

St Edith Stein, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross:

Her Life and Teaching.

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1st Talk

Father Matt opened the first talk with the Prayer of Queen Esther, this prayer which was important to Edith Stein, the prayer for her Feast.

We look at how Edith would see her life. What would she say is the core, essence, heart of what her message is. To let her answer this we quote from the Science of the Cross which draws together the teaching of St John of the Cross. The book brings us deeply into her prayer life in those last months. What she herself is living. This gets us close to what she says about her life, looking back at it.

She comments on John choosing his name "of the Cross". The change of title expressed the distinguishing mark of his life, to live the life of the Cross in Discalced Carmel. Participating in the life of the Cross defines what her Carmelite life is. Edith sees in this what it means to be Carmelite. In Carmel she discovers her identity and becomes her true self.

What does she mean by this? We bear in mind this name "of the Cross" is what she chose. She comments that John of the Cross was not a neophyte in the religious life, by changing his name he would take the emblem of the Cross on himself, which is what Edith Stein did! She chose the name "Teresa". Teresa of Avila was the greatest influence in her life. She lived Teresa's spirituality as she had taught it. She found what she was searching for in Teresa, an understanding of what she herself was. Teresa of Avila is critical to our understanding of Edith Stein. She also chose the name "Benedicta". Benedict: the Benedictine influence upon her for she had found a home in Benedictine spirituality for some years.

"Of the Cross", like John of the Cross, she saw the depth of meaning in the Cross. When we speak of the Science of the Cross it is not a theory, something defines, neither is it a structure of ideas. "What we are dealing with is a well recognised truth, a theology of the Cross, a real living truth", something which we recognise from experience, not something told to us. What is theology? It literally means the study of God. Edith views it as being our understanding and experience of God which is real. The Cross makes God real. In the Cross we meet with, encounter the truth of the reality of God. The Cross is a theology revealing who God is, as it is expressed in the Gospel of St John. Real, living, effective, it changes us. It is buried in the soul like a seed that grows in us, deep within each one of us. The most profound truth of revelation of God is not "out there", from somewhere else, but within the person, like a seed taking root and growing. It makes a distinct impression on the soul, what it does and what it omits; the attitudes and kind of person one is comes from this. Another dimension is shown in what a person does and is, from that deepest place within the soul. "In this sense I speak of a science of the Saints, from this a perspective of life arises. Strength comes from the experience of the Cross in that deep place within". A perspective of life rises from there and the image one has of God comes from deep within. One's understanding of the world finds expression in a mode of thinking.

This in essence is what Edith's life is about. She gives pointers as to how we can access this. She goes on to look at the world; "What we have known leaves us cold and leaves us preoccupied with our own ideas, a rigidity and concern about ourselves, a numbness of feeling in the religious sphere". The facts of salvation history no longer have any influence on the soul. This is a fundamental problem with many believers; depression, rigidity, numbness. The Cross does not impress upon a person as it should, people are left cold. Its strong influence on life is lacking.

She looks at three elements from St John of the Cross. A holy realism; the original inner receptivity

of being born in the Holy Spirit, of having the capacity to receive, the realism of a child. A child may not naturally have the maturity nature and grace. "Whoever is seeking truth is seeking God". The capacity to receive truth is made greater through Baptism. The artistic expression of St John of the Cross to express in songs what transpires in his soul. What he writes about his poetry, the prose, serves to explain the poems, his artistic expression. The Saint, the Child, the Artist are able to be receptive to this, to be changed, transformed and to express that. Edith is the Saint, child, artist. There is a childlike element in Edith, a capacity in her to absorb. She loved putting on plays as a child, and later when she was in Carmel; the Artist. In her life Edith becomes all three.

In her greatest theological work she opens it by saying "This is a book by beginners for beginners....". Of course, it is not, it is very deep and complex, but she always saw herself as a beginner. She expresses herself with clarity. The Science of the Cross rooted in her has grown and it is where her way of seeing God and the world comes from; by becoming more and more childlike, to wonder and grow. Edith could understand and express this. All genuine art is revelation, of God revealing himself. All artistic creation is sacred service. The Crucified One demands from the artist more than portrayal of the image; he has to become the image. Edith becomes the artistic drawing of the Cross, beyond artistic expression. Holiness is real. The wisdom of salvation history, of the Cross, is expressed in her life.

