

Module S12: Elizabeth of the Trinity, transformation and mystical tradition

This module uses Elizabeth's life as a case study to think about Christian transformation from a Carmelite perspective and addresses, amongst other things, the following topics:

- Starting with an overview of her life story, it notes points of change in Elizabeth's life and investigates the relationship between Elizabeth and the contemplative tradition that forms her thought
- what the term mystic means in a Christian context and looks at some of the metaphors that are used to describe a transformative 'journey' that develops relationship
- Elizabeth's relationship with her mother, asking whether difficulties in her life are an obstruction or provide part of her formation
- Elizabeth's use of St Paul to see the transformative potential text can play in spiritual development
- the role of suffering in her personal development
- the language that Elizabeth uses to describe relationship with God
- what has changed by the end of Elizabeth's life, analyzing the type of self-understanding that is implied in her late writing and reflects on how Elizabeth speaks to us today.

This module not only focusses on Elizabeth, but also the broader issue of how we can learn from mystical writers. Studying the mystics is not just an historical exercise because their writings invite us to engage with an encounter that transcends the limitations of time. One of the principal concerns of mystical writing is to talk of the process of personal transformation that draws us into the life of Christ. Before this tradition can again enrich our own contemporary spirituality we must first define an appropriate theological language that allows us to speak meaningfully of it to others.

This module is available to study on the following programmes:

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

