

Saint Teresa of Avila  
(Doctor)  
15 October



### About Saint Teresa of Ávila

Saint Teresa was born in Ávila, Spain in 1515, and entered the Carmelite convent there when she was 20. She did not enter the convent because she felt a calling to the religious life, but instead because it seemed the most sensible thing for her to do. When Teresa joined the Carmelites, their convents were fairly comfortable places – for the nuns was well looked after, had as little or much contact with the outside world as they wanted and they could keep their possessions. Teresa was disturbed by this laxness of faithfulness to the Carmelite rule and so she set about reforming the Carmelites, establishing what became known as the Discalced Carmelites. This new branch of Carmelites modelled themselves on the poor and crucified Christ. They adopted a life of poverty and abstinence. Together with Saint John of the Cross, she helped bring this new way of life to the male Carmelite communities. Although their reforms were met with great resistance, they moved forward with faith and persistence.

### What can we learn from Saint Teresa's life?

**Saint Teresa did not do her work for her own glory, but for God's. Her convictions about the need to reform the Carmelite Order helped her to face hardships and opposition. We, too, need to have a sense of conviction and wear our faith on our sleeve, rather than hide it. Yes, like Saint Teresa of Avila if we are going to follow Christ, we need to do it wholeheartedly, not just when it is convenient.**

Saint Teresa also had a sense of humour. One day, on one of her many trips across Spain, her horse threw her as she was crossing a river. She was soaked and looked up to heaven and said: **"If this is how you treat your friends, no wonder you have so few of them!"**

Just as Saint Teresa brought everything to the Lord, so should we. Even in our moments of despair and frustration with the Lord, let us offer up to God what he has given to us that day even when we do not understand why.

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Prayer      Let Nothing Disturb You

Let nothing disturb you,  
let nothing frighten you,  
all things will pass away.  
God never changes;  
patience obtains all things,  
whoever has God lacks nothing.  
God alone suffices. Amen.

Collect

O God, who through your Spirit  
raised up Saint Teresa of Jesus  
to show the Church the way to seek perfection,  
grant that we may always be nourished  
by the food of her heavenly teaching  
and fired with longing for true holiness.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

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## Gospel

I am the vine, you are the branches

Jesus said to his disciples:

**'I am the true vine,**

and my Father is the vinedresser.

Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away,

and every branch that does bear fruit

he prunes to make it bear even more.

You are pruned already,

by means of the word that I have spoken to you.

Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.

As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself,

but must remain part of the vine,

neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever remains in me, with me in him,

bears fruit in plenty;

for cut off from me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in me

is like a branch that has been thrown away – he withers;

these branches are collected and thrown on the fire,

and they are burnt.

If you remain in me

and my words remain in you,

you may ask what you will

and you shall get it.

It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit,

**and then you will be my disciples.'**

## Antiphon

I will sing for ever of your mercies, O Lord through all ages my mouth will proclaim your fidelity.

John 15:1-8

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## Hymn for the Feast of Saint Teresa of Avila

Teresa, you show us  
how to follow the Lord,  
and give our life wholly to Him  
pondering on His Word.  
Let nothing disturb you,  
Let nothing frighten you,  
all things will pass away from earth.  
Our God will never change.

Teresa, you show us  
how to be rich yet poor,  
leaving all earthly things behind  
bringing Christ to the fore.  
Let nothing disturb you,  
Let nothing frighten you,  
all things will pass away from earth.  
Our God will never change.

Teresa, may we pray  
that to the Christ we cling,  
**giving up all things we don't need;**  
to Him a pure life bring.  
Let nothing disturb us,  
let nothing frighten us,  
all things will pass away from earth.  
Our God will never change.

Tune: Crown Him with Many Crowns  
SMD 66.86D

## Other Music Suggestion

[Christ Has No Body Now But Yours](#)

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