

CARMEL CLARION

JULY – DECEMBER 2010 † VOLUME XXVI, NO. 3

Edith Stein
St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross



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Discalced Carmelite Secular Order, Washington, D.C.

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Editorial

2010 was an unusually busy year for the OCDS in the Washington Province. For the first time, Rome has been actively involved in many ways: (1) Approval of the Washington Province OCDS Statutes resulted in a small pocket-sized booklet containing all our legislation. Each of you is encouraged to renew your familiarity with the Rule of St. Albert, the OCDS *Constitutions* and *Statutes*. This is increasingly important as we enter our triennial election season. You may be asked to serve in the leadership roles so necessary in community. (2) Communities participated in providing information for the **2010 Conspectus Ordinus**. 152 communities are listed for each of our Province's four Regions, as well as dates of Canonical Establishment or first meeting dates if an OCDS Recognized Communities or Groups in Discernment, and formation status of our 4013 members. Thank you for your contributions. (3) The first step of the personal and collective renewal of our Teresian Charism, in preparation for holy mother St. Teresa's 500th birthday in 2015, was completed as all friars, nuns and seculars finished reading *The Life* together. As Fr. General has asked us to do, each community is now focusing on the *Way of Perfection*. This will help us review and meditate upon the reason Teresa began her reform and refresh our understanding of the fundamentals of her teaching on prayer. **This is not a replacement for formation classes at any level, but an added commitment to the Order.**

Our *Clarion* during 2010 focused on Edith Stein, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. This six-month issue starts by sharing the talk: "SAINT EDITH STEIN Challenges Catholics" by Fr. John Sullivan OCD, which was prepared for the 1998 Teresianum International Symposium in Rome. "Edith: Her Companions in Life and Sisters in Death" provides first-hand memories and interesting information about the women who traveled together on that last journey. We continue with Part 2 of the article she wrote about our holy mother, *Love for Love: The Life and Works of St. Teresa of Jesus*.

We continue to seek ways of better identifying formation resources on Carmelite Spirituality. This led to a redesign of our website: <http://www.carmelclarion.com/> with a brief summary of each CD. The last of our Carmelite Authors 101 Series, **CD 319: St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross**, was delivered by Fr. John Sullivan, OCD and is **now available!** We are very pleased to report that many of our Carmelite nuns are also finding this a valuable resource for their formation, and our international sales are slowly increasing. All receipts over actual development and production costs accrue to the OCDS.

It has been brought to our attention how Carmelite related websites have increased on the web. I thought it would be helpful to let you know which websites the Discalced Carmelite Order and our Province officially recognize. They are:

http://www.ocdswashprov.org/	OCDS of the Washington Province
http://www.ocdshwashprov.com/	Friars of the Washington Province
http://www.ocdfriarsvocation.org/	Vocations for the Washington Province
http://www.discalcedcarmel.com/	General House of the Teresian Carmel
http://www.ocd.pcn.net/ocds_ind.htm	Carmelite Secular Order – Rome
http://www.iwasbornforyou.com/	Worksheets on the <i>The Way of Perfection</i> (Click on British flag in upper right corner.)
http://www.carmelclarion.com/	Carmelite Spirituality Lectures on CD
http://www.icspublications.com/	Books, including study edition of <i>The Way of Perfection</i>

Other websites, while good and informative, may not be officially recognized by the Order or Province. May you and yours enjoy a blessed Christmas season, and a very Happy New Year.

Fr. Regis





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December 1, 2010

Dear Presidents and Councils of OCDS Communities,

Early in the new Church Year I am happy to be sending you some important information about the 2011 Elections of your leadership. May the Holy Spirit be with us as we proceed from now through to next spring.

I have decided to appoint your OCDS Provincial Council to serve as our Election Board and to conduct the election process. Your cooperation with the members of the Council will be precious to them and appreciated by me. Further indications about their role will soon be sent to you by them.

Secondly, I have come to another decision. It has been brought to my attention that very few of our OCDS communities have had the chance to create the local attendance policy called for by our new Statutes at no. 2-C on page 40. To guide the communities in deciding eligibility in this regard and for these elections only (assuming there will be time afterwards for you to determine locally your own separate policy): any member missing six (6) or more meetings in a calendar year is ineligible to vote. This seems fair and compassionate for those who might miss meetings.

We all look forward to election time as a time for renewal of strength and of vision as the Lord grants us time to move into the future desired by God's dear Providence. They are an exercise in grace that is designed to help us place among us persons willing to serve the well-being of us all and of the Church which has us in mind as agents of the Gospel.

Please be assured of my personal prayers and those of the friars. We begin our own election season next month and we go on relying on your prayers for the Spirit's guidance.

Fraternally in Carmel,

Fr. John Sullivan, OCD

V. Rev. John Sullivan, OCD, STD

Provincial

Cc: John Leidy (Acting President of OCDS Provincial Council), Virginia Chromczak, Loretta Gallagher, Annie Lex, Suzanne Treis

Edith Stein Challenges Catholics

John Sullivan OCD

EDITORS NOTE: This talk was originally prepared for the 1998 Rome – Teresianum International Symposium. Time references have been refreshed.

Introductory Remarks On A Multi-Faceted Gift Of God

Edith Stein, like any declared saint, is first and foremost a gift of God for the Church. “In crowning their merits, you crown your own gifts” is the praise the Preface for the Saints directs to God. They are gift because they have allowed the gifts of God seen in them to predominate throughout their lives.



Edith Stein gave continuing education courses for the young women already serving as school teachers. They all sat in her room on the floor around her. She introduced them to current political events and contemporary social problems. This was something entirely new at that time.

Each saint displays different facets of the holiness of God, and the diversity is perhaps one of the most interesting aspects to them. No standard mold type sanctity rules in the company of the saints; they manifest, as Paul says, “many different gifts” (1 Co 12:4; Ro 12:6). Stein, in this vein, was different from others and she also was a very multi-faceted holy one of the Most High. Examples abound in her spiritual biography. Just one instance suffices to show her at her multi-faceted best. During the decade or so she served at the Sankt Magdalena teachers’ college in Speyer she was a lay teacher, yet she took private vows; she spent long hours preparing and conducting lectures in class rooms, but found time to draft and give a radio address; she advised many a troubled student in need of encouragement, but she also traveled to other countries on lecture tours; she went West to Juvisy near Paris to delight a group of Neo-thomists with her knowledge of mainline Phenomenology and St. Thomas Aquinas, but she also faithfully returned eastward to her home town of Breslau during school vacations to visit her Jewish mother. In life she impressed people by her all-around competence and diligence.

More recently, in the process of discernment the Church conducted to establish her worthiness for beatification she

impressed her posthumous examiners considerably. She became the first person ever to be approved for beatification on two counts: she received the “honors of the altar” because of 1) her heroic virtues, but also because of 2) her martyrdom. Usual practice makes either one or the other sufficient grounds to open the door to beatification for a “Servant of God.” Stein’s cause demonstrated extraordinary signs of maturity and exemplarity in the convert from Breslau who entered Cologne Carmel and equally in her who was chased from there to Holland by what the Pope termed the “insane ideology” of Nazism which eventually deported her to die in Auschwitz.

Most definitely St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, or Edith Stein, is not merely a new, modern face among saints, or just an offbeat name to be chosen for new Christian children. Much more, as an intellectual light for the Catholic women’s movements in German-speaking countries, a proficient and prolific writer, and finally one of the



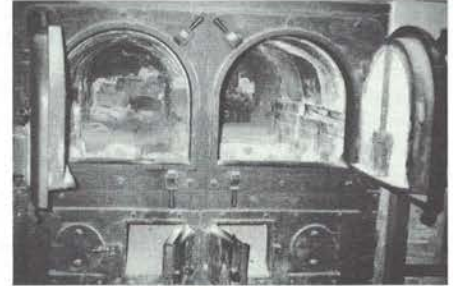
As was the custom, for the festival High Mass the postulant Edith Stein wore a wedding dress whose white silk was later reworked into a vestment.

millions the Nazis wiped out, she is someone who “connects” with our situation.

Though gassed and cremated in the 20th century, the range of her interests and accomplishments reaches into our own. Granted, she was born over a hundred years ago, in 1891; still her life’s arc shows features close in tone and tempo to our own. She can call us to account, challenge us.

To prove she does offer positive challenges I would adopt the following approach to this talk: taking my cue from her as a talented writer, I prefer to let one of her incisive texts speak to a key issue facing our times. I will link to the text (wherever it seems suitable, but without going

into too many details) suitable references to life details that do show parallels to conditions today. Much of what she wrote and did offers good advice for us to come to grips with the world around us, contribute to it, and thus prepare a richer future. As the conclusion will show, these are the major areas of church life that she calls us to and not the only areas her heritage can affect.



Ovens used for cremation

CHALLENGES

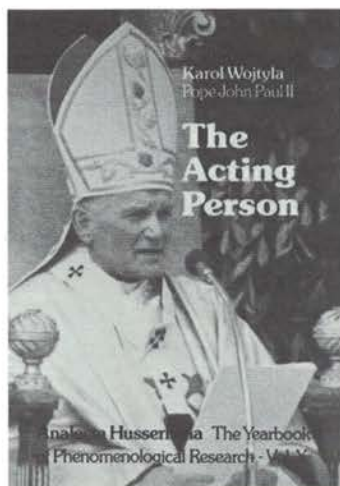
1) Connected, Non-Abstract Spirituality

The stress of contemporary living with depleted resources, ever-increasing competitiveness for wealth, and fundamentalist interpretations of reality frequently induce withdrawal tendencies. People care intensively for their own small group, with ever-vigilant concern for its survival. They become less and less open to persons of other persuasions, the ones they fear will make them lose their own well-being and even identity. They tend to be especially fearful and defensive in their religious life, and thus satisfy themselves by mere rote repetition of old truths. Stein never gave into such parochialism. Her example calls us instead to be spirituality open and connected to our surroundings. This is challenge number 1.

Just in time for the canonization, a helpful book gave us an introduction to her philosophical thought. It is the posthumous work of an American Stein expert, Sr. Mary Catherine Baseheart, and bears the apropos title “*Person in the World.*” Those four words house a deep truth about Saint Edith. Stein always strove to craft accurate descriptions of the nature of our human person, and she always considered it in direct relation to the world, our home—a temporary home perhaps (Heb 13:13) but our current home nonetheless. One would not be abstracted from the other; both the human person and the world go together in Stein’s thought and spirituality. That little word “in” of Baseheart’s title is quite important.

She applied her gifts of acute observation to take the pulse of events, and did a good job of scrutinizing what Our Lord called “the signs of the times.”(Mt 16:3)

Consistent with her thought, Stein maintained a vigilant eye on evolving reality precisely to keep the two together and avoid artificial opposition. She applied her gifts of acute observation to take the pulse of events, and did a good job of scrutinizing what Our Lord called “the signs of the times.” (Mt 16:3) From the many challenges she presents, this is a primary guiding principle of all the others: never lose contact with the real world. Never underestimate the salvific content planned by God for the creation (cf. Gen 1:31). Detecting them, establishing contact with their God-given value is not necessarily easy. Nevertheless, they are the theatre where the drama of God’s designs for our happiness and sanctification takes place. Because of its key importance for understanding Saint Edith I will devote a little more time to it.



One cannot help admiring how she went on practically discerning those “signs of the times” and thus kept in touch with the ups and downs, the ins and outs of salvation history’s current moment running through her life. Many a disappointment and contretemps encountered along the way had offered her ample reason to disconnect from the flow she was in or to close in on herself: employment was denied her for the sole reason she was a woman, then unemployment was thrust upon her by the Nazi racist regime in pursuit of its “final solution.” And yet, she went on seeking to observe and plumb the hidden meaning of it all. The motivational force that led her to remain open is described in a letter she wrote to a friend while still a laywoman. That letter proves Stein is a shining example of that admirable being Pope John Paul II calls “The Acting Person.”