2nd Talk

Fr Matt opened this talk with Edith's Prayer to the Holy Spirit which she wrote at Pentecost 1942.

This talk looked at the background to Edith's life, the human historical context in which she lived. We need to understand her background as it is into that story that the Holy Spirit comes. We are not just looking at history but a context into which the Holy Spirit flows and gives meaning. These facts are simply the foundation to what is built on them. In addition to the Holy Spirit we have the unique person. In Edith's case looking at the details of her context is a difficult subject. She lived through the most difficult and painful circumstances, fraught with issues. How do we really know her? Pieces of history can be disputed so we have to be wary of making assumptions as the situations are complex.

What makes Edith who she is? St. John Paul II declared her to be the Patroness of Europe. She lived a life that touches almost all the influences that shaped Europe in the 20th Century. We see the work of the Holy Spirit in this.

At the beginning of Edith's Doctoral Thesis on Empathy, written during the First World War, there is a little biography in which she says; "I am a Prussian Citizen and Jewish" which says a lot about her history. She saw no conflict in this.

Her political background was strongly Prussian and Nationalistic, in a time where there was conflict around Poland's identity and Germany's borders. In the middle of the First World War Prussia was at war with most of Europe. Edith believed in the rightness of Germany's cause, although she remained in touch with her English friends during the war. She's a Jew; a complex subject, difficult to speak of without debate. She came from a Jewish family, not orthodox Jews but assimilated into Jewish culture. Her mother was devout but the rest of the family were not. We ask how well did Edith know about Judaism while growing up? Most of her perspective on Judaism was written when she was an adult, when she was already a Christian. She only came to appreciate her background after becoming Catholic. We must be careful not to draw conclusions about this as we know so little. But we do now that she was proud of being Jewish. Her social milieu was Jewish but it was not a closed Jewish society. Her family was different to the majority of Jews dispersed

over Europe who were poor.

Edith was born into this cultural context with all her gifts and the education she received. Her Father died when she was young, leaving the family bankrupt, but her mother, against the advice of others, decides to continue to run the business. The older children receive little education as the family was poor at that time, but the two youngest received a University education. It was rare for girls to go to university at this time. Edith chose to study philosophy, history, German, psychology among her subjects. She became highly educated, involved in the feminist movement and budding trade unions. She was politically active and broke new ground in terms of what she did. Her life story, interests, decisions and choice of friends made up who she was.

The question of faith and religion and how influential this was in early days is difficult to say. She gave up prayer in her teenage years. She became an atheist, but we don't know what this meant to her. It's not easy to define. She didn't practice her faith and seemed to have left aside the question of religion. At the end of her thesis on Empathy she refers to religious experience but says it is not clear, leaving it to further exploration. She leaves it on one side. Her driving force is her search for truth; this defines her choice of philosophy, Husserl and his study of phenomenology. She is a woman of learning who likes to look at things. No half answers or holding back from involvement. She is interested in life in all its dimensions. This search brings her to Catholicism. Her becoming a Christian changes her 100%, but on the other hand it doesn't. Her Christianity is a growth and development of who she is. A good example of this is her feminism: her lectures on women, women's education, women in church, women in society. She brings her feminism into her Catholic faith. She helps develop the role of women in society and sought to inspire women. Christianity broadened her perspective.

The political situation cast a darker and darker shadow over her. Initially there were just a few hints of prejudice towards her as a professor in an academic environment, more a fact that she was a woman than a Jew. Later her Judaism became an issue. No one would consider having a Jewish teacher on their faculty. The antisemitism grows and develops. Edith's becoming Catholic was not a leaving Judaism. Her appreciation of being Jewish grows and develops, even when she is in danger, she doesn't hide who she is. She tries to understand it more deeply.

