

is the ideal of womanhood as both mother and spouse of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit.

This a compelling introduction to the life and works of Edith Stein, written in an accessible style for those who wish to become acquainted with her spirituality and thought.

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POSSELT, TERESIA RENATA, *Edith Stein: The Life of a Philosopher and Carmelite*, (eds.) Susanne M. Batzdorff, Josephine Koeppel & John Sullivan. 2005, pp. xix, 372. ICS Publications, 2131 Lincoln Road NE, Washington DC 20002-1151, USA (www.icspublications.org). ISBN 0-935216-36-7. \$15.95.

This is a fresh English translation of the very first biography of Edith Stein, Saint Teresa Benedicta a Cruce, written in 1947 by her novice mistress and later prioress of the Cologne Carmel, Sister Teresia Renata of the Holy Spirit (Teresia Renata Posselt), and first published in Germany in 1948. The original appears here in a revised edition, translated and edited by Edith Stein's niece Susanne Batzdorff, as well as Sister Josephine Koeppel of the Carmel of Elysburg, Pennsylvania, and the Rev. Dr. John Sullivan, Chairman of the Institute of Carmelite Studies, in collaboration with Maria Amata Neyer, of the Cologne Carmel, who also contributes the Foreword.

This biography describes the most important moments in the life of Edith Stein: her upbringing in a Jewish family in Prussia, her disengagement from religion as a teenager; the study of philosophy under Husserl in Göttingen, which paved the way for her conversion to Catholicism and active lecturing as a philosopher. Her entry into the Cologne Carmel is eloquently portrayed. We learn about Edith Stein's flight from Nazi persecution and death at the gas chambers shortly after arriving at Auschwitz.

Written by a fellow Carmelite who knew her well from the Cologne Carmel, and as the first testimony of Edith Stein's life, beatified in Cologne in 1987 and canonized in Rome in 1998, it remains a fundamental first hand account. Since this work was composed from memory and without the original documents, some of the missing information is supplied or corrected by the editors.

The work presents an array of narrators through letters written or received by Edith Stein. Chapter 4, 'My first semester in Göttingen', is an autobiographical account of Edith Stein's first semester in Göttingen, and describes her new acquaintances in the university town as she moved about its philosophical circles.

As the title indicates, the book focuses on the saint's philosophical and religious interests and pursuits. In philosophy her study of contemporary and medieval currents is highlighted, in particular phenomenology as taught by

Husserl, and later the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas after her conversion to Catholicism aged thirty, upon reading the *Life* of St. Teresa of Avila.

Naturally, in addition to these philosophical interests, phenomenology under the influence of Husserl and St. Thomas Aquinas, the book accompanies her spiritual development upon conversion to Catholicism; her thorough study of Catholic theology, her early attraction to monastic life, the desire to become a Carmelite and subsequent entry into Carmel. Edith Stein's acceptance into the monastery coincides with the rise to power of the National Socialist party and the start of persecutions against the Jews. The key philosophical and religious moments are clearly portrayed and explained, without overlooking cultural and political aspects.

The strong personality and holiness of the philosopher and Carmelite clearly emerges from this biography. In particular, her acceptance to follow the fate of her fellow Jews, in spite of early attempts to escape Nazi persecution, is eloquently highlighted.

This biography will be an important element in the field of Edith Stein studies.

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VITA SPIRITUALIS

BERND JASPERT, *Mönchtum und Protestantismus. Probleme und Wege der Forschung seit 1877. Band 3. Von Karlmann Beyschlag bis Martin Tetz.* Si tratta del Supplemento delle REGULAE BENEDICTI STUDIA, vol. 19, Eos Verlag, Erzabtei St. Ottilien, 2007. ISBN 978-3-8306-7286-9.

Dopo la stampa del secondo volume di "Monachesimo e Protestantismo", l'autore di questo presente studio, il prof Dr. Bernd Jaspert, raccoglie ed interpreta i problemi e i racconti di autori protestanti del secolo scorso (dal 1953 fino al 1979), con la scelta delle opere importanti scritte in lingua tedesca. Tra gli ultimi capitoli di questo suo libro egli espone uno studio bibliografico sulla Regola di San Benedetto e sulle conseguenze dell'incontro dei protestanti con essa, mostrando infatti l'influsso sulla scelta e accettazione del monachesimo da parte dei non cattolici cristiani. La sua esposizione fa conoscere le fonti e soprattutto gli studi, cioè l'ampia letteratura, nata soprattutto in lingua tedesca. Nel suo profondo lavoro Bernd Jaspert ritiene opportuno di riportare anche Karl Rahner (con tutte le sue opere complete) e altri scrittori.

L'esposizione di Bernd Jaspert sul Monachesimo, che spera di venir accettata e presa come esempio per fare una vita consacrata di tutti cristiani, basandosi sulla fondazione di monasteri, si appoggia in gran parte alla Regola