

John Tauler (ca. 1300-1361) priest

John Tauler, a Dominican and one of the best loved Christian witnesses of the medieval West, died in Strasbourg in 1361.

Born into a wealthy family, John entered the Dominican convent of Strasbourg at the age of fourteen and received a traditional scientific, theological and spiritual education. He lived in a time of serious contradictions to the Gospel, even within his Order, which on more than one occasion had necessitated a direct intervention on the part of the Dominican general chapter. All of this motivated John to reevaluate his faith in depth.

To remedy the decadence he saw in the spiritual lives of both religious and lay Christians, Tauler formed the "friends of God," groups of Christians committed to living a life of faith more firmly centered on listening to the Gospel and on personal prayer.

For years, Tauler was involved in intense apostolic activity in the Dominican convents of Alsace and in the Beguignages of the region, where he taught an approach to seeking the experience of God's presence that was inspired both by the theological vision of the church fathers and by the mysticism of Meister Eckhart. Under his guidance, entire generations of Christians discovered a spirituality that sustained them in their everyday lives of faithfulness to the Gospel.

At his death, Tauler left a collection of Sermons that stand out in medieval mystical literature for their clarity and restraint.

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:

Richard (d. 1253), bishop of Chichester

Joseph Butler (d. 1752), bishop of Durham, philosopher

WESTERN CATHOLICS:

Adrian, Natalia and companions (4th cent.), martyrs (Spanish-Mozarabic calendar)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (9 ba'unah/sane):

Samuel (11th cent. BCE), prophet (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:

John Tauler, mystic in High Rhineland

MARONITES:

Hosea (8th cent. BCE), prophet

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

Tikhon the Thaumaturge (4th-5th cent.), bishop of Amathus