

## Planned events include:

### Opening Mass:

Carmelite Priory,  
Kensington

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2014, 7pm

### Academic conference:

*Mystical Theology and Spirituality  
in the Carmelite Tradition*

St Mary's University, Twickenham

18 - 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
[www.smuc.ac/inspire](http://www.smuc.ac/inspire)

### Retreat days and pilgrimages:

Walsingham 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Spain, 31<sup>st</sup> Aug - 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015

### Closing celebration:

Aylesford Priory, Kent  
Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2015

For updates check: [www.teresaofavila.org](http://www.teresaofavila.org)

## What is the Carmelite Forum?

The *Carmelite Forum of Britain and Ireland* is a joint initiative of the Order of Carmelites and the Order of Discalced Carmelites.

Members represent groups living or interested in Carmelite spirituality in the twenty-first century. These include nuns, friars and lay members of the two Carmelite Orders.

### For further information:

Website: [www.teresaofavila.org](http://www.teresaofavila.org)

Facebook: [teresa500](https://www.facebook.com/teresa500)

Twitter: [@carmeliteforum](https://twitter.com/carmeliteforum)

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[WWW.TERESAOFAVILA.ORG](http://WWW.TERESAOFAVILA.ORG)

# Teresa 500

The fifth centenary  
celebrations  
of the birth  
of St Teresa of Avila

2014 - 2015

The Carmelite Forum of Britain and Ireland

St Teresa was born on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1515 into the religious and political ferment of medieval Spain.

She entered the Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation in Avila in 1535. The Incarnation was a large monastery with over one hundred sisters.

Teresa longed for a smaller community more deeply rooted in the principles of the early Carmelite hermits and with a greater emphasis on solitary prayer.

In 1554 Teresa experienced a radical encounter with Christ which was the flowering of a rich spiritual life. From then on, Teresa was convinced that prayer was best understood as a living friendship with Christ.

In 1562 Teresa founded St Joseph's the first monastery of her reform. Over the next fifteen years she established a further seventeen communities of nuns dedicated to prayer. In 1568 a group of friars also joined the reform.

Prayer is nothing else  
than an  
intimate sharing  
between friends.

St Teresa of Avila

Teresa taught her approach to prayer in her books and letters. She used vivid images drawn from daily life, likening prayer to the different ways of watering a garden, and imagining the soul journeying towards God as through a castle.

Teresa died on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1582 and was canonised in 1622. She was declared a Doctor of the Universal Church in 1970, meaning that her teaching has significance for all Christians.

Through the centuries, Teresa's life and writings have influenced saints and other writers, not least her namesake St Thérèse of Lisieux, the 'Little Flower'. Teresa continues to inspire people from all walks of life even today.

Throughout 2014-2015 there will be events to celebrate the fifth centenary of Teresa's birth, and to explore the ongoing significance of her life and teachings.