

DAY 5 · WEDNESDAY 14 OCTOBER · ALBA DE TORMES

Love Stronger than Death

“This is the reason for prayer... the birth always of good works, good works.”

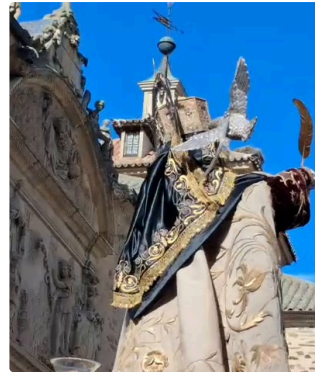
Interior Castle, VII.4.6



The people of Alba de Tormes gather for the procession of St Teresa



St Teresa carried in procession beside her convent



Our Holy Mother above the crowds at Alba



Our friars in their white mantles at Alba de Tormes

Today we travelled to Alba de Tormes, where Teresa died on the night of 4 October 1582. The Gregorian calendar came into force that very night and ten days were dropped, so the next morning was 15 October. That is why we keep her feast on the day she was born into eternal life.

On the way, two graduates of our Spiritual Direction Formation Programme (SDFP), taught by the Centre for Applied Carmelite Spirituality (CACS) in Oxford, shared the joys of the programme and of their ministry as spiritual directors. Their happiness was plain to see. They spoke as people who have discovered that accompanying others in prayer is itself a gift, one that keeps returning to the giver.

At Alba we joined the townspeople as the image of St Teresa was carried in procession past her convent, our friars among the crowd in their white mantles.

At Alba one line from our reflection captured the mystery of the place:

“Life is understood as a gift received, and death is understood as that same gift returned.”

Teresa’s last years were spent on the road, founding, writing, serving, worn out for the Church. By the end it was no longer Teresa who lived, but Christ who lived in her (Galatians 2:20). Her dying words, “I die a daughter of the Church,” were the words of someone handing back a gift with gratitude.

PAUSE AND PRAY

If your life is a gift received, what would it mean to hold it with open hands today?

Watch on Instagram: [Two SDFP graduates](#) · [The gift returned](#)

Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things pass; God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing. God alone suffices. — St Teresa of Jesus