

St. JOHN OF THE CROSS

Feast: 14th December

Born in Avila, Spain, John grew up in poverty. His father died early on. His mother, a devout Christian earned money through weaving.



Sent to boarding school for the destitute, John received good religious education which influenced him towards religious life.

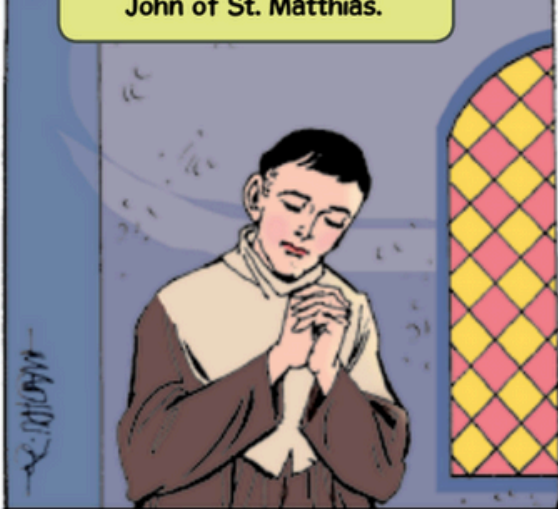


Years later, he began assisting at a hospital while attending a Jesuit school. He took care of the patients with great love.



O Jesus, I feel your presence here!

He joined the Carmelite order and took the name, John of St. Matthias.



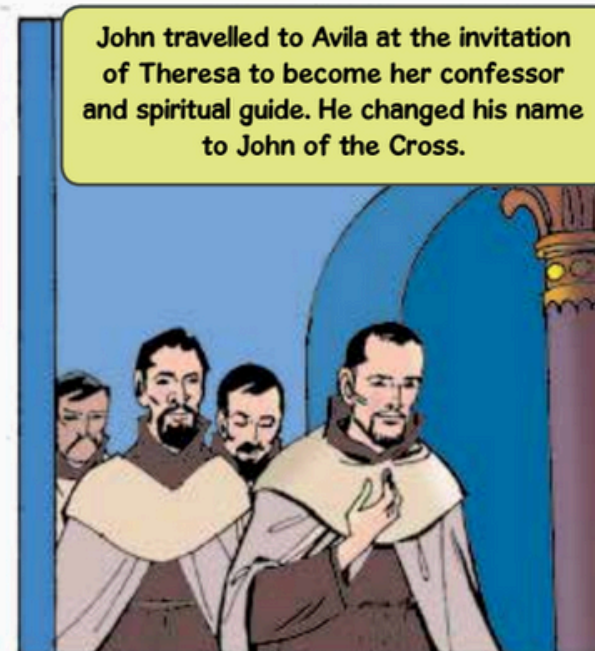
John met the charismatic Carmelite nun, Teresa of Avila. He liked the simple strict rules followed by the nuns. They went barefoot, and were therefore known as the discalced Carmelites.

John can we work together?

Sure Mother.



John travelled to Avila at the invitation of Theresa to become her confessor and spiritual guide. He changed his name to John of the Cross.



A disagreement broke out between the Discalced and the ordinary Carmelites over reform, causing a rift.

I will follow the original rule of the Carmelites.

So will I.



A group of Carmelites opposed to reform, kidnapped John. He was imprisoned and brutally punished.

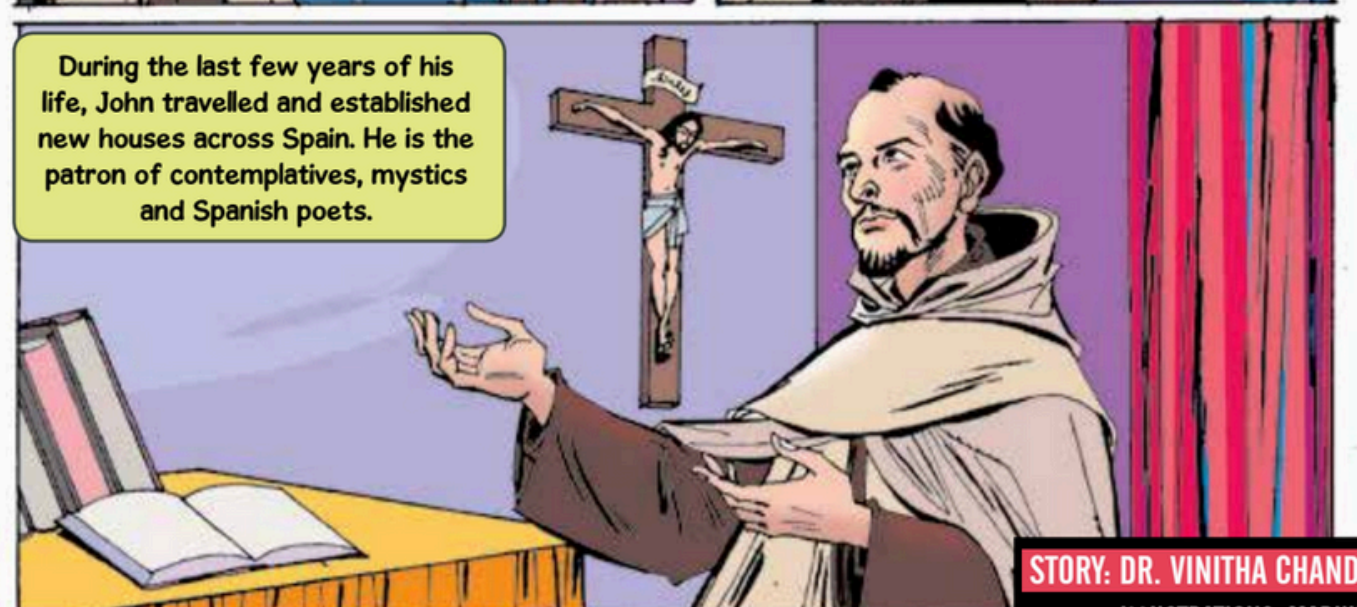


Lash him publicly, then return him to the cell.

To pass the time he wrote poems on paper given to him by the friar guarding his cell. After nine months, John managed to escape.



During the last few years of his life, John travelled and established new houses across Spain. He is the patron of contemplatives, mystics and Spanish poets.



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