Edith doesn't fit into a neat narrative. It is more complex. Respecting Edith, her time, context and those around her who often saw things so differently to her. There was the pain and suffering of her family, their confusion and questions. Into all this comes the Holy Spirit, the life of God coming into our world, into human experience and history.

Why do we need Edith Stein? She bears witness to the life of God in the complex history in which we live, the key issues in which she found herself. The revelation and work of God. The deeper her prayer life became the more engaged with society and understanding she became. She learns through life that our understanding of life cannot be confined to academic learning. She studied history, psychology, philosophy, languages in order to understand the world view of others. All this understanding is limited without a relationship with God, the events of salvation history imprinted within the depths of the person. This is where the deepest understanding comes from.

Edith is a young woman who wants to know the truth and who desires to learn. This only comes about when she discovers the presence of God.

3rd Talk Edith's Baptism and Conversion

Fr Matt began by reading the poem which Edith wrote for her sister Rosa's Baptism in December 1936. Her older sister was baptised on Christmas Eve. This poem also reflected her own experience.

How can we speak about Edith's experience? We need to tread carefully with words. The word conversion, especially in Edith's case. Edith was never an orthodox Jew. She converted to a certain extent, but she considered herself an atheist. It is preferable to use terms like her point of arrival, her coming home, of her search for truth. Her Baptism was not a major rupture but a consequence of her search for truth, with honesty and thoroughness. It was within a certain world environment where Christ kept popping up. Some of her friends and colleagues were Christian so she had contact with Christianity in many ways. Her's was a deeply personal journey, a work of the Holy Spirit deep within her person.

Edith wrote a lot, but she remains difficult to get to know. Her siblings gave her the childhood nickname "Sealed with the Seven Seals" as she was so secretive. When her Spiritual Director died (in the confessional!), she went straight to his office and located a file which had all the letters which she had written to him. She took the file and burnt all the letters, ensuring that this part of her life remained secret.

Edith had examined the possibility of faith in her thesis and laid it aside, but it was firmly in her mind. It was part of her and of others whom she loved and respected. She didn't practice faith or pray but whether she was actually an atheist is debateable. She was always searching for truth, for God. One can search for something, acknowledge its existence, become expert on it without actually "jumping over the cliff".

"A convinced atheist learns from personal experience that there is a God...He can choose instead the scientific world view instead". He may not choose to respond. She spent years saying that she's a convinced atheist, but was led to experience that there is a God. The experience could have been eluded to avoid changing her world view. "The Science of the Cross impresses is impressed upon the soul and the whole world view changes. This experience might not be allowed to change the world view. Something is required to allow it to change, something has to happen. The journey towards faith is a straight line in one direction, but the point of arrival hits upon the person in a particular way. In Edith's case it was Teresa of Avila's book of her life. This book "pushed her over the cliff, transforming her completely.

This was a point of discovery, of arrival.. It changes her world view of everything. She is still who she was but her perspective has been broadened. Her search for truth continues, her feminism, political engagement etc. There is both continuity and change. She has come to terms with her "car crash". She becomes more herself, more who she was created to be.

What might it be in Teresa's book, in Teresa of Avila that could change Edith's life? There was no greater influence in her life.. Teresa was a woman, most philosophers were men, most theologians and writers were men. Here's a woman who could be an equal to Edith, an intellectual, a writer. She could have got on (or fought?) with her. Kindred spirits. When she read Teresa something struck a deep place within her. It is the life that Christ lives in her (taken from St Paul). This was Teresa's personal experience of Jesus, her relationship with him. She's been through the struggle and it has been resolved through relationship. Edith spent her life searching for truth in academic study, now she meets another woman who has discovered truth through experience of Christ. She gains her whole world view from meeting with Jesus Christ.

