC, Castillo* VII.4.6. “This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works.” *CWST, IC* VII.4.6.

In fact, the purpose of prayer is to have the strength to serve, and Martha and Mary must walk together (Luke 10:38-42): “esto quiero yo mis hermanas q̄ procuremos alcançar /y no pa goçar sino pa tener estas fuerças pa servir . . . creeme q̄ marta y maria ā de ādar juntas pa ospedar al señor y tenerle siēpre consigo.”⁶⁰¹

Further research to explore the connection between contemplation and action could be done through the lens of intensity to determine the relationship of the intensity of prayer to the intensity of activity, and to explore whether it is possible to describe an increase in intensity in terms of faith development throughout life, as it seems was the case for Teresa.

Work, Spirituality and Social Concerns

Work has long been a concern of practical charitable groups, which help needy families and individuals find jobs and often provide free or low-cost benefits such as housing and clothing. In this context, work is seen primarily as a money-making activity, instrumental for earning a living. However, people also benefit from work as a way to focus and grow spiritually, as well as to develop themselves and have a fuller sense of life. How might work for the purpose of spiritual development be integrated into social programs?

⁶⁰¹ *CastilloTR*, VII.4.12. “Esto quiero yo, mis hermanas, que procuremos alcanzar, y no para gozar, sino para tener estas fuerzas para servir . . . creedme, que Marta y María han de andar juntas para hospedar al Señor y tenerle siempre consigo.” *OC, Castillo* VII.4.12. “This is what I want us to strive for, my Sisters; and let us desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of our enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve . . . Believe me, Martha and Mary must join together in order to show hospitality to the Lord and have Him always present.” *CWST, IC* VII.4.12.

Work could be envisioned as a vital developmental need such that social programs could benefit their clients by not only “finding them jobs” but also by providing them with meaningful work for their own personal growth and development. Psychological, cultural and spiritual factors, as well as physical and medical concerns, would likely need to be considered, but it would be interesting to see how a less instrumental and more developmental view of work could transform individuals, organizations and communities. Pilot programs could be instituted which might incorporate this vision and experiment with different approaches, such as providing micro-credit opportunities with small, incremental tasks, while clients continue to search for more substantial work and income.

Spiritual practices in the workplace: recollection, focus, creativity and work

Many workers today may have had the joyful experience of working together with others on a task or bringing a project to completion successfully. This often requires dedication and focus, and a type of attentiveness that brings a quality of joy and intensity to the work. Recollection and focus may provide helpful insights during periods of work, and the aspect of contemplative meditation could be studied more fully in connection with its impact on various types of work.

What is the relationship between recollection and work, and should recollection (i.e., meditation or prayer) be practiced before and/or during periods of work? Distraction can cause problems or accidents, yet too much focus can sometimes be exhausting and seem to limit

innovation and creativity. What are the inter-relationships among recollection, focus, creativity and work? Is there an optimal rhythmic balance for certain tasks? How could this be studied, and are these factors personality-dependent?

In this arena a number of factors could be studied: the relationship of focus (concentration) to dreaming, especially in the context of producing creative work; the impact of briefly shifting our focus on a work task to something else, such as a “play” task, to enhance productivity; the impact of work deadlines on the human person and on long-term productivity and balance (Teresa did not want to give work with a time limit to the nuns (*Const* 24)); and the importance of paying attention to transcendental values - truth, goodness, beauty - and spiritual practices in the workplace. These spiritual aspects of work could help to benefit workers today, and perhaps minimize employee “burnout,” as well as nurture the value of work beyond merely making a living, while contributing to a stronger sense of community and purpose in the workplace.

Aging, Spirituality and Productivity

The last two decades of Teresa’s life, from ages 47 to 67, were her most productive years, including her reform activities as well as her major writings. She also experienced and wrote about profound spiritual experiences during this time, and she led a well-integrated, active life, with many friends, colleagues and associates. Her story could be seen as a springboard for further study in the relationship among spirituality, aging and productivity in later years,

especially in our contemporary period when longevity is increasing. Lessons learned from Teresa's life, and others whose lives demonstrate highly productive work integrated with deep spirituality in their later years, could be developed further to shed light on the interrelationship of spirituality, aging and productivity.

APPENDIX

THREE VIEWS OF TERESA'S LIFE

Kavanaugh's Overview of Teresa's Life

Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., provides a thorough and detailed chronology of Teresa's life in the third volume of *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*.⁶⁰² In the introduction to a shorter collection of Teresa's writings on prayer, he breaks down the sixty years of her life into three segments which correspond to stages in her spiritual growth.⁶⁰³ Both writings together provide a helpful view of the various stages of Teresa's life from Kavanaugh's perspective.

