December 14th: Memorial of Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Lk* 14,25-33): One day, when large crowds were walking along with Jesus, He turned and said to them, «If you come to me, without being ready to give up your love for your father and mother, your spouse and children, your brothers and sisters, and indeed yourself, you cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not follow me carrying his own cross cannot be my disciple.

»Do you build a house without first sitting down to count the cost to see whether you have enough to complete it? Otherwise, if you have laid the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone will make fun of you: 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish'. And when a king wages war against another king, does he go to fight without first sitting down to consider whether his ten thousand can stand against the twenty thousand of his opponent? And if not, while the other is still a long way off he sends messengers for peace talks.

»In the same way, none of you may become my disciple if he doesn't give up everything he has».

«Whoever does not follow me carrying his own cross cannot be my disciple»

Fr. Joaquim MESEGUER García
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Today, when celebrating Saint John of the Cross, we can discover a mirror where we are reflected. But when this mirror is the saints, we end up by discovering that, after all, we are not giving our best to God; that we are selfish and that there are very few prayers in our lives. Watching the saints scares us, because they are prophets who summon us to conversion and remind us of Jesus' imposing words: "And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14:27).

Saint John of the Cross helps us to see the way to go and urges us to go back to the Master, even though we might find ourselves in a night of sin and tepidity. Saint John of the Cross felt the divine love; he, who was small in size, was great in sufferings; his name already implies it: "John of the Cross". One cross leading to great divine gifts. Those that many would like to have, although without having to proceed through the narrow path leading to them. We carry our cross for we have no other choice, but we

complain and resent its burden, and contemplate our life as a lousy night in a lousy inn.

There are people that do bear there cross and do it joyfully, because they are capable of loving: they are the saints. But, did they never have had any problems? Of course they did!, but they looked at them with a different gaze, for they knew where the always flowing source of life is. The saints are a model, but they do not want us to be after them, but after Jesus Christ; Saint John of the Cross expresses it quite well when he says: "never take a man for your example in the tasks you have to perform, however holy he may be, for the devil will set his imperfection before you. But imitate Jesus Christ, who is supremely perfect and supremely holy, and you will never err».