

ST. CATHERINE

2019



Dear Sisters:

Throughout history there have been saints who have not only changed the bad habits of their contemporaries but also the bad attitudes of pastors.

One of them was St. Catherine of Siena. The bold and courageous woman of the Middle Ages who today leaves us a message very necessary for our time.

When someone, in the name of her faith, raises her voice on issues of social morality, justice and solidarity ..., there is always someone who says: "That is getting into politics." Yes, of course it is getting into politics. The question is what kind of politics and why she does it.

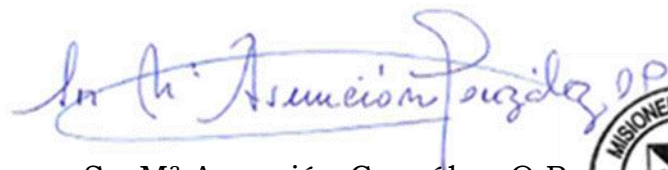
St. Catherine of Siena also got into politics. Her prayerful vocation fits perfectly with her ingenious ways of serving the poor; she goes out on the street looking for the sick with contagious diseases that nobody wants to attend to and who suffer a great loneliness. She listens carefully to the cry of the poor, of the new suffering Christs. The more she advances in prayer the more she commits to the world. She becomes an itinerant preacher who has the street as the pulpit. And, with little culture, almost illiterate, she had the courage to correct not only the authorities, politicians and ecclesiastics but also the Bishop of Rome himself, urging everyone to change their attitudes. Something unheard of for a 25-year-old woman in the 14th century.

In any case, Catherine of Siena is a clear example that the more deeply rooted one is in God, the better apostle she is. One thing leads to the other, for prayer is never an evasion of our earthly responsibilities, nor mysticism a forgetting of the needs of the earth. In connection with this, St. John Paul II praised the "filial daring of St. Catherine of Siena." He added: "In the history of the Church there has not been lack of men and women consecrated to God who, through a unique gift of the Spirit, have exercised an authentic prophetic ministry speaking to all in the name of God."

This 21st century, a witness of so many tragedies, is in need of mystics, and Catherine of Siena is a good reminder that invites us to have our eyes and ears wide open. It calls us to be prophets, to adopt evangelical attitudes, to care about the poor and the needy of our society, the new suffering Christs. Love of God and neighbor are inseparable and one is the best proof of the other.

Happy feast of St. Catherine of Siena!

A fraternal embrace,



Sr. M^a Asunción González, O.P.
Prioress General