For Kavanaugh, the first period of Teresa's life consists of her early years, from her birth in Avila on March 28, 1515, to her entry into religious life at the Carmelite monastery of the Incarnation in Avila on November 2, 1535. The second period consists of "her initial years as a Carmelite nun . . . her painful illness; her return to prayer after her father's death; and the faint beginnings of her mystical life leading to her conversion in 1554."⁶⁰⁴ The final ten years of this second period of Teresa's life correspond, for Kavanaugh, to the fourth dwelling place of Teresa's *Castillo Interior*.

⁶⁰² Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "A Teresian Chronology," in *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 3:83-94.

⁶⁰³ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., "Introduction," in *Teresa of Avila: The Way of Prayer*, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2003), 9-23.

⁶⁰⁴ Kavanaugh, "Introduction," *Way of Prayer*, 16.

The third period of Teresa's life, from her conversion before a statue of the wounded Christ during Lent in 1554 to her death on October 4, 1582, correspond to the fifth (1554-60), sixth (1560-72) and seventh (1572-82) dwelling places. Kavanaugh demonstrates this correspondence by means of an analysis of Teresa's descriptions of mystical experiences and the frequency of various types of prayer (i.e., prayer of quiet, prayer of union) that she reports as she recounts her life of prayer in her major writings, especially *Castillo*. For example, beginning in 1554, "contemplative prayer, the prayer of quiet and often of union, became habitual and would last a long while"⁶⁰⁵ Teresa classifies this as the fifth dwelling place, and she reports having the Lord speak to her during the period from 1554-60, during which she developed a friendship with Him in prayer.

In the periods of 1560-72 and 1572-82, corresponding to the sixth and seventh dwelling places, respectively, Kavanaugh sees "a threefold line of development" in Teresa's contemplative life. "We find the sharing (locutions), the visual contemplation (visions, intellectual and imaginative . . .), and ultimately the divine presence. In the last decade of her life, amid a bluster of activities and obligations, Teresa felt drawn continually into the warm orbit of deep intimate communion with the Holy Trinity."⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰⁵ Kavanaugh, "Introduction," *Way of Prayer*, 18.

⁶⁰⁶ Kavanaugh, "Introduction," *Way of Prayer*, 19.

Álvarez's Overview of Teresa's life

Tomás Álvarez divides Teresa's life into three periods also, but he lengthens the middle period of her life.⁶⁰⁷ The first period consists of her early years as for Kavanaugh (1515-35). The second period begins when Teresa enters religious life at the monastery of the Incarnation in 1535, and ends when she establishes her first reformed foundation, "el Carmelo de San José de Ávila," in 1562. The final period consists of the last twenty years of her life, ending with her death in 1582.

Álvarez's brief summaries of each period provide a helpful road map for our understanding of Teresa's development. His first period extends from 1515 to 1535:

Hers was a large family: the parents, twelve (?) siblings, and various domestic servants. They lived in the city of Ávila, with brief intervals in Gotarrendura. Little by little the family began to disintegrate: with the death of the mother, the marriage of the older sister, the departure of the two oldest brothers to America, to which would follow gradually all the other male siblings. *At the end of this period, Teresa was made practically the mistress of the home.* [Emphasis added; translation mine.]⁶⁰⁸

In 1505 (before Teresa's birth in 1515), Don Alonso de Cepeda, Teresa's father, had married Catalina del Peso, and two children were born of that marriage: María and Juan. In 1507, Catalina died, and in 1509 Don Alonso married Beatriz de Ahumada, Teresa's mother. Teresa's

⁶⁰⁷ Tomás Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús," in *Diccionario de Santa Teresa: Doctrina e Historia*, ed. Tomás Álvarez (Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2002), 604-17.

⁶⁰⁸ "Teresa en familia: 1515-1535. La suya es familia numerosa: los padres, doce (?) hermanos, y varios domésticos. Residen en la ciudad de Avila, con breves intervalos en Gotarrendura. Poco a poco la familia comienza a disintegrarse: con la muerte de la madre, el casamiento de la hermana mayor, la partida de los dos primeros hermanos a América, a los que seguirán paulatinamente todos los otros hermanos varones. Al final de esto período, Teresa hace prácticamente de ama en hogar." Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús," *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 604.

older brother, Hernando, was born in 1510, and Rodrigo was born in 1511. Teresa, Doña Beatriz's third child, was born in 1515. In 1525, when Teresa was 10 years old, her maternal grandmother died. Teresa's mother died in 1528, three years later. Her older sister, María, was married in 1531 and her older brothers, Hernando and Rodrigo, sailed to America in 1534 and 1535, respectively. Most of Teresa's siblings were younger than she was – six more children were born to Doña Beatriz after Teresa – so by 1535 she would have been the oldest sibling among the Ahumadas remaining in the household, virtually responsible for the large home by age 20.

