

12. December 2025  
THE ADVENT JOURNEY  
Day 13: “The Interior Life”

This week's meditations lead us step by step toward the theme of contemplation.

In our Holy Church, we have a rich mystical tradition that describes the profound encounter between God and the soul and invites us to embark on such a journey. We know of religious orders that devote themselves entirely to contemplative prayer and, in this way, present to God all the concerns and intentions of the Church and the world. They withdraw completely from the world and allow the flame of divine love to burn in their hearts.

Certainly, this is a special vocation that is not meant for everyone. However, the interior journey—such as the path taken by contemplative Carmelites—contains essential aspects for all who wish to deepen their faith. Just as in the world we learn from those who are experts in a particular field, on a spiritual level we can learn from those who have intensely cultivated the interior life.

In yesterday's meditation, I concluded by saying that we should seek moments to withdraw and enter into deeper contact with the Lord, thus responding to His desire to communicate with us in a trusting and familiar relationship.

In fact, the Lord tells us in the Gospel: *“When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”* (Mt 6:6)

St. John of the Cross, one of the most prominent spiritual teachers, explains it this way:

*“It should be known that the Word, the Son of God, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is hidden in the inmost being of the soul. Hence the soul that would find Him must depart from all things according to its affections and will, and enter within*

*itself in deepest recollection, as though all things were not. (...) God is therefore hidden in the soul, and there the good contemplative must seek Him with love.”<sup>1</sup>*

We see, then, that God dwells within us and draws us to seek Him within ourselves.

Spiritual teachers remind us that we should not allow ourselves to be absorbed by external things. This is an essential point for deepening our inner life. We easily allow external things to determine us; we let ourselves be carried away, we attach our hearts to passing things and people, seeking comfort in them and placing our hope in them, and so forth.

However, all this prevents us from deepening and encountering God in the depths of our soul. We could say that we are busy and entertained with the things of this world. Generally, these occupations are so absorbing that they also affect the time we would truly like to devote exclusively to God.

Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalene, a Discalced Carmelite, writes on this subject:

*"I understand, my God, that in order to find You, I must leave behind all things: the noise and commotion of external life, the chatter about worldly things, the curiosity that leads me to go out to see, to hear, to know... To leave behind this whole external world, which constantly wants to capture my attention, my thoughts, my affections. Help me to silence my useless curiosity and my excessive chatter. Help me to pass through all the vicissitudes of life, all its insistent attractions, its bustle, its accelerated returns, without my gaze and my heart becoming attached to these things, seeking in them satisfaction, consolation, or personal interest."*<sup>2</sup>

While this applies particularly to souls who lead a life withdrawn from the world and totally focused on God, it is also valid for all who want to intensify their journey with the Lord. It would be an illusion to believe that one can deepen one's spiritual life without being willing to leave behind what hinders us, while remaining stuck in a superficial life and finding our "home" in it.

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<sup>1</sup> St. John of the Cross: *The Spiritual Canticle*, Song 1, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalene, O.C.D., *Geheimnis der Gottesfreundschaft [Divine Intimacy]* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder Freiburg, 1957), 41.

How strange it would seem to us Catholics if, for example, worldly customs were adopted in a contemplative monastery! We would see it as a contradiction and speak of the “worldliness” of the monastery.

But in the same way, it seems strange if we Christians do not seriously walk the path of interior transformation and our habits resemble those of people who do not know the Lord and are not yet able to receive the grace He has prepared for them. It would be equally contradictory, and we would be contributing to the growing worldliness of the Church.

Thus, the growth of our spiritual life is not only fruitful for our own sanctification but also for the witness we are called to give to those who seek God.

Therefore, if we want to seriously deepen our journey of following Christ, the invitation to enter into our own hearts, where the Lord has made His dwelling, becomes more relevant than ever.

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**Meditation on the reading of the day:** <https://en.elijamission.net/a-burning-heart-2/>