

Saint John of the Cross

14 December



About Saint John of the Cross

Saint John of the Cross was born in Fontiveros in Spain in the year 1542. He joined the Carmelite Friars in 1563. In 1568, Saint Teresa of Avila persuaded him to begin the great task of reforming the Carmelite Order. This was a very challenging task for Saint John of the Cross and at the same time a dangerous one for which he suffered imprisonment and severe punishment by those in the Church hierarchy of his day.

His writings include two major mystical poems. He is considered one of the great poets of the Spanish language. His spiritual writings combine theology and poetry to describe the spiritual journey through darkness to union with God.

He was canonized in 1726 and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1926.

What can we learn from Saint John of the Cross' life?

Saint John of the Cross took risks and had great courage in doing so. He knew that his work of reform needed to be done, and he did not let the harsh treatment of the Church authorities discourage him from doing what was necessary.

The monks he lived with initially treated him like the worst of sinners. However, by the time he died they were converted and saw his sanctity. His funeral was one of great enthusiasm for him and his work. How many times have we seen people do great things here on earth only to be treated with contempt? Then when they die, people suddenly realized what a treasure they had in **their midst. Of course, it's too late then.** So, there are two lessons we can learn from Saint John of the Cross' life. **Firstly, let us be courageous in our decision making and commit important decisions to prayer.** In taking risks we may fail, but we did what we thought is right. **Secondly, let us value the people in our midst, especially those who are the source of great wisdom for us and who have the courage to point the way forward for us, especially when we are wrong.**

Saint John of the Cross

14 December



Collect

O God, who gave the Priest Saint John an outstanding dedication to perfect self-denial and love of the Cross, grant that, by imitating him closely at all times, we may come to contemplate eternally your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Luke 14:25-33

Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple

Great crowds accompanied Jesus on his way and he turned and spoke to them.

'If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple.

Anyone who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

'And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it? Otherwise, if he laid the foundation and then found himself unable to finish the work, the onlookers would all start making fun of him and saying, "Here is a man who started to build and was unable to finish."

Or again, what king marching to war against another king would not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other who advanced against him with twenty thousand? If not, then while the other king was still a long way off, he would send envoys to sue for peace.

So in the same way,

none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions.'

Saint John of the Cross
14 December



Antiphon

Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself,
take up his cross, and follow me, says the Lord.

Hymn for Feast of Saint Francis Xavier

“Saint John of the Cross, you have shown
how to be faithful every day
to God and what He asks of us,
so from Him we will never stray.

With great courage may we always
be faithful to the Lord each day;
in taking risks and doing right,
our lives will follow in God’s Way.

You undertook the daunting task
with Saint Teresa to reform
the Order of the Carmelites
and your brothers’ lives to transform.

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono
LM – (Anacrusis)

Saint John of the Cross, you have shown
to follow Christ there is a cost.
If we do what is right in life,
our peace and comfort may be lost.

Other Music Suggestion

[Let Nothing Trouble You](#) (Bernadette Farrell)

SCRIPTURE READINGS: *Jerusalem Bible Translation of Scripture used in Australian Lectionary for Mass, Vols I, II and III* (London: Collins Liturgical, 1981). All rights reserved.

COLLECT and ANTIPHON: *Roman Missal 2010* © International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.

REFERENCES: Sourcebook 2019: © Liturgy Training Publications 2019
Universalis App: 14 December 2020