

**28th Week in OT Cycle B**  
Weekday 4/Thursday **TERESA OF JESUS**  
Romans 3:21-30, Luke 11:47-54

Teresa of Avila was almost 40 years old, and had already been a nun for 18 years, when suddenly: as she was praying before a statue of Christ scourged at the pillar entitled *Ecce Homo* - "Behold the Man", she experienced a profound conversion and call to prayer holiness of life.

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Thus it could be said that from that particular moment on, her soul was one who lived out the supplications of today's Psalm which states.

**"Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord hear my voice".**

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The latter years of her life demonstrate how our Lord not only heard her voice, but united himself to her by means of a "**Spiritual Marriage**". The book for which she is most commonly known as today is entitled: "**The Interior Castle**".

Amazingly, this spiritual treasure exists because she wrote it out of obedience to her confessor.

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Her book is like a spiritual roadmap that *leads into the heart of the Trinity*. And given that Jesus Christ said: "He who sees me has seen the Father" it comes as no surprise to find that its **primary focus is Jesus Christ...** for Teresa of Avila, it is the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ which is the gateway to the great mysteries of God.

Again, it is **Jesus Christ IN HIS SACRED HUMANITY** - who is pure God... it is he who is the way into the heart of the Trinity...

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The concept behind the Interior Castle lies in the many room like **LAYERS OF THE SPIRITUAL REALM**. Teresa describes seven layers to this Interior dwelling place *Where Christ is seen as the light living and emanating in the center*.

As one moves closer to the center of the Castle, the closer one moves to experiencing "Spiritual Union" with God. She explains how in this state of Union, the soul sees nothing and hears nothing, and comprehends nothing. Union lasts a short time, and seems even shorter than it really is. God presses himself so fully against the inside of the soul that when she returns to herself the soul has no doubt whatsoever that God was in her and she was in God. **MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES of the SAINTS...**

In her words:

**"Cast off your self-centeredness! And your personal will, give up your attachment to all worldly things. Practice humility, prayer, purification, surrender, and all the other good works you are familiar with. You have learned exactly what it is you ought to do, do it..."**

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Oh, how ardently Teresa would love for everyone to experience this state of Union with God – and yet, we need to remember that even if we do all the right things, that doesn't necessarily mean that God will reveal himself to us in the same way as he revealed himself to someone else. Everyone's journey to the heart of God is as unique as we are as individuals. However, there is one thing that remains true for all and that's the fact that it is sin, and nothing else; **Sin deprives us**, but never makes us deprived of the image and likeness of God residing within us. **Sin acts like A BLACK VEIL DRAPED OVER A CRYSTAL SHINING IN THE SUN.**

The remedy that dispels the darkness of sin is the light of Christ. As it was in the lives of the apostles, as it was in the life of St. Teresa, as it is in the life of all of humanity: in this Eucharist, we receive the **sacred resurrected humanity of Jesus Christ and he entrusts us with a mission**:

To help others **DISCOVER and WELCOME the Light of Christ in their own lives...**