The following passage went to Sr. Mary Catherine Baseheart on 12 February 1928:

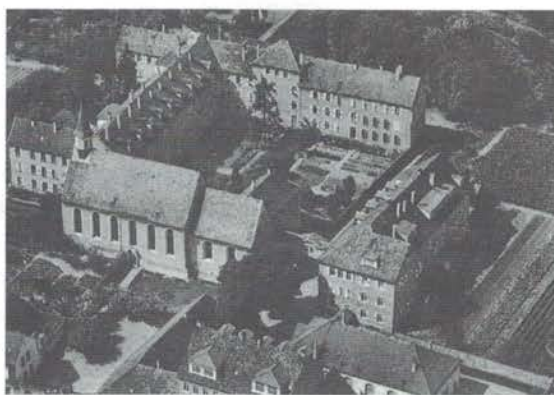
Immediately before, and for a good while after my conversion, I was of the opinion that to lead a religious life one had to give up all that was secular and to live totally immersed in thoughts of the Divine. But gradually I realized that something else is asked of us in this world and that, even in the contemplative life, one may not sever the connection with the world. I even believe that the deeper one is drawn into God, the more one must “go out of oneself”; that is, one must go to the world in order to carry the divine life into it.

Several pairs of words indicate the depth of her thought: “secular—Divine,” “sever—connection,” “drawn into—go out.” The context helps us understand why she describes her feelings in this healthful tension-filled fashion.

She was writing to a Dominican teaching sister from her residence at Speyer, among teachers and students at St. Magdalena normal school. Just a little over six years had passed since her baptism, and that was preceded a few months earlier in the summer of 1921 by the “conversion” she was alluding to.

A nightlong reading of the *Life* of St. Teresa of Jesus, ending with the exclamation “That is the truth,” was her conversion experience. She felt immediately attracted to a contemplative calling in order to live out the divine life that had finally broke through the defenses of her atheism. (One ought to keep in mind that Stein did not pass to the Church through a renunciation of Judaism: she had abandoned practice of her Jewish faith years earlier, and often said that in embracing Catholicism she rediscovered the riches in Jewish religious teachings.)

The great St. Teresa had opened the door to her; she felt a resultant desire to seek out a life like Teresa's. She did not account, however, for an experienced old spiritual director, Canon Schwind, who convinced her to place her great intellectual gifts in the service of other Catholic women and wait for sometime later in her life to enter Carmel. Now she is saying to Sr. Callista that "in this world" we shouldn't break our links to the world even if "thoughts of the Divine... in the contemplative life" are so admirable and desirable. On the contrary, closer proximity to God or "the deeper one is drawn into God" invariably leads a person "out of oneself" and "to the world in order to carry the divine life into it." We do not turn away from the world, not shun it, nor do we act as if it does not exist. Rather, we draw upon our relationship with God (she was known to spend long hours late at night before the tabernacle in St Magdalena's chapel) to "carry" or spread its fruits wherever they will do so much good.



The Dominican convent of St. Magdalene in Speyer with its school rooms and dormitory became home and workplace to Edith Stein for eight years.

For me the high point of this passage is the expression she puts purposely within quotation marks, viz., "go out of oneself." I am convinced she has in mind the Greek term *extasis*, laden, as it is, with mystical overtones. She broadens the usually introverted connotation evoked by the word "ecstasy" and goes way beyond any notion of visionary delights to create the idea of an ecstatic act of *sharing*. We do not stay transfixed solely where and when we feel most uplifted, rather we allow ourselves to be impelled to reassure others God does in fact lift us up. God is present and concerned with us. We establish contact with others in this kind of ecstasy because God wishes us to do so. We are sent from contact with Divinity to proclaim that the "divine life" can be reached because we, with our experience, will speak to others about it. A little further on in her letter, Stein confirms this by advising that "... one is to consider oneself totally as an instrument, especially with regard to the abilities one uses... We are to see them as something used, not by us, but by God in us."

"... one is to consider oneself totally as an instrument, especially with regard to the abilities one uses... We are to see them as something used, not by us, but by God in us."

At a time when "flight from the world" or *fuga mundi* was the safe recipe for any Catholic ardently searching for the perfection of a holy life, Stein is saying we can find God *in* the world by bringing God to the world. Adapt your abilities to the people and the situation, and God will take over as God wields the instrument His grace has finely tuned. Stein's corrective to what had become a classic principle of religious life slipped deftly between the opposed dangers of mere passivity on one hand and spiritual hubris on the other.

This is practical advice since it avoids the expected (for those times) exhortation to heavenly considerations of an altogether ethereal sort. "Something else is asked of us in this world," she writes, and we thus willingly leave the time for endless delights to the next world. The proper forum for spiritual exchange between humans and God is right here. We court a great

risk by thinking we can find it in a refined atmosphere devoid of real-life situations.

In canonizing Edith Stein the Church points us in the direction of a spirituality that includes new forms “beginning with people as they are... in ways they can understand.” It is not by asking them to abandon their nature for some pretense of a higher realm that you reach them (thereby creating a dichotomy between the spiritual and the ordinary), but by interacting in ways they recognize because found close at hand. Not an easy task, but Stein would hardly have recommended this unless she thought it possible. We can make it possible in our time too, by sharing what God has given us and letting the Lord guide the transmission.



Passport photo when Edith immigrated from Cologne, Germany



Carmelite Monastery in Echt, Holland where she was received on December 31, 1938

The Church has called for a “new evangelization”: it now has in Saint Edith Stein a valid promoter of a spiritual vision that breathes life into an evangelization that should both spring from contemplative prayer and eventually find its completion there, but which never sacrifices spiritual realism. Two weeks into World War II Stein restated her earlier advice to Sr. Callista Kopf in the following words addressed to the nuns of the Echt monastery on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. By them she invites us to avoid turning in on ourselves but rather to go about discovering the signs of God at work in our times:

Bound to Him [Christ] you are omnipresent as he is. You cannot help here or there like the physician, the nurse, the priest. You can be at all fronts, wherever there is grief, in the power of the cross. Your compassionate love takes you everywhere, this love from the divine heart.

2) Compassion For Hesitant Pilgrims

Tendencies toward fundamentalist zeal on the contemporary scene lead to hard-hearted disregard for those who suffer and are in dire need. People are convinced they have all they can do to assure the basic dignity of their own clan or societal group. They cannot be bothered by the “troubles” others are in, because they feel overburdened with their own. Edith Stein followed another way, the way of compassion for worried and harried fellow travelers; and she reminds us we ought to exercise compassion in our times.

A text she wrote four years after the 1928 text just examined captures her awareness and concern over the burdensome problems of the young women she taught and who wanted to be teachers themselves. As a teacher of young laywomen and as a laywoman herself, she was well attuned to the life problems of her students. Many hours of counseling troubled individuals led her to write these golden lines that any teacher would be happy to own:

The most important thing is that the teachers should really have Christ’s spirit in themselves and really embody it in their lives. But it is also their duty to know the life into which the children are going. Otherwise there is a great danger that the girls will say to themselves: ‘The Sisters have no idea of what the world is like, they couldn’t prepare us for the questions we now have to solve’—and that then the whole thing will

be thrown overboard as useless...You have the personal advantage that you did not enter too early and were in the Youth Movement. This means that approaches are open to you, which others miss. But also you must keep your feelings ever open. The younger generation of today has passed through so many crises that they cannot understand us any more. But we must try to understand them, and then perhaps we shall be able to help them a little.

Stein wrote this letter in October of what we call “the Year of Our Lord 1932,” but for the young German women of whom she speaks it was one of those “between-the-wars” years when Germany lurched back and forth under the pressure of the social and political upheaval that only increased when the Nazis took power.

To invoke the phrase coined by W.H. Auden (who was staying in Germany at about this time) to describe the 20th century, it was truly an “Age of Anxiety.” Edith was taking the proper measure of the raw material fed into her classroom when she claimed on their behalf the presence of “problems which we now have to solve.” Every generation has shifting matrices for its growth pains; only the perceptive educators like Edith Stein have both the insight and the courage to declare candidly what they are. And yet, beyond the shifts, Edith’s words designate well what used to be called a “generation gap,” and they call for a compassion toward the alienated that requires extra efforts to ease communication, to take the initiative toward them.

Underscoring, as I have, Stein’s great concern about the troubles of the people she taught is just another way of saying she sincerely wanted to help younger persons, children included. The very final stage of her life was no exception and she cared for little ones in the following poignant manner:

Arrested on August 2, 1942 by the Gestapo, she died one week later not very far from her home city of Breslau in the Auschwitz extermination camp. In that last week of her life she was pushed through the infernal network of Hitler’s “final solution,” thus visiting two intermediate transit camps in Holland, first Amersfoort, then Westerbork. In Westerbork her stay coincided with the tenure of Etty Hillesum, the Dutch Jewish woman who has left behind a diary and some Letters from Westerbork that have made her a subject of discussion in some Christian circles. Hillesum devotes a lot of space in her writings (published posthumously because she too was killed by the Nazis) to the deep sense of despair, which overcame women with children in the camp. Understandably, the children were neglected, and an eyewitness account informs us that Edith Stein did much to look after them. Julius Marcan, a survivor, testified that:

It was Edith Stein’s complete calm and self-possession that marked her out from the rest of the prisoners...Many of the mothers were on the brink of insanity and had sat moaning for days, without giving any thought to their children. Edith Stein immediately set about taking care of these little ones. She washed them, combed their hair and tried to make sure they were fed and cared for.

From Westerbork Edith was able to send back a compelling message to the nuns at her monastery in Echt:

...we place our trust in your prayers. There are so many persons here in need of a little comfort, and they expect it from the sisters.



Etty Hillesum



Edith and sister Rosa

The religious nuns were not nursing personnel (also referred to as “Sister” in Europe), so Edith had no medications to dispense, nor could she deal with the other detainees from a nurse’s position of authority. She had only herself to give: her attentiveness, the time she took away from her own worries, and her sense of religious hope. She gave all that she had, because she was fully present to the others, and she was willing to do as much as she could to share their burden of suffering so as to lighten the load. The freeing effects of her compassionate “comfort” did not go unnoticed. Mr. H. Wielek, a Dutch official who spoke with her in Westerbork left a description, which can serve as an eloquent epilogue to what she wrote, said and did to add to this poor world’s reserve of humor and compassion:

I knew: here is someone truly great.

For a couple of days she lived in that hellhole, walking, talking and praying ... like a saint. And she really was one. That is the only fitting way to describe this middle-aged woman who struck everyone as so young, who was so whole and honest and genuine.

At one point she said to me, “I never knew people could actually be like this...and I honestly had no idea of how my brothers and sisters were being made to suffer...I pray for them continually.”

...then I saw her go off to the train with her sister [Rosa] praying as she went, and smiling the smile of unbroken resolve that accompanied her to Auschwitz.

3) Loving Knowledge Of The Faith

Anyone currently involved in the formation of seminarians or religious quickly comes upon a disquieting realization: they do not have the kind of grasp of the fundamentals of their faith that previous generations of candidates had. A further realization arises: if the ones who show such good will and desire to serve the Church and extend its outreach to a world in need of the Good News are so ignorant of the fundamentals, how much more ignorant must their brothers and sisters be who probably do not care much about Church life at all? A postulant for a typical religious order in my country told his confreres back home about his confusion when, receiving the “Hail Mary” as penance in the confessional, he had to go look for a printed text of that prayer since he did not know it by heart(!). A good deal of the efforts put into devising *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* probably aimed at helping remedy the situation underlying that and similar stories. Edith Stein invites us to work to correct such a glaring deficiency, no matter—and no doubting—the good intentions of the persons who suffer from it.

