

visions were the work of the devil and that she should not communicate so often (V 25.4). Another priest acting temporarily as her confessor, on hearing her report of a vision she had repeatedly had of Christ, told her it was clearly the devil and commanded her to make the sign of the cross and laugh at the vision (V 29.5). But God did not fail to comfort her, and she received the favor of the transverberation (V 29.13-14). In August 1560 St. Peter of Alcantara counseled her: "Keep on as you are doing, daughter; we all suffer such trials."... For more on Saint Teresa of Avila, read her autobiography [Way of Perfection](#) which she wrote...
* (excerpted from: www.karmel.at)

PRAYER OF SAINT TERESA OF AVILA

Lord, Thou knowest better than I myself
that I am growing older and will someday be old.
Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say
something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs.

Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy.

With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all;
but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details;
give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains; they are increasing,
and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility
and a lessening sureness when my memory
seems to clash with the memories of others.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet,
for a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.
Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places
and talents in unexpected people;
and give, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.
Amen.

prayer by St. Teresa of Avila

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Saint Teresa of Avila

FEAST DAY: OCTOBER 15



QUOTE:

**"Oh, my Lord!
How true it is that whoever works for you is paid in troubles!
And what a precious price to those
who love you if we understand its value."**

Saint Teresa of Avila

Saint Teresa of Avila

*Saint Teresa was born in Avila, Spain, March 28, 1515. She died in Alba, October 4, 1582. Her family origins have been traced to Toledo and Olmedo. Her father, Alonso de Cepeda, was a son of a Toledan merchant, Juan Sanchez de Toledo and Ines de Cepeda, originally from Tordesillas. Juan transferred his business to Avila, where he succeeded in having his children marry into families of the nobility. In 1505 Alonso married Catalina del Peso, who bore him two children and died in 1507. Two years later Alonso married the 15-year-old Beatriz de Ahumada of whom Teresa was born.

In 1528, when Teresa was 15, her mother died, leaving behind 10 children. Teresa was the "most beloved of them all." She was of medium height, large rather than small, and generally well proportioned. In her youth she had the reputation of being quite beautiful, and she retained her fine appearance until her last years. Her personality was extroverted, her manner affectionately buoyant, and she had the ability to adapt herself easily to all kinds of persons and circumstances. She was skillful in the use of the pen, in needlework and in household duties. Her courage and enthusiasm were readily kindled, an early example of which trait occurred when at the age of 7 she left home with her brother Rodrigo with the intention of going to Moorish territory to be beheaded for Christ, but they were frustrated by their uncle, who met the children as they were leaving the city and brought them home.

EARLY LIFE

At about 12 the fervor of her piety waned somewhat. She began to take an interest in the development of her natural attractions and in books of chivalry. Her affections were directed especially to her cousins, the Mejias, children of her aunt Dona Elvira, and she gave some thought to marriage. Her father was disturbed by these fancies and opposed them. While she was in this crisis, her mother died. Afflicted and lonely, Teresa appealed to the Blessed Virgin to be her mother. Seeing his daughter's need of prudent guidance, her father entrusted her to the Augustinian nuns at Santa Maria de Gracia in 1531.

VOCATION

The influence of Dona Maria de Brinceno, who was in charge of the lay students at the convent school, helped Teresa to recover her piety. She began to wonder whether she had a vocation to be a nun. Toward the end of the year 1532 she returned home to regain her health and stayed with her sister, who lived in Castellanos. Reading the letters of St. Jerome led her to

the decision to enter a convent, but her father refused to give his consent. Her brother and confidant, Rodrigo, had just set sail for the war on the Rio de la Plata. She decided to run away from home and persuaded another brother to flee with her in order that both might receive the religious habit. On Nov. 2, 1535, she entered the Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation at Avila, where she had a friend, Juana Suarez; and her father resigned himself to this development. The following year she received the habit and began wholeheartedly to give herself to prayer and penance. Shortly after her profession she became seriously ill and failed to respond to medical treatment. As a last resort her father took her to Becedas, a small village, to seek the help of a woman healer famous throughout Catile, but Teresa's health did not improve. Leaving Becedas in the fall of 1538, she stayed in Hortigosa at the home of her uncle Pedro de Cepeda, who gave her the Tercer Abecedario of Francis of Osuna to read.

"I did not know," she said, "how to proceed in prayer or how to become recollected, and so I took much pleasure in it and decided to follow that path with all my strength" (Libro de la Vida, the autobiography of St. Teresa -- hereafter abbrev. V--4.6).

Instead of regaining her health, Teresa grew even more ill, and her father brought her back to Avila in July 1539. On August 15 she fell into a coma so profound that she was thought to be dead. After 4 days she revived, but she remained paralyzed in her legs for 3 years. After her cure, which she attributed to St. Joseph (V. 6.6-8), she entered a period of mediocrity in her spiritual life, but she did not at any time give up praying. Her trouble came of not understanding that the use of the imagination could be dispensed with and that her soul could give itself directly to contemplation. During this stage, which lasted 18 years, she had transitory mystical experiences. She was held back by a strong desire to be appreciated by others, but this finally left her in an experience of conversion in the presence of an image of "*the sorely wounded Christ*" (V 23. 14). Diego de Cetina, SJ., brought her comfort by encouraging her to continue in mental prayer and to think upon the humanity of Christ. Francis Borgia in 1555 heard her confession and told her that the spirit of God was working in her, that she should concentrate upon Christ's Passion and not resist the ecstatic experience that came to her in prayer. Nevertheless she had to endure the distrust even of her friends as the divine favors increased. When Pradanos left Avila in 1558 his place as Teresa's director was taken by Baltasar Alvarez, SJ., who, either from caution or with the intention of probing her spirit, caused her great distress by telling her that others were convinced that her raptures and