From the last Chapter of the Book of her Life, written 300 years earlier, CH. 40 Teresa says; “I was given knowledge of truth.... the fulfilment of all truth.... this is no small thing.... from this divine truth that is shown me by God... I have a keen desire to speak only of what is true. The Lord gave me understanding of what truth is. All other truths depend on this...”. Teresa makes clear that she didn't find or discover truth, rather truth made itself known to her. Truth is not our discovery. One's fundamental relationship is not one of understanding and control but is one of humility. All other truth and love depends on this. It is not one truth among many, it is bigger than anything we can grasp. Once revealed we can know it and enter into it. This truth does not overpower or control, it enters into relationship. The search for truth doesn't stop, that continues. It doesn't negate the need for intellectual study. It takes time for Edith to see this. Her whole relationship with it has changed. Truth has been made known to Edith, the inevitable decision is to say “yes” to truth, to what her heart and mind have known for a long time. She couldn't have done it without Teresa. The rest of her life is a living out of the life of Teresa. In practical terms this leads to three decisions: to become a Christian, a Catholic, and to enter Carmel. Her Baptism was a fundamental YES to God, to what Teresa has said to her.

4th Talk

Fr Matt Began by reading the Gospel for the Feast of Edith Stein, the story of the woman of Samaria in John's Gospel Chapter 4. This choice of reading for the feast shows how the Church sees St Edith Stein. Jesus indicates to the woman of Samaria that the consequence of her life and context is the way in which she relates with God and that it changes to a much more authentic relationship through this encounter.

Edith by now is fully initiated into the Church. Let us take that forward and look at the next eleven years of Edith's life. What indication do we find as to how she lived those years? Everything has changed through her Baptism. A new life, but she is still the same person. What she see now, what has gone before is seen in a new light. The person who is seeking truth is seeking God, as St John of the Cross reminds us. Through Baptism the eyes are opened and a person then sees differently. This perception takes time and Edith has to grow into it. How does this growth take place for her?

She wrote a letter which reveals a lot in 1928, to the Dominican nun Sister Calixta who had written to her for advice. It is a personal response to the Sister; “Religion is not something to be relegated to a corner. It must be the root and basis of life for all Christians....”. It takes time to get to this. It is possible to reach God by scholarly research after conversion and after reading Teresa of Avila she sees it all in a different way. She had given up her intellectual research after her conversion. It has taken time for her to pull her life together again.

There were external influences on her life. Her thesis was completed and her work with Husserl finished. As a woman she was unable to get a professorship. The political situation post war was difficult. On an interior level, how does she combine her past life with what she is doing now? She goes to work at the Dominican training college in Speyer. She holds a teaching post from 1923 to 1931 in a big institution, the Dominican noviciate and a school. She translates the works of Thomas Aquinas.

She challenges the opinion that in order to live the religious life one has to give up secular things and think of divine things. She sees that even in religious life one is not drawn away from life. Even the contemplative religious is drawn out into contact with the world. This spirituality is very

Teresian. This life can be lived everywhere. One can go out into the world and take Christ everywhere. It takes Edith some years to arrive at this point.

How does she fit in to this life and find a role? She says “the only essential is that one finds a quiet corner in which to communicate with God as if there's no one else there, on a daily basis.... all else falls into place... preferably early in the morning hours before work... and accept one's mission there..... Consider oneself as an instrument to be used by God. The work becomes service of God, God works through the person. This then is my recipe. My life begins anew each morning.....”. She doesn't worry about the future.

Her work importantly inserts her into the life of the Church. She loves teaching. The Benedictine community of Beuron becomes important to her. The Benedictine way influences her life. Abbot Walzer becomes her spiritual director and remains so, up until the time when she enters Carmel. She goes on retreats and visits Beuron Abbey.

A Benedictine nun who knew her at Beuron commented on how Edith would remain on her knees with her eyes closed. This made no sense to the nun who thought she should pray with her eyes and ears, which was the Benedictine way. It was not a surprise that she should enter Carmel. The Benedictine influence unlocked her spirituality and helped her to develop a sense of the importance of the liturgy. At this time there was a lot of new thinking in the Church. She develops on a personal level her hidden and interior resources and sensitivity so her largeness and breadth of personality develops. She is influenced by the Scriptures, scriptural scholarship, development in liturgy, through her scriptural study and the personal spiritual direction of Abbot Walzer. Despite the Benedictine influence she becomes a Carmelite. There was an expert on St John of the Cross at Beuron. There was no contact between Edith and any Carmel on a practical level but she's growing in the spirituality of Carmel, of Teresa and becomes an expert in St John of the Cross herself.