Let us look at the Preface to *Science of the Cross*. It was her last major work and was to be a commentary on the great mystic and collaborator of St. Teresa of Avila in the reform of Carmel, St. John of the Cross. He was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1926 and this book was her contribution to the 4th centenary celebrations of his birth in 1942. Unfortunately, like Schubert’s fourth symphony, it remained incomplete, due to her arrest by the Gestapo. She had the following

trenchant remark to make in the unfinished manuscript's Introduction entitled "Meaning and Basis of the Science of the Cross":

There are naturally recognizable signs indicating that human nature as it actually exists is in a state of depravity. This includes the inability to assimilate and react to facts according to their true value... This lack of sensibility is particularly painful in the religious sphere. Many Christians feel depressed because the events of the Gospel do not—or do no longer—impress them as they ought and fail to affect and shape their lives. The example of the saints shows how it ought to be: where there is truly living faith there Christian doctrine and the mighty deeds of God are the content of life which shape everything and before which everything else must give way... If a saintly soul thus assimilates the truths of faith they become the science of the saints. If the mystery of the Cross becomes its inner form it grows into the science of the Cross.

Such a beautiful, and timely I would underscore, passage deserves careful analysis.

From a sanguine estimate of the generalized world situation Stein moves deftly to the religious sphere. Christians are depressed because they do not "react to facts according to their true value." Unfortunately, they share in a "lack of sensibility" to reality because they show less than a "truly living faith."

This estimate of the situation does not flow from pessimism. Stein was writing her study on Saint John of the Cross during World War II, and our generation is painfully aware of how paralysis among believers in the face of that war's atrocities has spawned other problems in our midst. One need only reread the Vatican's declaration "We remember" on the *Shoah* to appreciate how sad a breakdown in morale occurred among Catholic believers back then.

It is not a pessimistic vision of things for another important reason because, in assigning a cause for why Christians are "depressed," Stein gives the reader an antidote. She claims that if "Christian doctrine and the mighty deeds of God... [were] the content of [their] life" they would react to events most differently. What is lacking is assimilation on the part of those who by the rebirth of baptism are expected to take an active part in the Church, which has engendered them to eternal life.

In fact, Stein uses the word "assimilate" twice, and here is the nub of the question and her challenge. She would call upon the Church today to give more effective ways to assimilation of the riches of the faith. Ever an alert pedagogue, the former "Fraülein Doktor" who now as Saint Edith will give added credibility to an intellectual apostolate among Catholics, reminds us that effective catechetical methods and outreach is essential to vibrant participation by Catholics in all happenings of life, be they directly related to their church or be they found in the mainstream of secular life. But, if believers die of hunger for want of proper understanding of the teachings transmitted to them from Christ and his preaching of the Good News of Salvation, the world will lack the proper leaven Christianity can give. In parallel fashion, Stein tells us the reserves of holiness in our world will diminish too: there will be no science of the Cross at work because those who are called to be saints will hardly craft it into that "inner form" she would educe out of the "truths of the faith." The



While working on the Science of the Cross during the last year of her life, Sr. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross tried to draw it and wrote about her efforts, "I am not an artist at all, but I did it with reverence and love."

blockage they suffer and the lost contact with Gospel values will stunt their growth. In this connection it is very suitable to delve into the life of a true saint of our times, Stein, to see some of the ways she tried to take seriously knowledge of the faith and to transmit her grasp of it to her contemporaries.

How, in other words, did Stein invest in a deepening process of her faith, or how did she delve into valid explanations of the proclamation of salvation offered by the Church? An answer to this question is all the more interesting for the fact she had become a Catholic by abandoning an atheistic worldview. Put another way, she always considered assimilation of the faith an extremely precious element of her life.



Being the type to insist on acquaintance with the best exemplar of a particular field of knowledge, she turned to the system of reflection most popularly acclaimed by Catholics at that time, viz., Thomism. She translated an important work of St. Thomas [St. Thomas Aquinas.jpg] into German, the “Questions on the Truth,” and as she did it she devised fine linguistic rendering of the medieval genius’ teaching in contemporary German. But she did not stop there. She worked at building bridges between Thomism, the then reigning Catholic expression of the *philosophia perennis* and Phenomenology as a cutting edge trend in modern philosophical thinking.

Her second teaching post, just before entering the monastery, was at Münster in the Catholic Institute for Scientific Pedagogy. There she sought inspiration from major proponents of tradition by reading the Church Fathers. She took to translating one of St. John Chrysostom’s works, *The Education of Children*, from the original Greek with the help of an eminent Patristic scholar, Fr. John Quasten (later Professor at Washington’s Catholic Univ. of America). In doing so she sought out ideas of catechetical import that would help her form the future teachers she was instructing.

A final point: not even monastic life kept her from handing on lessons for growth in the knowledge of the faith. The first few years in the monastery at Cologne she wrote up small articles about spiritually significant persons or themes from Carmelite history and placed them in various German newspapers, not all of them necessarily Catholic newspapers. One such study appeared in a Sunday supplement to an Augsburg newspaper. What she did showed she would not just lament poor knowledge of the faith in others, she tried to supply for the deficiencies. One would hope Catholics today would be equally alert to remedy flagging knowledge and appreciation of their faith.

4) Respect For Riches Of The Spirit In Those Seeking God With “Sincere Hearts”

A book from ICS Publications, in its ongoing series Carmelite Studies,” is likely to cause a stir among English-language readers. It is a collection of statements by both Christians and Jews about Edith Stein. The name of the volume is *Never Forget* and it appeared in another form originally in Germany as *Errinere dich—Vergiß es nicht* (1990). One important issue discussed is the relationship of Stein

to her people and their religion. For Stein herself there was no root incompatibility between being a Christian and Jew. Her basic way of explaining it came in the form of words to her mother: she told her pious Jewish genetrix that now as a Catholic she had come to appreciate as never before the grace-bearing elements that Judaism offers. Only, it was the discovery Christ and his Cross that opened the door to those well-springs of grace.

My choice of her explanation to her mother is neither casual nor opportunistic. The way Edith related to Auguste Stein is paradigmatic for the way she related to her former religion. Her mother was an alter ego for her in so many ways, not only as she was growing up but in all the phases of her life; so much so that one would apply the old saying to the two Stein women that “the apple does not fall far from the tree.” Tenacity, devotion, and honesty were three precious values Edith derived from Auguste Courant Stein. That is why her attitude to her mother’s death clarifies extremely well for us Stein’s respect for the way God works in other religions. Respect for the traces of God’s presence beyond the borders of our own faith system is yet another challenge that Edith Stein makes to Catholics.

In all, Stein mentioned the passing of her mother on September 14, 1936 in nine letters, the last of which she sent as late as Feb. 17, 1939. Every one of them shows Edith admiring the faith of Auguste and the fruits of her life with God. An excerpt or two will suffice to show how the Carmelite Nun, former teacher of Catholic girls vindicated the ability of living Jewish faith to transform those who lived up to its demands. Although Edith surely was not writing a treatise about her mother, one notes a definite crescendo in her occasional remarks penned over a two-year period beginning soon after the death that took place on the Christian feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

The earliest mention of her mother’s death was in Letter 226 sent on Oct 3, 1936 to Mo. Petra Brüning: she refers to the way (and I quote) “...God took her to Himself very quickly.” So her mother was called by God, but there is more. The day the letter is written was the eve of Auguste C. Stein’s birthday. Her daughter goes on to state in this very inclusive fashion: “...today she is able to celebrate her 87th birthday with our dear Sr. Thérèse.” Significantly, “Sr. Thérèse” is none other than the latest Doctor of the Church, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux whose feast day was celebrated by the Church calendar on October 3 in the 30s. Stein places her mother in heaven in the company of a canonized saint, no reticence on her part about the blessed destiny of her Jewish parent.

The next letter is perhaps more significant still, because it alludes to the reason why Stein feels her mother has gone to heaven. Writing on Oct 4, 1936 to Sr. Callista Kopf in Letter 227 she casts aside any possibility her mother might have converted to Christianity in the following words:

The news of her conversion was a totally unfounded rumor. I have no idea who made it up. My mother held to her faith to the very last. The faith and firm confidence she had in her God from her earliest childhood to her 87th year remained steadfast, and were the last things that stayed alive in her during the final difficult agony. Therefore, I have the

Her mother was an alter ego for her in so many ways, not only as she was growing up but in all the phases of her life.



firm belief that she found a very merciful judge and is now my most faithful helper on my way, so that I, too, may reach my goal.

It was by being always faithful and true to her own belief in her own God that Frau Stein found a “very merciful” judge at the end of her days. Fidelity to the faith of her ancestors saw her through, and crowned her perseverance even in spite of that final “agony” caused by a stomach tumor. In referring to the trust her mother had in the Lord Stein notes it was the “firm confidence she had in *her* God...” Perhaps Stein was echoing the expression she used in a previous letter on the last day of her mother’s life as she awaited the end:

...she truly loved “her” God (as she often said with emphasis). And, with confidence in him, she bore much that was painful and did much that was good.

The important thing that confirms Edith’s sense of religious respect is not so much the presence of the good deeds her mother did (indicated in the second part of her sentence) but that her mother continued to insist on the validity of devotion for the God of Israel, her God and not the God Edith had lately embraced. In spite of the difference her mother wished to underscore, Edith esteems her tenacious devotion and would not think to criticize it in the least.

Edith goes beyond just accepting the efficacy of Jewish devotion for her mother, however; she attributed intercessory powers to the late Frau Stein in a subsequent missive. In letter 280 sent on Oct 31, 1938 to Hedwig Dülberg she commented on the sad departure of her older brother from Germany in these terms:

On the 14th my brother Arno said goodbye to me before his departure for America. On All Souls Day we will both remember our mother. This remembrance is always very comforting for me. I have the firm conviction that my mother now has the power to help her children in these great afflictions.

There is a highly provocative mixture of religious devotions in this passage: while Edith pays tribute to the very Catholic reliance on prayer for the dead connected to November 2nd’s All Souls Day, and at the same time believes interceding for her mother then will be worthwhile, she goes on to state her “firm conviction” that Mother is in a position in the afterlife to actually “help her children” in what they are now suffering from family break-up due to Nazi anti-Semitic persecution. Once again, Edith the Carmelite nun who would offer many a fervent intercession for the “intentions” recommended to her prayers is seen assigning the same role to her mother before the Lord. One can hardly derive any condescending attitude of Stein vis-à-vis the religion, zealously observed and cherished by Frau Stein. Surely, this did not mean Edith would have wanted to trade places; no, she remained faithful for a score of years to the tenets she formally embraced at baptism on New Year’s Day of 1922. But the way she acknowledged the transforming power of Jewish faith for a devout Jew like her mother (who wasn’t even Orthodox, for the record) leads me to conclude she would want us to show similar respect for valid Jewish commitment.

Much light is shed by these written remarks about her mother. They ought to be kept in mind when one proceeds to an exegesis of some of the “hard sayings,”

*Auguste Courant Stein,
1849 (Lublinitz) – 1936
(Breslau)*



*Arno, 1879 (Gleiwitz) –
1948 (San Francisco)*

if I may call them that, of Stein about the Jewish religion. On balance (and someone will one day do a balanced study of this point), she adopted an “enlightened” stance toward interreligious relations between Catholics and Jews. As a convert she oftentimes stirs up harsh, hurt feelings; but deeper knowledge of the “spiritual ecumenism” she cultivated would defuse many an emotional reaction when her name is mentioned. A suitable concluding remark comes from what she wrote about the second most cherished adult influence on her life, i.e., about her revered “Master” Edmund Husserl. As the Protestant founder of Phenomenology lay dying she penned a letter to her sister phenomenologist Adelgundis Jaegerschmid that contained these future-oriented thoughts:

I am not at all worried about my dear Master. It has always been far from me to think that God’s mercy allows itself to be circumscribed by the visible Church’s boundaries. God is truth. All who seek truth seek God, whether this is clear to them or not.



