



Salvation Faith in Edith Stein (1891–1942)

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Edith Stein's most sustained discussion of soteriology can be found in her book-length study of Saint John of the Cross, the last major work Stein wrote before her extermination in the *Lager* at Auschwitz. Reading the work of Saint John of the Cross, Stein notes the distinction between contemplation and faith. "The content of divine revelation and the acceptance of this revelation are called faith." Faith gives material for contemplation. Stein upholds the traditional Roman Catholic revealed position that in sinning against God, one also runs the risk of eternal punishment. Repentance and God's grace can bring one into union with God. God is described as a judge. We all share in God's being by virtue of our creation by God and we bear the imprint of God in us. In fact, Stein believes that it is God's will that we all return to God and that God provides the grace to do it, but we have to cooperate with God's will and grace. Salvation faith in Stein's work runs along two important lines. First, Stein maintains that individuals can be saved. Second, she also claims, however, that God wills to save and restore humanity as a whole to an original communion with the Triune God. Like faith derived from the natural knowledge of God, salvation faith is lived as a belief and, therefore, as a kind of knowing.

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