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Seasoning the Seasons™

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Saint Catherine of Siena

Saint Catherine of Siena: April 29

On April 29 we celebrate the Feast Day of Saint Catherine of Siena. Siena is a city in the country of Italy. Catherine was born in Siena on March 25, 1347. Her father made a living as a cloth dyer. This means he dyed cloth different colors. Her grandfather – her mother's father – was a poet. Catherine came from a really big family. Do you have any brothers and sisters? Imagine having more than twenty brothers and sisters! Catherine was the youngest of twenty four children.

From the time she was very young, Catherine decided she did not want to get married and have a family. She wanted to serve God in a different way, spending all of her time praying and helping other people. But her parents wanted her to get married. So do you know what Catherine did? She cut off her hair, so boys wouldn't think she was pretty! Her parents were really upset, and Catherine had to do all of the household chores as her punishment. But then one day Catherine's father saw a dove on Catherine's shoulder and knew that Jesus wanted Catherine to serve God in another way besides being married.



Saint Catherine of Siena, 17th century Painting:
Oil on copper.
Brooklyn Museum

When she was a teenager, Catherine joined a group that was part of the Dominican Order. Women who belonged to this order wore a long white outfit with a black cloak over it.

Catherine helped many people. She helped take care of sick people and poor people. She also wrote many letters. Do you like to write letters? Catherine wrote letters to lots of people, including kings and queens and even popes! She gave these people lots of good advice, and this advice helped the Church very

much.

Catherine died on April 29, 1380. In 1461 the Pope named Catherine a Saint. We celebrate her Feast Day on April 29, the date she died.



Celebrate Saint Catherine's Feast Day by writing a letter or making a card to send to someone. Saint Catherine helped sick people. Maybe you could send your card to someone who is ill or even in the hospital. You could even draw a picture of Saint Catherine with a dove on her shoulder! Then you would be helping people just like Saint Catherine did.