The pope greeting members of Edith Stein’s family after the beautification in Cologne, May 1, 1987. Lr: Alfred Batzdorff, Susanne Batzdorff, Bernhard Rosenmöller, Jr, Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Joseph Höffner (photo by Ronald Batzdorff)

4) Integrated *Vita Devota*

In the latter part of the 20th century, the Catholic Church in some countries is experiencing stress among groups that take divergent stances on content and rate of renewal. Even though Vatican II remains the reference point and rich watershed of moves toward revitalized Church life, it has received a “bad press” in some circles, as individuals prefer a return to practices that held sway before that greatest ecclesial event of our century. Charles E. Miller, “Conservatism, not Regression, in Liturgy,” *America* 179 (4-11 July 1998), 14-16 wisely suggests, “especially in matters liturgical we must conserve the best of our tradition, *including change.*” (Italics mine) The American founder of a new group of religious, who established it in the Franciscan tradition after he left the Capuchins, wrote a book that is symptomatic of a wish for a much slower pace, entitling it *The Reform of Renewal*.

The liturgy installed by express directive of the Council and the Vatican organisms entrusted with implementation of the Council decrees does not escape the strictures of those who dream of the apparent serenity of former days. In this area of mystagogy and liturgical piety one can find a way forward by taking up the last challenge to Catholics from Edith Stein.

The year 1937 marked a mid-point in Stein’s growth in her vocation as a Catholic contemplative nun. She had entered Carmel late in 1933 and would die in the summer of 1942 at Auschwitz. As already indicated she was delving into Carmelite spirituality and forming herself in the mold of monastic life. This did not mean, as some feared, she was losing contact with usual church life around her. Quite the contrary, she kept keenly in tune with the ebb and flow of events and even surges in disagreement that can occur.



One such disagreement concerned the liturgy, the “prayer of the Church” that she had found so important and nourishing to her spiritual life. Without going into too many details, the situation can be summed up as follows: a clash over the parameters of proper balance between liturgical piety and individual piety was brewing from the mid-thirties on, primarily in Germany. Some felt that renewed liturgical practices would be suitable-enough sources of inspiration to do away with devotional practices of later date. But those who favored the latter opposed the liturgical party and branded liturgical practices as “externalist” and “activist” with harmful consequences for individual spiritual progress. A solution suggesting coexistence between the two concerns, i.e., between ritual participation and interiority, would be the obvious answer, but when controversies move toward a flash point they tend to invite extreme formulations that only widen the breach.

Edith knew well the mentality of the liturgists: she had frequent contacts with the Archabbot of the famous Benedictine monastery in Southern Germany, Beuron Abbey, and had worshipped there during school vacation time. On the other hand, but not in opposition to the Benedictine vision of worship in common, she also had opted to join the Carmelites, an order known for its promotion of silent, meditative prayer with a mostly austere devotional style.

She decided to offer ideas from her own experience to ease the rising tension at that time. The result was a small essay/treatise called *The Prayer of the Church*, published in 1937 in a book that offered other essays weighing some of the factors involved in the growing debate in Germany. Her reflection was a clear attempt to strike a balance, and the following passage demonstrates how successful she was in doing so:

She mentions the two major axes of public worship, namely, the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours.

...the monks “resembling angels” surround the altar of sacrifice and make sure that the praise of God does not cease, as in heaven so on earth. The solemn prayers they recite as the resonant mouth of the church frame the holy sacrifice. They also frame, permeate, and consecrate all other “daily work” so that prayer and work become a single *opus Dei*, a single “liturgy.”

As in so many other significant passages of Stein’s works the very terminology she adopts gives precious keys to understanding. Three points will suffice to lay out her helpful and creative insight.

She mentions the two major axes of public worship, namely, the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. They are described in non-pragmatic terms, too, so Stein avoids what is sometimes called the “service station” model of liturgy, or one that subordinates worship to the moral effects it produces after worship time is over: note the word “praise of God” and “resonant mouth of the church.” The monks are granted by vocation a holy leisure (*otium sacrum*) that allows more time and thus it is easier for them to embellish praise by the beautiful cadences of their singing. Still, all liturgy, wherever it is celebrated, needs to stress gratuitous praise of God, and Stein reminds us of this. Her text takes us further, all the same.

She then links the prayers of the monks to activities outside the worship area, because those prayers are also a setting for (they “frame”) daily work, and they both permeate and consecrate that work. Our faith vision of things says there is

a difference between cultic and non-cultic activities but no gap between them. Benedictines themselves take for inspiration the motto "Ora et labora." The same can be said for differences between cultic acts and acts of piety by individuals or smaller prayer groups: they might take place according to different rhythms, but they do not call for a choice of one over the other, certainly not one against the other.

Thirdly, Stein claims there is a unified notion embracing both worship and non-cultic acts: prayer and work, she writes, "become a single 'opus Dei,' a single 'liturgy.'" Once you base your individual prayer on the Mass and the prayer of the Hours, once you infuse your daily work with them both, you notice your work acquiring a spirit of service of God (*opus Dei*). To the extent you direct your work toward praising God in the Mass and in the Hours your work becomes "liturgy" whose root meaning is, after all, "work of the people." It seems Stein is trying to bridge the gap between worship and work in themselves, as much as the gap that was widening between the liturgical enthusiasts and the piety people. In our own days we would gain from adopting her insight so that our worship might flow over easily into daily tasks and the fulfillment of those tasks can itself prove to be worshipful activity. This requires vigilance in our hyper-busy world, so full of temptations to stray from any form of Godly activity, but Stein reassures us her challenge is worth accepting. No Christian spirituality can survive without the integration of liturgy and devotion her vision promoted.

To the extent you direct your work toward praising God in the Mass and in the Hours your work becomes "liturgy" whose root meaning is, after all, "work of the people."

CONCLUSION

By no means are the previously mentioned "challenges" the only invitations we can receive from Edith Stein, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. My choice is admittedly subjective, and influenced by my own perception of Church life. They do not exclude other challenges.

It seems to me, also, that other important areas of her thought, which apply to on-going concerns today, were treated by other speakers on the program of the 1998 International Congress in Rome. The topics they handled, such as, Men—Women, Contacts between philosophy and the theological enterprise, empathy and faith, and religious experience are also important. To them could be added others like care for children in both developed and developing countries; individual and communal rights/obligations; peace and violence; co-responsible living in society, especially in the face of a quickly expanding stultifying consumerism; the role of the Church in the protection of the persecuted.

One can hope that the intense attention paid by the canonization on the holiness of "kluge Edith" will draw more and more thoughtful persons to mine her thought for new lessons of hope for our contemporaries. She would be busy doing that very thing if she were still with us, and her own inherent tendency to come to grips with reality as a fully-human person, as she sought for the truth, will surely lead others to follow in her footsteps.

As I express my appreciation for the chance to join the distinguished speakers of this Congress in praising Saint Edith Stein, I want to express my thanks, after a fashion, to Stein herself for having joined our Order and giving us the opportunity to feel so proud of her as a sister Discalced Carmelite. We are, indeed, in great company. ☩

Resources used for this talk, many available from ICS Publications, which are a good basis for your own further study of Edith Stein, St. Teresa of the Cross.



1. Cf. Maria Adele Herrmann, *Die Speyrer Jahre von Edith Stein: Aufzeichnungen zu ihrem 100. Geburtstag* (Speyer: Pilger Verlag, 1990), 212pp.
2. Ambrosius Eszer, "Edith Stein, Jewish Catholic Martyr," *Carmelite Studies* 4 (1988), 314: "...an event without precedent in the centuries-old history of the Congregation [for the Causes of Saints]."
3. Pope John Paul II, "Homily at the Beatification of Edith Stein," *Carmelite Studies* 4 (1988), 299.
4. Mary C. Baseheart, *Person in the World: Introduction to the Philosophy of Edith Stein* (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 300pp. "Contributions to Phenomenology," 27.
5. Letter 45. We cite here the English-language edition, *Self-portrait in Letters, 1916-1942*, tr. Josephine Koeppl, ocd (Washington: ICS Publications, 1993), p. 54. Vol. 5 "The Collected Works of Edith Stein." Subsequent reference will be "Letters".
6. Cf. Teresia Renata Posselt, ocd, *Edith Stein*, tr. Cecily Hastings and Donald Nicholl (London/New York: Sheed & Ward), p. 64. Stein wrote that the decisive night's reading at Bad Bergzabern "put an end to my long search for the truth" in her narrative "How I came to the Cologne Carmel," tr. Susanne Batzdorff, *Edith Stein: Selected Writings* (Springfield, IL: Templegate Publishers, 1990), p. 19.
7. See the Pope's comment on the day of her beatification: "For Edith Stein her baptism as a Christian was by no means a break with her Jewish heritage. Quite the contrary, she said 'I had given up my practice of the Jewish religion as a girl of 14. My return to God made me feel Jewish again' in "Homily at the Beatification," no. 7, *Carmelite Studies* 4, p. 303.
8. See Joachim Feldes, "Edith Stein und ihr Seelenführer Joseph Schwind," *Edith Stein und Schifferstadt* (Schifferstadt: Stadtparkasse Schifferstadt, 1998), pp. 9-24.
9. Letter 45, *Letters*, pp. 54-55.
10. Edith Stein, "Elevation [= Exaltation] of the Cross, September 14, 1939," *The Hidden Life: Essays, Meditations, Spiritual Texts*, tr. Waltraut Stein (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1992), p. 96. "The Collected Works of Edith Stein," 4.
11. Biographical excursus/reminder: Due to discrimination against women in German universities earlier this century she was unable to obtain a university teaching appointment commensurate with the academic achievement of the *summa cum laude* thesis that Husserl directed. She served for a time as his assistant but was denied employment on the faculty in her own right. Her conversion to Catholicism in 1921 brought with it the project of forming the hearts as well as the minds of young women: she became an instructor at the teacher's college of the Dominican sisters of Sankt Magdalena in Speyer. Cf. B. H. Reifenrath, *Erziehung im Licht des Ewigen: Die Pädagogik Edith Steins* (Frankfurt: 1985).
12. Letter 123, *Letters*, p. 122-23.
13. Etty Hillesum, *Letters from Westerbork* tr. Arthur J. Pomerans (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), esp. pp. 28-30 where she notes the arrival of the "Catholic Jews or Jewish Catholics" and describes several religious among them.
14. Waltraud Herbstrith, *Edith Stein, A Biography*, tr. Bernard Bonowitz (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), p. 105.
15. Letter 342, *Letters*, p. 353.
16. W. Herbstrith, *A Biography*, pp. 107-08.
17. Cf. Avery Dulles, "Orthodoxy and Social Change," *America* 178 (20-27 June 1998), 8-17.

