

Martha and Mary Together

Deep Calls to Deep · Praying the Scriptures with St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila

What We Found

Jesus's word to Martha targets anxiety, not service: "you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful" (Luke 10:41-42). Mary's portion, the disciple's place at his feet, is the center that nourishes and directs all serving, for "apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). And the pattern of the whole Bible is contemplation overflowing into mission: Elijah meets God in the still small voice and is immediately told "Go, return on your way" (1 Kings 19:12, 15); the Twelve are appointed first "to be with him," then "to be sent out" (Mark 3:14).

St. Teresa teaches it from the summit of the Interior Castle: Martha and Mary must join together; the purpose of the deepest union is the birth always of good works. Prayer and Christian life are inseparable (CCC 2745). St. John of the Cross gives mission its field manual: where there is no love, put love, and you will draw out love.

And the study's hidden thread stands revealed: Venerable Jan Tyranowski, a Krakow tailor who believed a sermon (it is not difficult to become a saint), kept a hidden rule of prayer, and in an occupied city formed young men in Living Rosary groups, placing St. John of the Cross into the hands of young Karol Wojtyla, the future St. John Paul II, who never forgot the beauty of a soul opened up by grace. A sermon, a tailor, a rosary circle, a pope, and this study in your hands. Hidden prayer moves history. Keep the appointment.

Voices of the Church

ST. TERESA OF AVILA

At the summit of the castle Teresa answers the suspicion that mystics float away from the world: believe me, she tells her sisters in substance, Martha and Mary must join together to show hospitality to the Lord; this is the purpose of the spiritual marriage: that from it good works may be born, always good works. The soul most united to God is the most useful, and her own life witnessed to it: as her Foundations and her letters record, the years of her deepest prayer were the years of foundations, journeys, lawsuits, and administration. Fix your eyes on the Crucified, she says, and everything will seem small to you; he did not give us these desires to waste them.

The Interior Castle, Seventh Dwelling Places, ch. 4, summarized.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

In a letter written in the last year of his life, John gave a persecuted friend the sentence that summarizes Carmelite mission: where there is no love, put love, and you will draw out love. It is, we might say, contemplation's field manual: the contemplative does not wait to find love in the parish, the family, the shop, the occupied city; having received the living flame, he puts love in, and God kindles what love puts there. Everything this study has practiced exists to make a person capable of that sentence.

From his letter to Maria de la Encarnacion, 6 July 1591.

VENERABLE JAN TYRANOWSKI

A shy Krakow tailor who believed a sermon (it is not difficult to become a saint), built a hidden rule of prayer, and, when the Nazis emptied his parish of priests, was handed its young men. His method was the interior life itself: Living Rosary groups of fifteen, leaders formed one soul at a time, meetings held quietly under an occupation that punished such gatherings. He put St. John of the Cross into the hands of a young worker named Karol Wojtyla, who as St. John Paul II wrote of him with lifelong gratitude, remembering in Gift and Mystery the beauty of a soul opened up by grace. The tailor died in March 1947, four months after Karol Wojtyla was ordained a priest; nearly all the rest of the harvest he never saw. You are reading

the Carmelite doctors in a parish study tonight partly because Martha and Mary joined together in a tailor's shop.

The historical record of his apostolate, and St. John Paul II's memoir *Gift and Mystery*; declared Venerable in 2017.

Live It This Week

- Keep the daily fifteen minutes (Mary), and complete one deliberate, costly act of service (Martha) before next session; let the prayer choose the act.
- Pray John's sentence into one loveless place in your week: where there is no love, put love. Report to God, not to the group.
- Bring all your Take-Home sheets next week, including the opened Session 1 guess, for the final session's look back.

MEMORY VERSE · LUKE 10:42

"One thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her."

Before next session: Read 1 Corinthians 13 and John 21:15-19. Bring every Take-Home sheet from the study, including your opened Session 1 guess.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 2745, 863, 2013.