Abbot Walzer said himself that “all she wanted was to be with God in Church and to have great mysteries in front of her”. In her time of meditation she didn't study Scriptures, the rigidity of her exterior concealed a quiet soul of interior prayer. A different way of praying. The Abbot said that the only outward signs indicating her balance of mind and heart were her concern for others, compassion and tender solicitude for their wellbeing, she was plain and direct with ordinary people, scholarly with scholars and a sinner with sinners. Her understanding of people helped her to become all things to all people and concerned for all. She was a friend, and when it came to dealing with others she was gentle. She sought out the wretched as God's favourites and she sought out those in most need.

In 1927 to 1932 she was called upon to lecture around Europe on women's education and women's issues. According to an account from a student in Salzburg who heard Edith lecture in 1930, she is a “slender lady of medium height, dark eyes and hair who advances to the front and removes the water jug. Our eyes met and she looked into my eyes. Her subject, the ethos of woman's vocation, was boring and had been talked to death, I had been tempted to leave, but her matter of factness, humour, charm kept me spellbound. She talked for two hours. All listened in silence, captivated by this simple and delicate woman, she had an indefinable smile, she used no paper, her hands folded on the lectern. I felt no sense of tiredness, she had such a great power of mind and self assurance of a quiet woman”. Edith is growing, blossoming, flourishing, making a contribution. She grows and matures over the years. The deeper one goes the more one goes out to the world.

There is only one goal in Edith's mind; to be where Teresa is, to be in Carmel. She sees her destiny to be in Carmel. Despite the advice of others and the concern of her friends and family who think she is doing more good where she is.

5th Talk

To open this talk Fr Matt read a poem which Edith had written not long after entering the Carmel in Cologne. In it she uses the imagery of a Vineyard. An image used by Teresa and the Carmelites to illustrate life in Carmel. Young vines being planted in the Vineyard of Carmel and the protection that they need from our holy Mother Teresa.

Edith's life has been leading to this point. When she picked up and read Teresa's book of her Life she saw her own life. It was the catalyst to her becoming Christian, Catholic and Carmelite. Her discovery that she is a daughter of Teresa. By 1933 the possibility of her gaining a teaching professorship were gone. As a Jew she would put others in danger if they employed her. She gets offers from other countries in Europe, but she decides to enter Carmel. Abbot Walzer, her spiritual director initially objects, but eventually lets her go "singing for joy, like a child running into it's mother's arms. "Now we must run and do things with joy" as Saint Benedict said.

In 1933 Edith enters Cologne Carmel. It is a coming home and setting free for her. Externally it is the end of her career, of all the good she has done, where she won't be seen to be doing anything. Really it is a beginning for her.

What does this actively mean for Edith on a personal level? Sister Edith Posalt, her Novice Mistress, and eventually prioress, is closest to Edith during her early years in Carmel and understands her. She reflects on Edith's entry into Carmel. "In actuality her entry into Carmel was a descent, from the height of her career to the depth of insignificance". In Carmel Edith was just another postulant. The nuns are unaware of her prominence having never entered into her social or academic circles. She is expected to undertake the usual little postulant tasks. She adapts to her new life as a postulant which is the very thing that Edith needs. Nowhere else but in Carmel can Edith escape from being Doctor Stein. She becomes one with common humanity. In Philipians Chapter 2 we read that Christ emptied himself becoming a servant and humbled himself even unto death, becoming like all of humanity. Edith had to do the same and it was ultimately her setting free. Her freedom.

Why do I say that? We look at her writings; those before her entry into Carmel and those after. There is quality, depth and beauty in what she writes after entering Carmel. She writes her greatest philosophical works in Carmel. There is a freedom and maturity in her work. She becomes more truly herself.

