

## Saint Catherine of Siena

### The Life of Caterina di Giacomo di Benincasa (1347-1380)

- Early childhood
- Becomes a *Mantellate* in 1366 at age 18
- “Mystical Marriage” with Christ at age 21
- Receives the stigmata in February 1375 in Pisa
- Work in hospitals and charitable activities
- Controversy and the *Caterinati*
- Death on April 21, 1380

### Church History

- The Avignon Papacy
- Catherine’s Political Activity
- The Pope’s Return to Rome and the Great Schism

### The Legacy of Saint Catherine

- Balance of the active life and the spiritual life
- Devotion to the Eucharist
- Writings: *The Dialogue* and *Letters*
- Doctor of the Church (1970)



### Quotes

"The Holy Spirit becomes [for those who surrender themselves to God's providence a mother who nourishes them in the divine womb."

“Be impatient—with your miserable impatience.”

“All the way to heaven is heaven.”



“Pray the prayer of action, which is the fragrant flowering of the soul. A good man *is* a prayer.”

“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”

“Nothing great is ever achieved without much enduring.”

“We've had enough exhortations to be silent. Cry out with a thousand tongues - I see the world is rotten because of silence.”

“Take my heart and squeeze it out over the face of Your Bride, the Church.”

“The soul is in God and God in the soul, just as the fish is in the sea and the sea in the fish.”

“But to walk merely in slavish fear is not enough. It is not enough for eternal life to sweep the house clean of deadly sin. One must fill it with virtue that is grounded in love, and not merely in fear. Then one must put both feet on the first stair of the bridge. And the two feet that carry the soul into the love of my Truth, of whom I have made a bridge for you, are affection and desire.” (words of Christ to Catherine)

“In regard to this imperfect love I want to tell you—I will not remain silent—about how people can be deluded by thus loving me for their own consolation. And I want you to know that when my servants love me imperfectly, they love this consolation more than they love me.” (words of Christ to Catherine)

“I tell you further: the more the mystic body of holy Church is filled with troubles now, the more it will abound in delight and consolation. And this shall be its delight: the reform of good holy shepherds who are flowers of glory, who praise and glorify my name, offering me the fragrance of virtue rooted in truth. This is the reform of the fragrant blossoming of my ministers and shepherds—not that the fruit of this bride needs to be reformed, because it never spoils or is diminished by the sins of its ministers. So be glad, you and your spiritual father and my other servants, in your bitterness. For I, eternal Truth, promise to refresh you, and after your bitterness I will give you consolation, along with great suffering, in the reform of holy Church.” (words of Christ to Catherine)

## Italy Around 1400

