April 29th: Memorial of Saint Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church, patron saint of Europe

Gospel text (*Mt* 11:25-30): At that time Jesus said in reply, “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

«You have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike»

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Today, the church celebrates with joy and gratitude the festivity of St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380). With joy because in her the words of Christ became a reality: «because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children» (Mt 11:25). It is moving the degree of inner maturity and of loving union – even the mystical marriage - with Jesus Christ of a girl as young as Catherine.

God himself incorporates in his “DNA” the humility and the discretion. This is how the Messiah acted out: He was born in a barn and resurrected without any triumphalism. He was the King announced and expected since David’s reign, but His Royal Crown is made out of thorns and His throne is the Cross. In one of her mystic visions, Catherine saw Jesus presenting her two crowns, a golden one and another one with thorns. While replying that her repose was the pain of the Lord she chose the thorns... "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28): Catalina rests on the suffering of Christ; Jesus lies in the modesty of the young saint.

Catalina, knowing quite well her beloved, had a vivid awareness of the greatness of man because God himself is in love with each one of us: "what made you establish man in so great a dignity? Certainly, the

incalculable love by which you have looked on your creature in yourself! You are taken with love for her; for by love indeed you created her, by love you gave have given her a being capable of fasting your eternal Good»

Finally, the gratitude of the Church to Catherine for her conciliatory task. At that time, the Church was undergoing a sad period of divisions, both internal and external. The most unfortunate thing was the "Avignon exile". From 1305, a total of seven Popes resided in Avignon. The prayers and the efforts of St. Catherine - also from other personalities, as St. Brigitte – made possible that in 1367 Pope Urban V could return to the Eternal City. Thanks may be eternally given to these holy women who have done more than we will ever know for the Church.