

# Vision of Hell—Saint Teresa of Avila

**“The entrance seemed to be by a long narrow pass, like a furnace, very low, dark, and close. The ground seemed to be saturated with water, mere mud, exceedingly foul, sending forth pestilential odors, and covered with loathsome vermin. At the end was a hollow place in the wall, like a closet, and in that I saw myself confined. [...]**



**“I felt a fire in my soul. [...] My bodily sufferings were unendurable. I have undergone most painful sufferings in this life... yet all these were as nothing in comparison with what I felt then, especially when I saw that there would be no intermission, nor any end to them. [...]**

**“I did not see who it was that tormented me, but I felt myself on fire, and torn to pieces, as it seemed to me; and, I repeat it, this inward fire and despair are the greatest torments of all. [...]**

**“I could neither sit nor lie down: there was no room. I was placed as it were in a hole in the wall; and those walls, terrible to look on of themselves, hemmed me in on every side. I could not breathe. There was no light, but all was thick darkness. [...]**

**“I was so terrified by that vision – and that terror is on me even now while I am writing – that though it took place nearly six years ago, the natural warmth of my body is chilled by fear even now when I think of it. [...]**

**“It was that vision that filled me with the very great distress which I feel at the sight of so many lost souls, especially of the Lutherans – for they were once members of the Church by baptism – and also gave me the most vehement desires for the salvation of souls; for certainly I believe that, to save even one from those overwhelming torments, I would most willingly endure many deaths.”**