



Images taken from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint_John_of_%C3%81vila.PNG and <https://www.facebook.com/SacredHeartChurchBournemouth/>

ST JOHN OF AVILA, THE VIRTUES, AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

SUMMER CONFERENCE FOR PRIESTS: 23 - 25 JUNE

*You are my friends if you do what I command you.
No longer do I call you servants ... but I have called you friends,
for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.
You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you
that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide.*

Jesus (Jn 15:14-16)

St John of Avila, Doctor of the Universal Church, is the patron saint of diocesan priests. Often confused with St John of the Cross (perhaps because of St John of the Cross' friendship and collaboration with St Teresa of Avila), St John of Avila was not a Carmelite. Nevertheless, he does have a connection with St Teresa of Avila. St Teresa (also a Doctor of the Universal Church – known as the Doctor of Prayer) was a disciple of St John of Avila. It is St John of Avila who reviewed the writings of St Teresa of Avila and confirmed them as authentic. Benedict XVI referred to St John of Avila as a *pioneer in pointing to the universal call to holiness*.

In this three-day conference for priests, we will explore the life and teaching of St John of Avila, with particular attention to his teaching on the virtues and his advice for spiritual directors. Come and deepen your knowledge of how to overcome struggles in the spiritual life; how to differentiate between various kinds of spiritual experiences; and how to recognize authentic growth in holiness.

The teaching team for this conference is led by Dr Denise Clare Oliver, author of the book *Discerning Your Spiritual Journey with St John of Avila, Doctor of the Church*. Prior to coming to the Academy of the Annunciation, Dr Oliver was a professor of Spiritual Theology at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome. And she was Director of Theology at the School of the Annunciation at Buckfast Abbey.

The Academy of the Annunciation invites you to come and get to know the teaching of this great patron of priests!

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 2:42

During this conference, we follow in the footsteps of the early Christians, studying together, praying together, and being nourished together at the Eucharistic Banquet. There are also opportunities to enjoy social time and fellowship with staff members, fellow disciples, and the Oratory Fathers.

Places are limited. Please register as soon as possible to ensure you have a reserved place.

Cost for the Conference (including accommodation, meals, and parking): £465.

This Conference begins on Tuesday morning and ends on Thursday afternoon. If you would like to extend the hotel booking of your room (at the discounted rate) on either the previous (Monday), or following (Friday) night(s), or both, please contact us.