Álvarez's second period extends from 1535 to 1562:

The monastery of the Incarnation is found outside the walls of the city. New building. Numerous community: about 200 people, between religious and relatives. Of all ages . . . Teresa would reside there 27 years (from 20 to 47 years of age), with brief absences for illness or for other reasons. Years of formation, at first. Later, years of illness, digressions of mediocrity, of struggle, of spiritual maturation. Initiation into the mystical life . . . Plans of the new foundation. Later, she would return as prioress of the community: 1571-74. [Translation mine.]⁶⁰⁹

During this period, in a large monastery with not only many nuns but also many of their relatives, Teresa observed and experienced the effects of interruptions and social activities on the life of prayer. She had an opportunity to observe people of many different personalities, and to form opinions about what types of people might thrive in a quieter community, more suited to

⁶⁰⁹ “El monasterio de la Encarnación se halla extramuros de la ciudad. Edificio nuevo. Comunidad numerosa: casi 200 personas, entre religiosas y familiares. De todas las edades . . . Teresa residirá ahí 27 años (desde los 20 a los 47 de edad), con breves ausencias, por enfermedad o por otros motivos. Años de formación, los primeros. Luego, años de enfermedad, paréntesis de mediocridad, de lucha, de maduración espiritual. Iniciación en la vida mística . . . Proyectos de nueva fundación. Más tarde, regresará como priora de la comunidad: 1571-1574.” Álvarez, “Teresa de Jesús,” *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 605.

the eremitic, contemplative lifestyle envisioned by the *Rule* of St. Albert (the Carmelite *Rule*).

Eventually she would form plans and obtain permission to establish her first discalced monastery in 1562, after 27 years as a nun at the Incarnation.

Álvarez's third period begins when St. Joseph's monastery is founded in 1562 and ends at Teresa's death in 1582:

Last 20 years of Teresa, from 47 to 67 years of age. Period of personal and spiritual fullness. Writer and founder. Traveled the roads of Castile, La Mancha, and Andalusia. Associates her work with John of the Cross. Enlarges her network of human relations to diverse strata of social life. Faces situations of conflict. Publishes editions of her *Constituciones* and of the *Camino de Perfección*. Dies at Alba de Tormes at the end of one final journey. [Translation mine.]⁶¹⁰

This third period, the final twenty years, corresponds to Kavanaugh's sixth and seventh dwelling places, the period of Teresa's greatest sense of union with the Trinity.

Kavanaugh's view provides a guide to Teresa's inner spiritual development, while Álvarez offers insight into the life situations Teresa was navigating during the various periods of her life. The two views together offer a vision helpful for our understanding of how Teresa worked, both in her internal life of prayer and in her various life tasks and activities. Both together offer insight into how God guided her inner and outer work, and how growing closer to God inwardly increased her capacity for serving Him outwardly.

⁶¹⁰ “Últimos 20 años de Teresa, de los 47 a los 67 de edad. Período de plenitud humana y espiritual. Escritora y fundadora. Recorre los caminos de Castilla, La Mancha y Andalucía. Asocia a su obra a fray Juan de la Cruz. Amplía su red de relaciones humanas en los diversos estratos de la vida social . . . Afronta situaciones conflictivas. Promueve la edición de sus *Constituciones* y del *Camino de Perfección*. Muere en Alba de Tormes al final de un último viaje.” Álvarez, “Teresa de Jesús,” *Diccionario de Santa Teresa*, 608.

Miranda's Overview of Teresa's Life

In his book on Teresa's life, foundations and writings, Emilio Miranda defines the stages of her life as follows:

- Infancy: Until age 10.
- Adolescence and early youth (from age 10 to age 20).
- Process of maturation (from age 20 to age 45).
- Mother and reformer of Carmel (from age 45 to age 47).
- Mother and founder (from age 47 to age 67). [Translation mine.]⁶¹¹

There are two advantages of Miranda's breakdown. First, he divides the first twenty years of life into two stages of ten years each. This is important because age 10 marks Teresa's first encounter with the death of a close family member (her maternal grandmother). Shortly after that her mother died (when Teresa was 13). In Teresa's second decade of life, she grew up fast, and by age 20 she was in a leadership role in her family.

Second, Miranda breaks out a two-year period to mark the start of Teresa's life as "mother and reformer of Carmel." This is significant because from 1560 to 1562, amid doubts about the future and questions from ecclesial authorities, Teresa persevered in her determination and in her dedication to what she understood to be God's will, ultimately to establish the first discalced Carmelite monastery, St. Joseph's of Avila, in 1562. The significance of this event can hardly be overstated. After this first hurdle was overcome, and the first discalced nuns were

⁶¹¹ Emilio Miranda, *Teresa de Jesus: Vida, fundaciones, escritos*, 2nd ed. (Avila: Asociación Educativa Signum Christi, 1986), 155.

living according to the strict observance of the Carmelite *Rule*, the foundations that followed had in St. Joseph's a precedent and guide to follow, and the confidence to know it could be done.

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