



## St. Catherine of Siena

2021

Dear Sisters,

On the 29th we will celebrate the feast of our sister, Saint Catherine of Siena, and I would like to share this reflection with all of you.

Speaking of Catherine of Siena, is to speak about one of the most admired and beloved figures of the Catholic Church. Throughout her life, this simple woman served tirelessly in a humble and sacrificial, helpful and generous way, with an unlimited and courageous dedication to the mandate of her God, at the service of the Church and the Roman Pontiff.

For Catherine, to speak about the Church is not just any way of speaking: it is to speak with passion about the Church that she loved, for which she lived and died: "If I die, know that I die with passion for her, the Church - the Mystical Body of Christ. "

Speaking of the Church in Catherinian manner is to talk about a Church that does not evade temporal conflicts because it is concerned with the human person and his full realization, distant from interested alliances and worldly privileges. John Paul II, when he declared the saint Patroness of Europe, said " the young Sienese entered confidently and with fiery words at the heart of ecclesial and social problems of her time."

She never hesitated to offer every moment of her life for the unity and fidelity to the Church until the time of her death. On her deathbed she prayed: "O God eternal, receive the sacrifice of my life in this mystical body of Holy Church. I have nothing to give, save what Thou hast given me. Take this heart, then, and press it out over the face of Thy Spouse."

However, if we look carefully at her life, we realize that she excels in her proclamation of the universal call to holiness, obedience to the Magisterium of the Church, the filial affection for the Holy Pontiff and the certainty that, without Jesus Christ, any human project is impossible.

They say that one morning, upon waking up from a mystical experience, Catherine confided to her confessor what she heard from the Lord who pronounced these words: "The cell will no longer be your usual home; indeed, for the salvation of souls you shall also leave your city... you shall bear the honor of my name and my doctrine to small or great, be they lay, clergy or religious. I shall place on your mouth a wisdom, which no one can resist. I shall lead you before Pontiffs, Heads of the Churches and of the Christian people, so that through the weak, as is my way of acting, I shall humiliate the pride of the strong".

Father Timothy Radcliffe, on the occasion of the proclamation of Catherine as Doctor of the Church, addressed the entire Order through a letter in which he highlights the relevance of her message because "Catherine's Europe was, like our world today, marked by violence and an uncertain future... there was a decline of vitality in the Church, a loss of a sense of purpose and a crisis of religious life. She refused to resign herself in the face of this suffering and division, but embarked on the not easy task of reforming and pacifying the Church and society, and she did so because she was consumed by the urge to bring God's love and mercy to everyone."

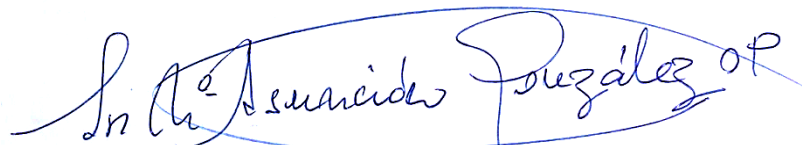
Catherine never sacrificed truth or justice for an easy or cheap peace. She knew how to live up to the occasion, as a lay woman, playing a significant role in the Church and in society. She became the female incarnation within the Order of Preachers of its evangelical project, making herself an undisputed reference for all of us throughout time.

Sisters, do we have the courage to assume, like Catherine, the mission of being peacemakers in the community, the Church and society?

St. Catherine, on your feast day we implore you to teach us to be like you, mediator of unity, instrument of peace, defender of justice, lover of dialogue with God and with our neighbors.

HAPPY FEASTDAY OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA!

Un abrazo fraternal y mi oración,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sor Mª Asunción González O.P.", enclosed within a blue oval scribble.

Sor Mª Asunción González, O.P.

Priora General