

St. John of the Cross. **Dark Night of the Soul**

“On a dark night, kindled in love with yearning, I went forth without being observed, my house being now at rest.” This begins St. John of the Cross’s poem, “Dark Night of the Soul,” considered a masterpiece of the literature of mysticism. The poet is not describing a soul wrestling with spiritual difficulties, but rather a soul dying to itself to arrive at a sweet life with God. The next several stanzas describe the joyful experience of being guided to God, in which the only light is that which burns in the soul, while the senses and the soul are purified. Extensive annotation helps the reader clarify the sometimes difficult passages of this 16th century poem. (Call No. 248.2-JOH; “New Books” shelf)