What is it that she actually needed? Before entering Carmel Edith could have prayed and studied all night if she wished. In Carmel she is confined. She struggles to adapt to a regulated way of life. But it sets her free. She needs the structure and discipline. Freed from her totally autonomous life where she was in control of what she did, she can rise and flourish. This is what this change means at the depth of her being. Paradoxically it costs her everything and is the making, creating of who she is.

We have the witness of the people who know her and visit her. She has many visitors to the Carmel to see her. Her friends visit her and say she looks younger, happier, peaceful, as if she's been set free.

She doesn't stop writing. Cologne Carmel makes use of her gifts. She writes her greatest work in Carmel Finite and Eternal Being and the Science of the Cross. There were other sisters in the Cologne Carmel who also wrote. There was a movement at that time in Carmel to make the life better known.

Edith wrote an article for a newspaper a few years after her entry into Carmel. In the article she tries to describe the essence of Carmelite life, and having written about the principle Saints of Carmel she comes to Therese of the Child Jesus. She says that “many people came to know this path through her (Therese) which she discovered with ingenious deduction and followed with heroic decisiveness to the end”. Edith does the same.

She goes on to describe the life of Carmel. “The walls of the monastery enclose a narrow space. One must dig deep and build high to rise up into the sunlight of Divine Love and compassion”. In other words descend into nothingness and be raised up in total dependence on God. She mentions the Carmelite Martyrs of Compiègne, then goes on to say “Only one who values her place in choir more than all the splendour of the world can live here and discover the great joy of living here”.

The Divine Office is not the supporting ground for Edith, despite her Benedictine experience of the Liturgy of the Hours, rather it is solitary prayer. “No human eye can see what God does in a soul in times of solitary prayer. All the other hours are for thanksgiving for pure grace upon grace, secretly which in times of silence God gives”.

The life of Carmel is not just for the person themselves. It is what she calls a lifelong martyrdom that no one suspects, but it is a pure joy which bubbles over into life and beyond. A life of darkness and martyrdom but the grace which flows to others is the fruit of prayer.

Silent prayer, the hours spent alone with God are not a private thing. This is for others. The person is totally at the disposal of God. This is how Edith understands the life in Carmel.

Edith defines prayer as “looking up into the face of the Eternal”. To stand before the face of God – this is the content of our lives. To live, looking into the face of God, simply to be in God's presence. By the Eternal, she means everything. She has a broad perspective.

Edith has a profound understanding of what this life means. She sees the great need and value of it. Her greatest contribution she can make to the world, to her nation. Most people wouldn't understand what this means, in this she is alone. Edith has been alone throughout her life. Despite a vast circle of friends she's always a loner, even in Carmel with its intense community life she is still a loner. It is her reality. Edith lived from a place deep within, somewhere that no one else can reach. The more alive and free one is the more life is lived from this place in the soul. It helped her to face the challenges before her. Edith lived less than nine years in Carmel in Cologne and in Echt. She may have been a teacher, Doctor, philosopher, but first and foremost she was a Carmelite.

6th Talk

The final talk focused on the conclusion of Edith's life and looked at some of her major literary works.

Father Matt began by reading a Jewish Midrash which she had written about Auschwitz. We have to look at Edith from different perspectives, not just as a Catholic, but within the context of her family, social history and Judaism etc. A Midrash is a Jewish prayer or reflection containing scripture and used as a teaching method by rabbis.

(My hasty paraphrase as Fr Matt read it) “One day God came to Auschwitz and stood with the

captives. The wearing captive prisoners stood in line cowered and stooped, soothing babies. The way to the left meant life, a crust of bread. The way to the right meant a wavering line to a door from which no one returns. He saw the smug well fed guards. God looked at the guards.... Is this what I created? Who took my imprint from their faces... God fled, mingled with the smoke coming from the chimneys”.

This sets us in the context of Edith's death, where everything went to. This woman, a Jew, shares with her people. This woman with her interest in the state and caught up in politics dies in the most significant event of 20th Century history. How does this proud Prussian woman reconcile all this? We know from her writings that another spiritual journey was going on. She died as she had lived, fulfilling what she had lived for.