18. Edith Stein, *Science of the Cross*, tr. Hilda Graef (Chicago: Regnery, 1960), p. 2.
19. Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, "We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah," *Origins* 27 (26 March 1998), 669, 671-74. See also Victoria Barnett, Part III "Resistance and Guilt," *For the Soul of the People: Protestant Protest Against Hitler* (New York/Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), pp. 197-235.
20. Cf. Ralph McInerney, "Edith Stein and Thomism," *Carmelite Studies* 4 (1987), 74-87.
21. Cf. John Sullivan, "Liturgical Creativity from Edith Stein," *Teresianum* 49 (1998,1), 182-3.
22. Cf. M. Amata Neyer, "Verzeichnis der von Edith Stein in Köln und Echt verfaßten Schriften," in Edith Stein, *Wie ich in den Kölner Karmel kam mit Erläuterungen und Ergänzungen* von Maria Amata Neyer (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1994), pp. 139-140.
23. Sr. Teresia Benedicta a Cruce, "Über Geschichte und Geist des Karmels," *Zu neuen Ufern*, Sonntagsbeilage der *Augsburger Postzeitung* (n. 13, 31 März 1935).
24. Cf. *Never Forget: Christian and Jewish Perspectives on Edith Stein*, tr. Susanne Batzdorff, ed. Steven Payne ocd (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1998). xvi + 304pp. "Carmelite Studies," 7.
25. See the prophetic words of John Donohue, "Edith Stein's Early Years," *America* 151 (1987), 9: If Edith Stein is beatified, her picture of Auguste Courant, by a divine and tender irony, is likely to rank first in the gallery of portraits drawn by saints of their mothers. It is more complete and memorable than the image of Monica in Augustine's *Confessions* or of Zélie Martin in Thérèse of Lisieux's *Story of a Soul*.
26. Edith Stein, *Letters*, p. 237.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Edith Stein, *Letters*, p. 238.
29. Cf. Letter 225, *Letters*, p. 235.
30. Edith Stein, *Letters*, p. 290-91.
31. Cf. Harry J. Cargas ed., *The Unnecessary Problem of Edith Stein* (Lanham, NY/London: University Press of America, 1994). xii + 85pp. "Studies in the Shoah," 4.
32. Letter 259, *Letters*, p. 272.
33. Charles E. Miller, "Conservatism, not Regression, in Liturgy," *America* 179 (4-11 July), 14-16 where the supertitle wisely suggests that "especially in matters liturgical we must conserve the best of our tradition, *including change*." (Italics mine)
34. Cf. Benedict Groeschel, *The Reform of Renewal* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990), 227pp.; and Annabel Miller, "Special Report: The Pain of Renewal," *The Tablet* (13 June 1998), 793.
35. See note 22, *above*.
36. Authoritative help to sort out the divergences and to bring deeper unity would come later in 1947, on the universal church level: see Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, esp. Part 4 "Acts of Piety are not to be neglected," and Part 1, sec. 2 "Liturgy is external and internal worship."
37. Cf. Josephine Koeppl ocd, *Edith Stein, Philosopher and Mystic* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier Book, Liturgical Press, 1990), chs. 12-18, "The Way of the Christian Mystics," 12 where this practitioner of cloistered Carmelite life illustrates how Stein shared community living; while the more recent reworked (Roman) doctoral thesis of Francisco J. Sancho Fermin OCD, *Edith Stein Modelo y Maestra de Espiritualidad, en la Escuela del Carmelo Teresiano* (Burgos: Ed. Monte Carmelo, 1998), pp 89-96 deals with the very topic of "Devociones."
38. Edith Stein, "The Prayer of the Church," *The Hidden Life*, p. 28.



I Will Remain With You...

By Edith Stein, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

You reign at the Father's right hand
In the kingdom of his eternal glory
As God's Word from the beginning.

You reign on the Almighty's throne
Also in transfigured human form,
Ever since the completion of your work on earth.

I believe this because your word teaches me so,
And because I believe, I know it gives me joy,
And blessed hope blooms forth from it.

For where you are, there also are your own,
Heaven is my glorious homeland,
I share with you the Father's throne.

The Eternal who made all creatures,
Who, thrice holy, encompasses all being,
In addition has a silent, special kingdom of his own.

The innermost chamber of the human soul
I the Trinity's favorite place to be,
His heavenly throne on earth.

To deliver this heavenly kingdom from the hand of the enemy,
The Son of God has come as Son of Man,
He gave his blood as the price of deliverance.

In the heart of Jesus, which was pierced,
The kingdom of heaven and the land of earth
are bound together.
Here is for us the source of life.

The heart is the heart of the triune Divinity,
And the center of all human hearts
That bestows on us the life of God.

It draws us to itself with secret power,
It conceals us in itself in the Father's bosom
And floods us with the Holy Spirit.

This Heart, it beats for us in a small tabernacle
Where it remains mysteriously hidden
In that still, white host.

That is your royal throne on earth, O Lord,
Which visibly you have erected for us,
And you are pleased when I approach it.

Full of love, you sink your gaze into mine
And bend your ear to my quiet words
And deeply fill my heart with peace.

Yet your love is not satisfied
With this exchange that could still lead to separation:
Your heart requires more.

You come to me as early morning's meal each daybreak.
Your flesh and blood become food and drink for me
And something wonderful happens.

Your body mysteriously permeates mine
And your soul unites with mine:
I am no longer what once I was.

You come and go, but the seed
That you sowed for future glory, remains behind
Buried in this body of dust.

A luster of heaven remains in the soul,
A deep glow remains in the eyes,
A souring in the tone of voice.

There remains the bond that binds heart to heart,
The stream of life that springs from yours
And animates each limb.

How wonderful are your gracious wonders!
All we can do is be amazed and stammer and fall silent
Because intellect and words fail.

Love for Love:

The Life and Works of St. Teresa of Jesus

By St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

Part 2 in a 3 Part Series

7. Infidelity

Teresa's generous heart was certainly determined to dedicate the life that had been given to her anew entirely to the service of her beloved Lord. She had no idea that her recovery was to result in dangers, and that when she left the solitary sickroom, there was to be an end for a long time to her excursions among the heights—in fact, that she was to lose again all that she had gained. "My great misfortune was that I found myself in a monastery without an enclosure. Doubtless, the dear nuns could be pleased with the freedom and remain innocent.... But I, weakness itself, would have found it the way to hell had not God with particular grace saved me from this danger" [L, 7, 3].

It was understandable that relatives and friends joyfully welcomed her whose life had been restored, that she was often called into the speakroom, that her loveliness, her animated spirit, her exceptional conversational ability delighted these visitors and drew them to come again and again. All research has concluded that Teresa's association with people in the world, on which she herself looked back with the most bitter repentance for her entire life, was entirely pure and in no way a relapse into worldly frivolity. She had a healthy influence on her visitors and during this time also spoke about nothing more eagerly than divine things. Nevertheless, her remorse is understandable because association with people diverted her from association with God. She lost the taste for prayer, and once she had gone this far, she no longer even thought herself worthy of such a grace.



Monastery of the Incarnation

Under the pretext of humility, I was afraid of prayer and meditation. I said to myself that, as the most imperfect of persons, it was better for me to do what everyone else was doing and to limit myself to the prescribed verbal prayers. In my condition, which was more suited to the company of the devil, I did not want to pursue so much intimacy with God. I was also afraid of deceiving the whole world. [L, 7, 1]

During this time Teresa impressed the other sisters as a thoroughly first-rate nun.

In spite of my youth and many relationships to the world, people saw how I sought solitude for reading and for prayer. I often spoke of God. I was fond of having the image of the Savior painted in various places. I had a special place to pray and carefully decorated it with all that could stimulate devotion. I never spread malicious gossip. [L, 7, 2]

And all that took place "without appearing at all calculating; for I really hated pretense, empty honor, and I believe—God be praised! — that I never thus offended him. As soon as self-love stirred in my heart I was so remorseful that the devil lost and I won..." [see L, 7, 1]. But the Lord wanted more from her.

One day while I was talking with someone with whom I had recently become acquainted, God gave me to understand that such acquaintances were not suitable for me and illumined me in my darkness. Our Savior Jesus Christ appeared to me as sad and serious and declared how much I was distressing him. I saw him only with the eyes of my soul, but much more clearly than if I

could have seen him with the eyes in my body. His image impressed itself into my spirit so deeply that even now, after more than twenty-six years, it is not erased. Seized by anxiety and confusion, I no longer wanted to receive this person. But to my detriment then, I did not know that the soul can see without the mediation of physical eyes. The devil used my ignorance to tell me this was impossible. He told me that the vision was a delusion, a machination of the devil.... But deep in my heart I still had a secret feeling that what I had seen came from God. But since this did not correspond to my inclinations, I tried to deceive myself. I did not dare to speak with someone about it.... People told me that it was not bad to welcome this person; associating with her would never hurt me, but would be an honor for me. Finally, I gave in. [L, 7, 6-7]

Her father's attitude was a serious warning. He had been allowing his child to lead him on the path of interior prayer and remained faithful to it. Teresa's upright nature could not permit her to leave him under the delusion that she was faithful too.



Courtyard with the Seven Chambers

I confessed to him, though without indicating the deeper reason, that I had stopped praying. I used only my health as a pretext. Actually, even though I had recovered from the serious illness, I still had to suffer a great deal. But this was not enough to justify myself. One does not need physical strength for prayer, but only love and steadfastness. My father, who loved me tenderly and was deceived by me, believed everything and pitied me. Since he had already progressed far toward perfection, he no longer spent as much time with me. After a short dialogue, he left me with the remark that lengthy lingering is time lost. But I who was losing time in an entirely different way did not see with as sharp an eye. [L, 7, 11-13]

Teresa spent at least one year, possibly longer, in this way. She did not feel at all good about it, and was constantly in great spiritual unrest. Yet again and again she permitted herself to be held back by a false humility. "I do not know how I was able to stand such a state of affairs. Perhaps what kept me going was the hope of taking up praying again. For I still had in my heart the will to return to it again. I was only waiting until I got better. Oh, onto how wicked a path did this insane hope lead me!" [L,19,11].

8. Return

Teresa was to find deliverance at the deathbed of her father. Upon the news of his serious illness, she was permitted to go to him and be at his side during his last days.

With him I lost all my happiness and joy. Yet I had the strength to conceal my pain from him. I remained quiet until his death, even though I felt that someone was tearing a piece from my heart as I watched such a precious life being slowly extinguished. But God gave him such a holy death that I cannot thank him enough. It was deeply moving to see the supernatural joy of this good father, to listen to the advice that he gave us after receiving Extreme Unction. He made us promise to commend him to God and to plead for his mercy, to fulfill our duties faithfully, and always to remember how quickly the things of this world pass and perish. With tear-filled eyes,

- 1 [In fact, recent studies have shown that Teresa was of Jewish ancestry; see Teofanes Egido, "The Historical Setting of St. Teresa's Life," *Carmelite Studies* 1 (1980): 122-182. Throughout this essay, Edith Stein writes in light of the historical data available to her at the time. Some minor corrections (of dates, etc.) have been inserted into the text of this translation, but the basic presentation remains as she wrote it.—Tr.]
- 2 [According to recent research, the dedication of the chapel of the Monastery of the Incarnation took place in the same year (1515) as Teresa's birth, but not on the same day; see Efen de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink, *Tiempo y Vida de Santa Teresa*, 2d ed. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1977), pp. 22-25, 90.—Tr.]
- 3 [Throughout this essay, to help preserve its original flavor, citations of St. Teresa's works have been translated directly from the comparatively free German translation that Edith Stein used. In addition, for the convenience of the reader, we have inserted cross-references (in brackets) to the ICS translations of the same texts, whenever these could be located. The latter may be found in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez, vols. 1-3 (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1976-1985). The following system of abbreviations is used: F = Book of Foundations; L = Book of Her Life; C = Interior Castle; W = Way of Perfection; ST = Spiritual Testimonies. Ordinarily, the two numbers following the initial letter indicate chapter and section, respectively; for the Interior Castle, however, the first number indicates the "dwelling place." Thus, "C, 1, 2, 3" refers to the third section of the second chapter in the first "dwelling places" of the Interior Castle.—Tr.]

he told us about his pain at not having served God the Lord better and during his last moment rued not having entered the strictest order.

He suffered a great deal, mainly with a piercing pain in his shoulders that gave him not a moment's peace. I remembered his devotion to the mystery of the cross-bearing Savior and told him that God surely wanted to let him feel something of the pain that he himself bore at that time of suffering. This thought gave him such comfort that there no longer came the slightest complaint from his lips. He lay unconscious for three days. However, to our great surprise, on the day of his death God returned him to consciousness and he remained conscious to the end.

In the middle of the creed, which he himself was praying with a clear voice, he gently gave up his spirit. At the same time his features became supernaturally beautiful. He seemed to be resting in the peace of the angels. It seemed to me that he indeed became their brother at the moment of his death because of the purity of his soul and conscience. His confessor (from the order of St. Dominic) told us that he believed that our father had gone straight to heaven. [L, 7, 14-17]

This Dominican, Fr. Vicente Barron, made a deep impression on Teresa by the way in which he assisted the dying man. She asked if she could confess to him and gave him complete insight into the state of her soul. Contrary to all others before whom she had up to then accused herself, he recognized at once what she needed and advised her to take up prayer again. "I obeyed and since then I have never given it up again" [L, 7, 17].

But what followed now was not an undisturbed peace but rather years of great spiritual struggles.

