



APRIL 29, 2020

HAPPY FEAST OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA!

As some of you may know from earlier writings, I love St. Catherine of Siena! I cannot wait to read this new book that just arrived at the Pastoral Centre! She is one of my favourite saints because **Sister** Catherine Siena, my seventh-grade teacher at St. Jude School in Indianapolis, Indiana, was the best teacher I ever had...hands down!

Sister Catherine Siena was a member of the congregation Sisters of Providence. She was delightful, yet strict. One encounter with Sister Catherine Siena was somewhat humiliating. She was teaching several seventh-grade girls to do the Irish jig, which would eventually be performed in front of the school on St. Patrick's Day. One afternoon during our lunch hour jigging lesson, I could feel her eyes staring at me. I thought it was because of my graceful dancing. However, as she came closer and closer, I realized it was not my feet that had caught her eye, but rather the mascara covering my very fair eyelashes. "Hannah," she said disappointedly, followed by an uncomfortably long pause. "What is THAT on your eyes? Please go to the ladies room and wash that off!" I quickly left the room to remove the forbidden substance from my lashes, and then resumed the jigging lesson.

Sister Catherine Siena was a stickler for proper grammar. We spent hours diagramming sentences. I can still recite the Preposition Song that she had us sing daily to the tune of Yankee Doodle Dandy. She was kind and loving and had special insight into her students. She exuded holiness, living in the world but not of the world. Her obituary said, "Sister Catherine Siena loved to roller skate and was always among the first to pin up her habit and put on the skates. Her tall, lanky frame with veil billowing out behind her was a joy to behold. Luckily she never broke any bones while careening joyously around the gym floor."

It is because of this special teacher that I have a love for St. Catherine of Siena. I was curious as to why she had chosen her name, and wanted to learn more about the saint who had inspired her. For this reason, I have read more than one biography about this remarkable saint. This particular book, *Saint Catherine of Siena: Mystic of Fire, Preacher of Freedom* by Father Paul Murray OP, is particularly exciting as it is published by the Word on Fire Institute. Father Paul and Bishop Barron have been great friends for over 20 years. Bishop Barron has high praise for this book calling it "a serious book, well researched...having the Father Paul Murray mark of deep scholarship that is never ponderous, always inviting to read. It is an uplifting book."

Call the Pastoral Centre today to reserve your copy for easy contactless pick up.

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"Be who you were created to be and you will set the world on fire."

St. Catherine of Siena