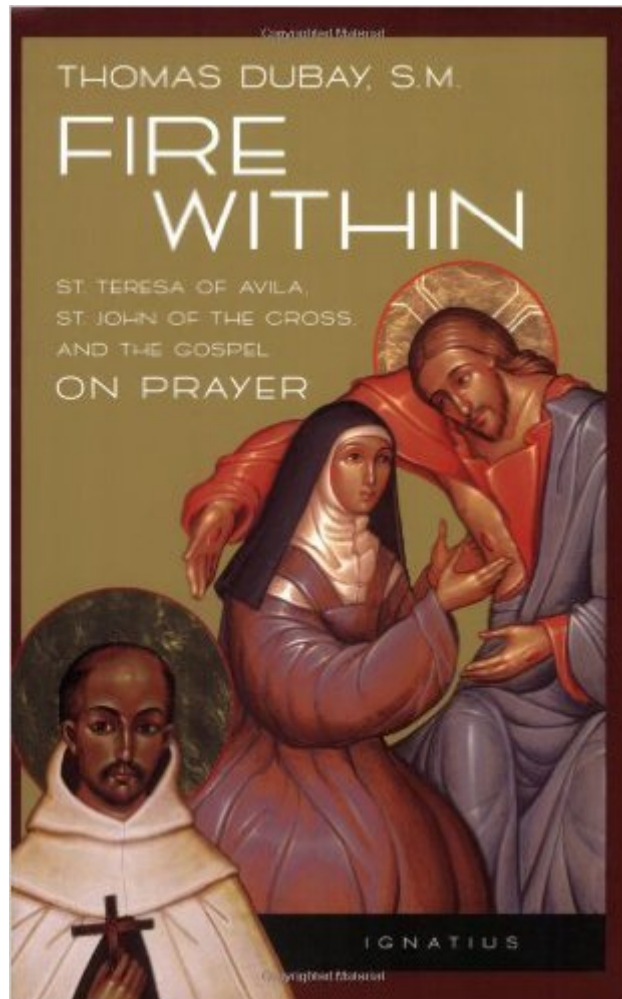


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# Fire Within: St. Teresa Of Avila, St. John Of The Cross And The Gospel-On Prayer



## Synopsis

This book is the fruit of Fr. Dubay's many years of study and experience in spiritual direction and in it he synthesizes the teachings on prayer of the two great doctors of the Church on prayer--St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila--and the teaching of Sacred Scripture. But the teaching that Fr. Dubay synthesized is not collected from Teresa and John for contemplatives alone. It is meant for every Christian and is based on the Gospel imperative of personal prayer and the call to holiness. All the major elements of these great teachers are ordered, commented on and put in the context of their scriptural foundations. Here is an outstanding book on prayer and the spiritual life written by one of the best spiritual directors and retreat masters of our time, and based on the writings of the Church's two greatest mystical doctors.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is a must for anyone who desires a closer relationship with God. It is literally a life-changing book and shows how deep contemplative prayer is possible for anyone in any walk of life. It dispels many misconceptions and objections about contemplative prayer: that it is impractical, takes too much time, is esoteric or has nothing to do with everyday life and relationships. The author, basing himself squarely on two great masters of prayer, St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, emphasizes that contemplative prayer is a gift of God; we cannot "earn" it or merit it in any way, though we have to make ourselves open to it by trying to live more and more according to Jesus' gospel. It does not depend on techniques (despite what many people think), but God will not give it unless we really want it. Contemplative prayer, a deep immersion in God, as Fr. Dubay so

passionately puts it, is the "one thing" of the gospel, the "pearl of great price", yet God wants it for everyone. I don't come across many books that have changed my outlook on life, but this is one.

Fr. Thomas Dubay has been able to synthesize the teachings of two of the greatest teachers and mystics in the Catholic tradition. A comprehensive discussion of St. Teresa's "mansions" and St. John of the Cross's "dark night of the soul," this book is also a practical guide for people who want to grow in prayer and in the universal call to holiness. Fr. Dubay is an authority on both theory and practice, and is a much sought-after spiritual director. His explanation of discerning genuine encounters with God versus one's own self-delusion is especially useful in the realm of contemplation, since contemplation is by its very nature not an objective experience. He elucidates the movement from meditation to contemplation and distinguishes it from other psychological states. His chapter on friendship and the development of virtues sets the entire contemplative experience within the context of the goal and purpose of prayer. This is a meaty book, but it is well worth the effort.

Happy the day I found this book! In my busy life it's very rare for me to drop every non-essential and read a book in ten days, highlighters in hand, then go back and read it again. I wish I had found it 20+ years ago. I enjoy the style: there is no pomposity, and I did not find it repetitive. It made the works of Teresa of Avila and, in particular, of John of the Cross much clearer. It has cleared up many questions I had. The best book I've seen in the last 10 years. (What did I find before then which is so good? - The Navarre Bible published by the Four Courts Press in Dublin / Scepter in the US / Baroque Books in Vancouver.) Away with the self-help books, the technique books, the books with false promises. Here is Truth.

This book is basically a How-to guide on how to be a Christian mystic, focusing on the writings and life of John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila. It is a very concise book, and is not light reading, but I enjoy that fact. I highly recommend this book for the individual interested in deepening their experiences with the Triune God.

This book is a phenomenal introduction to some of the best writers of the spiritual life--John of the Cross and his contemporary Theresa of Avilla. This book will give everyone a clear, succinct, insight into these giants of spirituality whose writings have stood the test of time. The book discusses their lives, and their writings and compares it to the gospel understanding. The author, DuBay, rightly

concludes that EVERYONE is called to be a mystic! Then explains what that process is! A must read for anyone who wants to grow in their relationship to God!

Thomas Dubay has given us a masterful overview in well organized, lucid style, on the works of the towering mystical doctors of the church. His book, steeped in the peerless wisdom of Teresa and John of the Cross, requires careful, attentive reading on every page. The reader will be rewarded with an increased understanding of these two saints whose hearts were enkindled with divine love, and whose lives were incandescent with joy. A central theme of the book is that God's call to contemplative prayer and, in its highest form, transforming union with Himself, is for every believer, not just for a "fortunate few" enclosed within monasteries. "Scripture knows nothing," Dubay writes, "of two ways to God and two differing prayer paths, one for the many, the other for the few." Many readers will be surprised to learn that contemplative prayer is "infused," a grace coming directly from God, and not something they can laboriously acquire through techniques or discipline. Every believer is called by "the still, small voice within," as Elijah was. At the beginning of this ancient spiritual journey, we use discursive and vocal prayer, and our own meditations on scripture. We do our part, as much as we can; seeking God's presence, avoiding sin, practicing faith, hope, and charity, striving to bring our own wills in accordance with God's. In His time, and subtly at first, the wonderful-beyond-words grace from the Lord begins to flow. Dubay clearly, matter-of-factly details, from the writings and the lives of Teresa and John, what to expect as we enter this most holy, most challenging of all human endeavors. His book is an invaluable aid to all Christians, from those on the first steps of the age-old path, to those traveling on its higher reaches.

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