This life that I was leading was very difficult because, in the light of prayer, I saw my errors newly illuminated. On the one hand, God called me; on the other, the world flattered me. Oh, my God, how could I describe all that your compassion did for me during those years or this battle that your love waged against my ingratitude! How am I to find the words to enumerate all the graces that you showered on me? At the moment I was offending you the most you suddenly led my spirit by means of deep rest to the enjoyment of your blessings and your consolations. O my redeemer! It is really true that you knew me. You knew how to punish me in the tenderest and severest way in that you rewarded my errors with good deeds.... My character made me suffer a great deal more when I received blessings after my failures instead of punishment— In an affliction I would at least have recognized a justified punishment. I would have seen this as a way of doing penance for my many sins. But to find myself showered by new favors, after so shamefully misusing the many already received, was a much greater agony for me. I firmly believe that only those who have some knowledge of and love for God can understand this.... [L, 7, 17-19]



Alonso Sánchez de Cepeda

Most souls favored by such graces experience that the interior life usually takes this course. God first draws them to himself by letting them enjoy the supernatural happiness of his beneficent presence, but then tests their fidelity by taking all joys away from them and letting them languish in dryness.

For three years I was oh so often concerned less with God and good thoughts than with the desire for seeing the end of the hour of prayer. I listened for the bell to finally ring. I would have preferred the most severe penances to the agony of being recollected at the feet of the Savior. The battle I had to endure with the devil and my wicked inclinations to make myself go to the oratory is indescribable. As soon as I entered, a deadly sadness came over me, and it took all my courage to conquer myself and give myself to prayer. Finally, God sent me help. And even if I had to force myself, I more often enjoyed consolations than than on the days when I was in a better mood. [L, 8,7]

4 According to the saint. Fourteen in the latest research. [Ed.]

The saint endured these struggles for fourteen years without ever wavering in her faithfulness. Holy Week of the year 1554 brought her release.

One day as I entered the oratory I saw before me an image of the Savior that someone had placed there for an upcoming feast day.

This image showed our divine Master covered with wounds and with such a peaceful expression that I was moved by it. More than before I apprehended what the Savior had suffered for us. At the same time I experienced my own lack of thankfulness so bitterly that it seemed my heart would break. I fell at the feet of my divine Master and through a stream of tears pleaded with him to give me the strength not to offend him any more. I called on the presence of the holy Magdalene whom I already loved fervently and whose conversion I revered. She came to my help. Without trusting my good intentions, I put my whole trust in God. If I still remember this correctly, I said to him I would not get up until he had heard my plea and I knew for certain that he wanted to grant it. For on that day true life began for me and I never stopped improving. [L, 9, 1-2]

Soon afterward this operation of grace was reinforced by a second similar one.

Someone gave me the Confessions of St. Augustine. God granted this, for I never thought of requesting it nor had I ever read it. I had hardly opened this book than I thought that I saw myself in it. With all my strength I commended myself to this great saint.... I had always loved him very much, first because the monastery in which I had been raised followed his rule, and secondly because he was a poor sinner for a long time. I believed that, because God had forgiven him everything, I could also receive my forgiveness....

I cannot describe what happened in my heart when I read the description of his conversion and followed him into the garden where he heard the voice of heaven. It seemed to me as if God were speaking to me. Overcome by regret, I remained dissolved in my tears for a long time. The Lord be eternally praised. He led me from death to life again. My renewed strength made me recognize that he had heard my call and that my tears led him to have mercy on me. [L, 9, 7-9]

9. God Alone

Teresa had completed the fortieth year of her life when the Lord rewarded her faithful perseverance and drew her to himself anew, this time forever. According to a comparison that she herself used in her *Life* to portray the various ways of praying, in her view she had up to now operated in her prayer life like a gardener who draws up the water for his garden from a deep well with a great deal of effort. She was most fond of conceiving of the Lord with the help of the imagination [Phantasie] — she especially enjoyed seeking him out at the Mount of Olives—and had tried to stay close to him. Now God came to meet her. Like the gardener who has a sufficient supply of water to let it stream forth, she could rest from her efforts. Intellect and memory could cease their activity. In this prayer of quiet, “the will alone is active and, without knowing how, it delivers itself to God like a prisoner for him to chain to himself through his love.”

The soul that surrenders to the divine attraction by this way of praying is raised above its own suffering and receives some knowledge of heavenly glory. It grows, draws near to God, and so becomes stronger. It loses its pleasure in earthly things. Why? It clearly sees that it could not for even a moment enjoy this supernatural joy on earth, that no kingdoms, no realms, no honor, no joys can offer it for even a moment this true happiness that is absolutely the only thing that can satisfy....

Since it has known nothing to surpass this joy, it cherishes no other wish. With complete justification it will say along with St. Peter, “Lord, let us make our home here.” [L, 15, 1]



God Alone

Soon the Lord himself takes over the role of gardener. The soul is raised from quiet (theologians usually call this contemplation) to union.

In my opinion, this way of praying is a clear union of the entire soul with God. The only leeway God leaves to the faculties is the freedom to recognize the great work he is doing in them. Their only activity is to be occupied with him without being able to do anything else. None of them dares to move. Strong measures would be required to divert them from their divine preoccupation, and, even so, such efforts would never succeed in tearing them away completely. The soul, entirely beside itself and moved by the sweetest rapture, would like its voice to intone hymns of praise, that everything in it could extol the superabundance of its happiness. [L, 16, 2-3]

Often enough, such hymns of praise have streamed from the lips of the saint.

At the beginning of her mystical life the duration of the union was very short, Teresa says hardly as long as one Hail Mary. But its effect was astounding.

By one single visit, no matter how short, God changed the face, the appearance of the mystical garden.... Unaware [of what happened] the soul sees itself transformed. It finds I do not know what powers to do great things. At the same time it recognizes that it could not in many years acquire those virtues that the Lord has just given it, and it feels a humility beginning in itself that is much more profound than anything beforehand....

When God the Lord raises a soul to this stage of prayer, he requires nothing more from her than a simple consent to the graces he is giving her and a full surrender to the will of his divine wisdom. He intends to dispose of her as he does of his property. [L, 17, 1-3]

Frequently the union increases to rapture. Overpowered by the force of grace and supernatural joy, the soul loses the use of its lower powers and the control of its own body.

During rapture it is almost always impossible to resist the supernatural power of attraction. The soul must have more decisiveness and courage than in the prior states. For when it is in these raptures, one feels oneself carried away without knowing where one is going or what is going to become of one, and our weak nature feels during this otherwise so delightful moment I cannot say what dread. Not only is the soul carried away, but sometimes the body also itself follows this movement, so that it no longer touches the floor. Should I want to be on solid ground again, I would feel under my feet astounding powers lifting me up against my will. It was a dreadful struggle. I remained as though annihilated and in fact I saw clearly that if God wills something, all resistance to his omnipotence amounts to nothing.

The effects of such an extraordinary favor are great. First, it demonstrates to us God's omnipotence and teaches us that we are the masters of neither our bodies nor our souls, but that we have a divine Master who does what he wants with them. The other effect is a rare detachment that I have no words to describe. One truly feels like a stranger to things here below. Because they are vying with each other, promises and heroic resolutions come from these things; lively desires, frank aversion to the world; a clear glimpse into its nothingness. Finally, this prayer leaves behind in the soul such great love that it could perish, not from pain, but from the tears of joy that it pours out.

...One hour's ecstasy or even shorter is sufficient to make the soul the mistress of itself and of all things and to give it a freedom in which it no longer recognizes even itself....

What power is comparable to the power of a soul that has been raised by God to these heights, and sees beneath it the things of the world without in the least being governed by them! How confused it is about the time when it clung to them! How amazed it is by its blindness! How greatly is it concerned over those who still live in the same darkness! It would like to raise its voice to show them their error. It would like to break their chains and tear them from the prison of this life where it itself had been locked up. But then when it looks at itself, it not only sees



the cobwebs or the great sins, but also the tiniest dust specks or the tiniest spots.... If on the one hand it contemplates the endless holiness of its God, it is blinded by his light. On the other hand, if it looks at itself, its eye seems to find her who is covered with the mud of her misery.... O happy, a thousand times happy, the soul whom God through ecstasy raises to the knowledge of the truth, [see L, 20, 3-8; 20, 25-29; 21, 1]

These recollections reveal to us the whole nature of the saint: the sensitivity of her conscience that with bitter regret accused itself when no one else could find a spot on her; the ardor of her love that made her ready to make any sacrifice for the glory of God; her concern over souls whom she wanted with all her might to rescue from ruin and to lead to the peace of the Lord. But before she was permitted to do great things as God's chosen instrument, she still had to taste the most bitter pains. ❧

In Remembrance

Elizabeth Hauss, OCDS, who made Vows on October 13th 1998, began eternal life on August 14, 2010. She was a member of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Community in Columbus, OH.

Mary Floyd, OCDS, *Marie Teresa of the Cross*, who made Vows on January 20, 1996, began eternal life on April 6, 2010. She was a member of the Mary and Joseph Community in Danvers, MA.

Rita, of the Holy Trinity, Bernatowicz, OCDS, who made Vows on September 22nd 2002, began eternal life on July 16, 2010. She was a member of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel & Saint Joseph Community in Elysburg, PA.

James Faba, OCDS, *Joseph Mary of Jesus*, who made Vows on February 11, 2007, began eternal life on June 10, 2010. He was a member of the St. Joseph Proctor Community in Harrison Township (previously Mt. Clemens), MI.

Kelly Gibson, of the Assumption, OCDS, who made Definitive Promise on November 17, 1991, began eternal life on May 3, 2010. She was a member of the St. Joseph and the Prophet Elijah Community in Moline, IL.

Mary 'Gertrude' Thompson, OCDS, *Ann of St. Joseph*, who made Definitive Promise on February 9th 2002, began eternal life on July 8, 2010. She was a member of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament in Owensboro, KY.

Lisa Wardell, OCDS, *Elizabeth of the Passion*, who made Definitive Promise on June 5th 2005, began eternal life on July 25, 2010. She was a member of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Community in Philadelphia, PA.

St. Teresa of Jesus Community in Raleigh, NC reported the death of members **Myra Gettys, OCDS**, who made Definitive Promise on November 4, 1990 and began eternal life on June 2, 1992; and **Ellen Weiss, OCDS**, who made Definitive Promise on November 19, 1994 and began eternal life on September 17, 1995.

Dawn Miller, OCDS, who made Definitive Promise on February 16th 2010, began eternal life on February 20, 2010. She was a member of the Holy Innocents Community in Rockford, IL.

Joan Gauger, OCDS, *Mary Jude of the Blessed Sacrament*, who made Definitive Promise on May 10th 1997, began eternal life on October 18, 2010; and **John O'Donnell, OCDS**, who made Definitive Promise on December 9, 1978. Both were members of the Our Lady of Mercy Community in Schenectady, NY.

St. Joseph's Community at Port Tobacco, MD recently had several members' who entered into eternal life: **Francis Garvey, OCDS** on May 18, 2010, **Dorothy Womaski, OCDS** on June 23, 2010, and **Ruth Bristow, OCDS** on July 16, 2010.

Eileen Scanlon, OCDS, *Mary Carmel of the Infant Jesus*, who made Definitive Promise in June 1960, began eternal life on June 12, 2010. She was a member of the Our Lady of Divine Providence Community in St. Paul, MN.

Delma, of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Ramsay, OCDS, who made Definitive Promise on October 14th 1990, began eternal life on July 11, 2010. She was a member of the St. Joseph's Community in Washington, DC.