Fr Matt read from a newspaper article written ten to fifteen years later by a Dutch camp official at Westerbork. In her group there were other Christians with Jewish connections. The official says: “The one Sister who impressed me immediately has never been erased from my memory. She is the one who may one day be canonised by the Vatican. She walked talked and prayed like a saint. She struck everyone she met as she was so whole and genuine”. She lived beyond what was happening immediately around her. She was a witness to her life in her death.

During the final months before her arrest and deportation to the camp she had been working a book about Saint John of the Cross. This became her final retreat, what she was living spiritually. Her death was the last chapter of that book. The total giving of herself.

However, her story does not end with death. After her death she becomes more significant as it became known that she had left a significant legacy of writings. Quite a lot of her work is not yet published or translated into English.

We'll look now at her eight major works issued by ICS Publications:

LIFE IN A JEWISH FAMILY. This book written in the early 1930's recounts the life of her family up to the 1930's when she presented her thesis. In it she tries to present a positive image of Judaism and shares the reminiscences of her mother. It was published much later as she didn't complete it until she was in Carmel. There was more than one edition. Some of them left out controversial stuff about her family members. It is a fascinating history of that time. She's very critical and harsh at times, but the book is veryreadable and interesting. The edition by Josephine Kopel is very useful as it contains lots of notes at the back giving lots of information about her family members and other people.

ESSAYS ON WOMEN. 1922-1932. A book of her talks on women and women's education which she gave all round Europe. These are fascinating essays about women's suffrage, women's protests, political and social awareness, the status and education of women, which combined her Christian and Catholic outlook. They are of their time, having a different perspective to that of the 21st century. She writes as a Catholic teacher under the shadow of Nazism.

THE PROBLEM OF EMPATHY. This is her doctoral thesis. At the stage of life when Edith wrote it she is an atheist. She is studying with the philosopher Husserl. It is an academic treatise and a very interesting subject: on how we relate with each other, human relationships. She finds real understanding and empathy later with Teresa of Avila and ultimately God. Her empathy with the people in the camp, her gift of relating to people. She has a great capacity for empathy.

THE HIDDEN LIFE. A collection of essays and meditations on spiritual texts. In it there is an article on Carmel written for a newspaper for the Cologne Carmelites. Edith s able to write for all,

not just academic works but very simple stuff and poems. She writes on the Spirit of Carmel, the Prayer of the Church, which the Benedictine Order had helped her to appreciate so much. Reflections on Saints, Elizabeth of Hungary, Teresa of Avila, Saint Teresa Margaret Redi, beatified in 1934, the Parisian Sister Aimee of Jesus, John of the Cross. And reflections of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and St John of the Cross written for her community. Also reflections written for special occasions in community life, professions etc. At the end of the book are three little plays which she wrote in which she puts across spiritual messages for the Sisters living in those difficult times.

LETTERS. This is a collection of letters written between 1916 and 1942 which give insight into her life. Since these were published another collection of philosophical letters written to Professor Ingarden in Poland have come to light. Her family refused to release these letters for publication until recently. Karol Wojtyla, now Saint John Paul was a student of Professor Ingarden and would have heard him talk about this remarkable young woman.

THE SCIENCE OF THE CROSS. The best known of Edith's writings. Written shortly before her death in 1942. It was the centenary of Saint John of the Cross so the nuns asked Edith to write a summary of the teaching of Saint John of the Cross. It was written from within the context of WWII and the political situation Carmel was in.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND HUMANITIES. A heavy going and academic work!

KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH. This is a collection of stuff bringing together Edith's identity as a philosopher. She compares Husserl and Thomas Aquinas. She wrote two versions of it. There are a few short articles of a religious and philosophical nature. An article written for an American journal which is a commentary on St Dionysius the Areopagite which was published in the USA, England and Germany.

She also did a lot of translating including St Thomas Aquinas, Blessed John Newman. She was asked to write a Catechesis for children for which she used her translations from Greek to German of St John Chrysostom.