

Module: S11 St Teresa of Avila, Doctor of Prayer



On the 27 September 1970, Pope Paul VI solemnly proclaimed Saint Teresa of Avila to be a Doctor of the Church. She was the first woman in the history of the Church to be honoured in this way even though she had never studied theology or been to University yet the Pope proclaimed her to be a teacher for the entire Church. Of Teresa, he wrote that she is “first among women for her knowledge and doctrine of Divine things” and that he had “confidence and trust that Teresa of Jesus, who was declared by a solemn decree Teacher of Christian life, will also strongly stimulate the

people of our time to grow in the love of contemplation in the soul and to the attainment of heavenly things.”

This module takes St Teresa of Avila (Teresa of Jesus) as our model and teacher and allows her to talk us through the various forms and stages of prayer that she experienced and that she so clearly articulated in her writings. By the end of the Module, you will have not only a better knowledge of the teachings of St Teresa, but a deeper understanding of the value of a life of prayer, a life to which every one of us is called, whatever our status or vocation in life.

Units 1-4 focus particularly on Teresa’s Way of Perfection, the book that contains the most basic teachings on prayer, after a lengthy description of the dispositions necessary for any serious attempt at a life of prayer.

Units 5-8 are based on the teachings contained in the Book of her Life.

Unit 9 looks at Teresa’s teaching on the Sacred Humanity of Jesus.

Units 10 -12 draw from the valuable teachings contained in her Letters and in the book of Foundations, as well as looking at some of the experiences she described in her Testimonies.

Units 13-16 focus on what is rightly considered the jewel of her writings, the Interior Castle.

This module is available to study on the following programmes:

- Diploma in Spirituality (Carmelite Studies)
- B.Th. (Carmelite Studies)