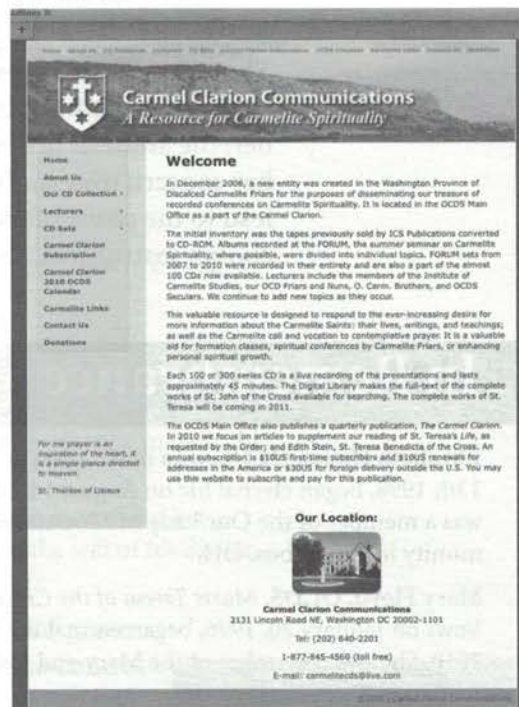
Dorothy Ellis, OCDS, who made Definitive Promise on November 14th 1993, began eternal life on September 21, 2010. She was a member of the Our Lady of the Annunciation Community in Virginia Beach, VA.

EDITORIAL CORRECTION: **Arleen Gifford, OCDS** was a member of Our Lady of Mt. Calvary in Utica, NY.

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Carmel's Quest for the Living God: A Lay Perspective

Dolores Leckey

This lecturer gives us her own lay perspective of how, over many years in her quest for the living God, Carmelites have been pivotal in her own spiritual journey. Her adult spiritual awakening happened when she was 27 and was diagnosed with Rheumatic Fever. A long recovery provided much time for contemplation. She learned to pray and eventually journeyed to Avila and discovered the importance of Teresa's work. She was impressed by how, in earlier years in the midst of caring for family, civic commitments, attempts to nurture the life of the mind, attending to vocation of marriage, Teresa - a 16th Century mystic, gave her - a lay woman of the 20th Century, both hope and a practical methodology for finding some center in the midst of the complex responsibilities of life.

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Fernando Romeral, O. Carm., Current Superior General

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By James P. Jenkins OCDS, Ph.D.

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Paul Strerath: Delivered Edith Stein in 1938 by taking her across the German border.

— *Cologne-Schlebusch, 1987*

The SS attack during the night from November 9 to 10, 1938, opened many people's eyes. A smell of death lay upon the streets of Germany on the morning of November 10. Jewish citizens had been driven from their homes at night with rubber truncheons, their businesses were demolished and expropriated. With one blow the livelihood of the Jews had been swept away. The synagogues were on fire. No one dared to level accusations out loud— In the darkness of New Year's Eve a friend of the (Cologne) Carmel, Dr. Paul Strerath, drove Edith Stein across the Dutch border by car.

— *Waltmud Herbstrith, The Real Face of Edith Stein, pp. 152-153*

Only a very reliable person could be entrusted with such a mission during the Nazi period. After the pogroms against the Jews in November 1938, it had become clear to Edith Stein that she ought no longer to endanger her monastery. The Carmel Echt in Holland had offered to take Edith Stein in. She had obtained all documents required for legal departure. Despite all precautions it was known that the guards at the Dutch border were especially strict. But Dr. Strerath had the pleasure of escorting Edith Stein safely to the Sisters in Echt at 8 o'clock at night. Strerath, his two Jesuit brothers, and his friends opposed National Socialism. The country doctor from Cologne-Schlebusch was known as a selfless, kind man who sacrificed himself completely to his profession.

He was especially popular in the children's home, Nazareth House. There are still acquaintances alive who testify, with the patients of the country doctor from Schlebusch, that you could go to him unannounced, at any hour, without insurance and without money. Dr. Strerath died on March 5, 1945.

— Fr. E. Ldufer, "Ein Leben an der Hand des Herrn"
(A life at the hand of the Lord)

Church Bulletin Cologne, Nr. 8, February 20, 1987.



Leo Sudbrack: Companion on Trip from Cologne to Echt

— *Perl, 17 August 1967 Apacherstrafte*

I consider it urgent for me to inform you that, as his traveling companion, I helped Dr. Paul Strerath, MD, bring your Sister, Dr. Edith Stein, across the border into Holland. I still recall she brought along a manuscript codex that she showed me. On each page of the book a large heart was drawn, accompanied by antiquated writing. This heart greatly impressed me and influenced considerably my work of preparing young children for their first Holy Communion. I am still happy today to have met this great woman and to have been able to share with her one of the stops along her Way of the Cross.

May her heavenly intercession bless my priestly ministry.

Most devotedly yours in the love of Christ, Dr. Leo Sudbrack, Pastor of Perl

*Rev. Dr. Leo Sudbrack was known to the nuns of the Cologne Carmel because his brother, Jesuit Karl Sudbrack, used to give them conferences. This letter reveals his little-known role in accompanying Edith Stein and Dr. Paul Strerath from Cologne to Echt on New Year's Eve, 1938. As a friend of the driver, Dr. Leo Sudbrack was a natural choice to provide companionship on the journey. With the permission of the Cologne Carmel's archivist, Sr. Amata Neyer, OCD, this previously unpublished letter has been translated by John Sullivan, OCD, and added to the English language edition of *Never Forget*.*



Valentin Fouquet:

Edith Stein: Her Greeting on August 7, 1942 at the Schifferstadt Train Station

— *Schifferstadt, 1953*

Only on August 7, 1942 around noon, I was waiting for the express train from Saarbrücken to Ludwigshafen. The train arrived, and a prison car, which had been attached to it, halted in front of me. From this car, a lady in dark clothes spoke to me, asking whether I was from Schifferstadt and whether I might know the family of Father Schwind. I answered in the affirmative, that the family of Dean Konrad Schwind, my classmate, was well known to me. She then asked me to give them regards from Sr. Teresia Benedicta, that she was Edith Stein and was traveling east. The lady appeared calm, friendly. Only a short time later, I was able to pass this message on to Miss Schwind, the sister of the Dean and niece of Edith Stein's spiritual mentor, Vicar General Joseph Schwind....



Vicar General Josef Schwind, wise advisor and cherished friend.

Pierre Cuypers: Eyewitness in Westerbork

— Echt, 1942

At 5 o'clock we had arrived in Hooghalen. There we met two gentle-men from Venlo, who had been sent by the Ursulines to Dr. Ruth Kantorowicz, an acquaintance of Sr. Benedicta. The camp is about five kilometers distant from Hooghalen. We were lucky; we got a ride on a truck carrying dirt to the camp.

In front of the camp, consisting of barracks, stood a small building where we were instructed to report to the Dutch police. We turned the telegram over to them; we offered cigars and cigarettes, and very soon a friendly dialogue developed.

It seemed that these military policemen performed their duties reluctantly. Upon our request, they sent a little Jewish boy with the telegram to the barracks where Sr. Benedicta and Miss Rosa were staying. After a few tense moments, the high barbed-wire fence opened, and from the distance we could see the brown habit and black veil of Sr. Benedicta, who was accom-panied by her sister. Our meeting was sad and joyful at the same time.

We shook hands, and, due to the joy of seeing people from Echt, the first words were a bit halting. The ice, however, was quickly broken, and we turned over everything that the Carmel had given us. Sr. Benedicta especially was very grateful for the greetings and prayers of her fellow-sisters. All written greetings as well as the note from Mother Prioress were put in Sr. Benedicta's hands, sealed, with the help of the Dutch police. She told us straight away that she had met very many acquaintances and even relatives in the camp. The trip had proceeded as follows: from Echt, with the squad car to the local headquarters in Roermond. In the evening the trip continued with two squad cars from there; one car with thirteen persons, the other with fourteen. The route went via Amersfoort, but because the driver lost his way, they did not arrive until 3 o'clock in the morning. From Echt to Amersfoort the German soldiers (SS) were very friendly toward the prisoners. In Camp Amersfoort the treatment turned hard-hearted and brutal. They were hit in the back with rifle butts, and with curses were driven to the dormitories without food. Thanks to other non-Catholic Jews, they got something anyway to relieve their hunger, and after a short night's rest in bunk beds, the transport continued very early Tuesday morning to Hooghalen and from there to the camp. Through the intervention of the *Judischer Rat*, sending a telegram was possible.

The *Judischer Rat* is very kind, especially toward the Catholic Jews. At the behest of the German authorities, the Catholic Jews are kept separate from the others. The Council can't do anything for them. They are together in a separate barrack.

Sr. Benedicta related all this calmly and with self-control. In her eyes shone the glow of a holy Carmelite. With soft words and quiet resignation she told all these experiences, but she said nothing about her personal experiences. We were asked especially to report to the Carmel that she was still wearing the habit of the Order, and that all nuns, ten in all, wanted to retain their holy habit if at all possible. Further, she told us that the people in the camp were glad that there were also Catholic



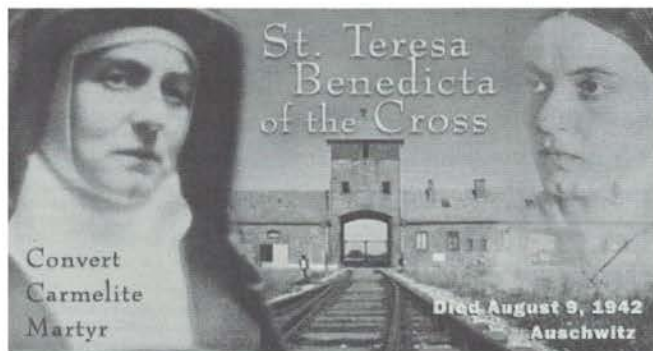
Sisters and Fathers in the camp. They were the only support in camp for all these people who were deprived of literally everything.

Sr. Benedicta was happy to be able to help with comforting words and prayer. Her deep faith surrounded her with an atmosphere of heavenly life. She stated repeatedly that Reverend Mother need not worry about her and her sister. They could pray all day long, interrupted only three times by meals. She had no complaint about food or the treatment by the soldiers. She did not know how long they were to remain at this camp. Rumor had it that that day (on August 7, a Friday) they might leave for Silesia, her homeland, but she did not yet know for sure. Miss Rosa, too, was well. She had a lot of courage for the future. The two girls from Koningsbosch are also very devout and trusting. They, too, find in the example of Sr. Benedicta a powerful support. If she were to leave, her prayer would certainly be in first place, no matter what work she might be assigned. Sr. Benedicta had written a letter to Mother Superior. She did not know whether it had arrived.

Together with P. O. van Kempen, Pierre Cuypers was the last to see Edith and Rosa Stein in the transition camp of Westerbork, Holland.

Background Information:

Edith Stein and Companions on the Way to Auschwitz



Hitler's national strategy in Europe was to conquer all of the Western continental nations, engage and conquer England and overcome Russia. The Dutch government had declared itself neutral. But in May 1940, the German army defeated the Dutch forces and occupied Holland until May 1945. Three new government offices were created as civilian agencies of the new government, Internal Affairs and Justice, Public Safety and SS Police. All played key roles in the hunt for and subsequent death of Dutch Jews (pg 4).

In summer 1941, Hitler ordered the extermination of all Jews in occupied countries, including Holland, and a formal

plan for a "final solution" of all Jews was coordinated at Wannsee, Berlin in January 1942. Organized and efficient death machines were tried out and the poisonous gas Cyclon B was seen as most efficient and effective. Auschwitz, Poland was the test site for the extermination process when 898 Russian prisoners and ill captured soldiers were executed by breathing gas in an enclosed room.

In Amsterdam, the ruling Nazi's and Dutch civilian collaborators followed procedures that lead to the identification of Jews and ultimately to their death.

Edith traveled this horrific path in August 1942 with her sister Rosa and other professed religious and lay women, all Catholic Jews, as a result of an organized program by the Nazi government in Holland to exterminate all Jews. The immediate reason for this particular vendetta against Catholic Jews "can be linked to actions taken by Catholic bishops in the Netherlands....because the bishops had stood up for human dignity and human rights in accordance with their Catholic vision of

man” (pg 2). At that time, there were about 722 Catholic Jews in the country but it is not possible to give an exact count of those murdered as a result of the bishops’ actions. The best estimate is that 113 Catholic Jews “perished because of the response of the Dutch bishops.” (pg 28).

Every journey begins with some anticipation [PIC pg 74 with caption: The police car did not wait right at the front door but closer to the street corner. Excited and protesting people had already assembled there. Also, a friend of the Carmel who had been quickly called to the scene was able to get so close to the two arrested women that they could clearly hear Edith’s exhortation to her weeping sister Rosa: “Come, let us go for our people!”] and some uncertainty, even the way to Auschwitz. This is the story of Edith Stein’s last journey with her sister Rosa, who was a Third Order Carmelite, Dr. Ruth Kantorowicz, Annemarie and Elfriede Goldschmidt, and Sister Maria Benedicta (Alice Maria Reis) of the Good Shepherd Sisters. All six women had known each other as friends and co-religious, lived in the same area of the Netherlands, were arrested within a few days of each other, rode to Auschwitz, died together in agony from poison gas and were buried in an unmarked grave. Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross was canonized as a martyr of charity by Pope John Paul II; God alone knows the heavenly joy of the others.

Sisters in Death

All the women had ties to Edith, who with her loving and gregarious nature made friends throughout her life, even in Carmel as a cloistered nun. Each of them knew Edith in Germany and in Holland. These are here companions in life.

Rosa Maria Agnes Stein

We begin with her sister, Rosa Maria, who was eight years younger than Edith, born in 1883, and raised in the Jewish faith by her parents. She had some emotional problems as a young girl and was sent to live with her aunts where she became very proficient in household management and cooking skills. For thirty years she handled the domestic household while her Mother ran the family lumber business.

Rosa and Edith became very close as adults. Edith took the leadership in this relationship and this suited Rosa who depended on her for advice, especially about her future. In 1936 she entered the Catholic Church, was baptized with Edith by her side, and “wore her sister’s white choir robed as a baptismal gown” (pg 92). In the next year the anti-Semitism in Germany increased, resulting in the “Crystal Night (Reichskristallnacht) in November 1938. Edith, now Sister Teresa Benedicta, left the Carmelite convent in Cologne and went to the cloister of the contemplative Carmel in Echt, the Netherlands in December 1938. [PIC pg 72, left with caption: Last photograph, probably in spring or summer 1942, of Rosa Stein, born 1891 (Breslau) and died 1942 (Auschwitz).] Rosa soon followed in July 1939 and wanted to enter the same convent as Edith as a contemplative. However, she was urged by the Prioress and the Provincial to become a member of the Third Order, to wear the habit and act as the portress for the convent. She made her profession as a Tertiary in June 1941 as an extern sister. The nuns from Carmel wrote about her, “We never heard her complain...She had excellent traits for managing a household and, as portress, was well-respected by the people. She, too, had a noble heart....In the evening, too, before going to bed, she had long conversations with Christ in his Eucharistic Presence.” (pg 93). When both were ordered to leave the convent, Edith took Rosa by the hand and said, “Come, we are going for our people.” (pg 94) Then, wearing their Carmelite brown habits, together they went to Auschwitz to die on the same day and be buried in a mass grave.



Dr. Ruth Renate Kantorowicz

She was born in Hamburg in 1902 of Jewish parents. The path from Germany to Holland was different for Ruth, though in some ways very much like the young Edith. She was an applied scholar for seven years and completed her studies in economics in 1930 when she received her doctorate with honors from the Friedrich Wilhelms University in Berlin. In 1934, Ruth wrote Edith that she was interested in becoming a Catholic and said, "Before all else I would like to tell you to lay all care for the future, confidently, in God's hands and allow yourself to be lead by Him entirely, as a child would." When Ruth had been three years old, Edith took her by the hand at a family celebration. They became closer when Ruth moved to Cologne and together they worked on Edith's manuscripts to prepare them for publication. In 1938, while Edith was in Holland, she began typing the manuscript, *The Science of the Cross*. Ruth lived nearby with the Ursuline Sisters. She was arrested on August 3rd and when the train to Auschwitz arrived she, Edith and others together went to the gas chamber (pg104)

Annemarie and Elfriede Goldschmidt

These women were eighteen months apart in age but very close throughout their short lives. Born in the early 1920's, baptized at an early age, educated by nuns, and as young girls they were active in the local Catholic youth organization. Their parents, also converted Catholics, sent the girls to the Netherlands because of the Nazi persecution. They lived in the same town, Echt, at a convent near Edith. On August 2, both were arrested with Edith and Rosa. "In a letter that Sister Teresa Benedicta wrote on August 4, we read, 'Two dear children from Koningsbosch (a suburb of Echt) are also with us.'" (pg 111) The girls wrote to their friends from the internment camp, "Please send very heartfelt greetings to the sister Carmelites in Echt from Miss Stein." (pg 112). All of them took the train together to Auschwitz.



Alice Maria Reis

She was a woman whose vocation became apparent only in the end. Alice was born of Jewish parents and became a Catholic when she was 27 years old. Her godmother at Baptism was Sr. Teresa Benedicta, who lived in the same city in 1930. Details of their relationship are not known; but they must have been close for Alice to ask Edith to sponsor her in the Church (pg 116). About the same time Alice was engaged to the son of a rich Jewish businessman in Mannheim; but when the family found out she had become a Catholic, the engagement was terminated. As a result Alice was hospitalized for a nervous breakdown for three months. During this time she discovered an attraction for the religious life and over a period of years applied to different convents of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. She was admitted to the novitiate in Leiderdorp, the Netherlands, in July 1934. She took as her name in religion Sister Maria Benedicta – perhaps after her godmother. Alice became discouraged during this time and left in March 1936 after a few months because of ill health. She used her early training as a nurse to earn a living; but also lived as a guest in Dutch convents of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Almedo, the Netherlands. In the spring 1941, Alice applied to the Carmelite convent in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, but was rejected because of poor health and the lack of a dowry. However, she remained as a guest and nurse in the convent (pg 119). On August 2, she was arrested at there and met Edith in a transit camp prior to the train to Auschwitz. "Alice Reis went to the baptismal font at the hand of her godmother, Edith Stein. Together with Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, she went through death to eternal life." (pg 121)

Sisters for Eternity

Ruthless Nazi efficiency worked not only the arrest, processing, and transportation of Jews from their homes to Auschwitz; but also in the last hours of life. Prisoners arrived by train after several days of poor sanitation and care. At the train station, guards hustled them out into lines, separating the men from the women and small children. The latter were informed that they would be given a shower first and a change of clothes. All clothing was discarded and the naked victims were lined up to enter a large room with multiple showerheads at the ceiling. The door was shut, and the poisonous gas, Cyclon B, was ejected from the nozzles and a near-instantaneous death occurred. Their last minute was an agony. Edith, her sister Rosa, Dr. Ruth Kantorowicz, Annemarie and Elfreide Goldschmidt, and Sister Maria Benedicta (Alice Maria Reis) became sisters for eternity. ☩



Image of Christ drawn by an inmate of cell 21 of Block 11, also known as Death Block. SS-men held their prisoners here during investigation and before execution. Etched in late 1944 or early 1945, it went unnoticed by the Nazis and has survived to this day in its original condition.



References:

NEVER FORGET, ICS Publications, Washington DC, 1998

- Paul Strerath pgs 247-248
- Leo Sudbrack pg 249
- Valentin Fouquet pg 264
- Pierre Cuypers Pg 277

Edith Stein and Companions on the Way to Auschwitz, Fr. Paul Hamans, Translated by Sister M. Regina van den Berg, F.S.G.M. Ignatius Press, San Francisco. 2010

CHANGES to the Washington Province OCDS STATUTES:

Effective immediately upon publication in the *Clarion*

It is the responsibility of each council to integrate his information with content of 12/19/2009 OCDS Legislation Booklet

ADDITIONS:

Community Life Section, page 31

5. While the size and unique circumstances of various communities point to a local approach to the specifics of attendance policies, some general principles should be kept in mind:
 - a) The need of each member to receive complete formation
 - b) Recognition that members have legitimate obligations and God-given responsibilities that may at times conflict with responsibilities to the OCDS community. Such conflicts should be the exception in an OCDS vocation.
6. Definitely Promised members who become home-bound continue to be full extended members of the local community. The community will show fraternal charity to these valued members and make every effort to maintain communications with them.
7. Local Councils may grant Leaves of Absence to any Promised member who is unable to attend meetings due to a temporary change in life circumstances. Any Leave of Absence:
 - a) Will be granted for 1 year.
 - b) May be extended, at the discretion of Council, for 6-month increments.
 - c) Council members who are granted a leave of absence must resign from the Council. (Const. # 47d)After consulting with the Council, members on Leave of Absence may return prior to the expiration date of the leave.
8. Members who stop attending meetings without communicating with the local council will be dropped from the community roster and will be considered inactive members if they do not respond to correspondence from local councils.
9. A member who has been dropped from the roster must contact the Council if they are interested in returning to active status. The Council will then inform the Main Office of the member's return.

REVISIONS:

The OCDS Provincial Council Section, page 48, # 2

ORIGINAL:

The OCDS Provincial Council shall consist of at least seven definitively professed members of the Washington Province,

TO READ:

The OCDS Provincial Council shall consist of at least five definitively promised members of the Washington Province,

The OCDS Provincial Council Section, page 48, #4

ORIGINAL:

4. A quorum for a valid vote consists of one less than the current active membership of the Council, one of whom must be the President or the presider. This number shall never be less than four. If a deciding second ballot is needed in order to break a tie vote the President will cast the deciding additional ballot.

TO READ:

4. A quorum for a valid vote consists of one less than the current active membership of the Council, one of whom must be the President or the presider. In the absence of the President the senior promised of the members present will be the presider. This number shall never be less than four. If a deciding second ballot is needed in order to break a tie vote the President will cast the deciding additional ballot.



Nairobi News

2010: An Exciting and Busy Year!

There are now ten African priests and three African deacons in the Kenyan Region of Discalced Carmelites.

In this issue, we meet our Novice in Malawi and Pre-Novices in Philosophy Studies at Consolata Institute of Philosophy

We continue to meet our brothers...



Charles Kyangu Wambus (Kenyan)
Leaving his family and country, Charles is now in the Novitiate in Malawi.

3RD YEAR OF STUDIES



Kennedy Wekesa Wekulo
(Kenyan)

2ND YEAR OF STUDIES



Harrison Wainganjo Irungu (Kenyan)
Joseph Muithi Maundu (Kenyan)



Peter Canisius Otieno
(Kenyan)



On the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, our Simply Professed renew their vows.

Front row (left to right) Br. James, Br. David, Harrison (in stripe jacket) and Fr. Abednecco

Back row (left to right) Fr. Steven, Joseph, Kennedy, Fr. Daniel, Fr. Nicholas, Fr. Phillip, Fr. Dennis and Peter



Ordination
August 19, 2010



**Fr. Daniel Mutuku Ngwili
(Kenyan) will be stationed in a
new community in the Upper
Kabete section of Nairobi.**



Reminders

Triennial Elections being held in Spring 2011

The OCDS Election Board, in consultation with Fr. Provincial and his Provincial Delegates, distributed the following instructions:

- † All Canonically Established communities and those OCDS Recognized communities with 14 or more members, who have made Temporary or Definitive Promise and are eligible to vote, will hold elections according to the process outlined in the Washington Province Statutes, pages 40-43. The election packet distributed included materials to assist in this activity.
 1. A timeline to assist in planning for the upcoming elections.
 2. Election sections of our Statutes, with clarifications imbedded in red.
 3. A form for submitting community election results to the Election Board for transmission to the Main Office by the end of May 2011.
- † OCDS Recognized Communities with less than 14 members eligible to vote received a letter stating they are to follow this process in lieu of holding elections:
 1. Communities should discuss their options for those willing to serve in positions of leadership. This is not an activity to be conducted only by the existing council.
 2. A slate of the proposed President and three council members should be forwarded to their Provincial Delegate for approval by the end of April 2011.
 3. Once the Council has been approved by the Provincial Delegate, then as per the Constitutions #53, it will elect the Formation Director.
- † Groups in Discernment will receive communication directly from their Provincial Delegate and may recommend leadership changes based upon his instructions.

Please contact the OCDS Board of Elections at ocdspcwash@gmail.com
if you have any questions regarding this process.