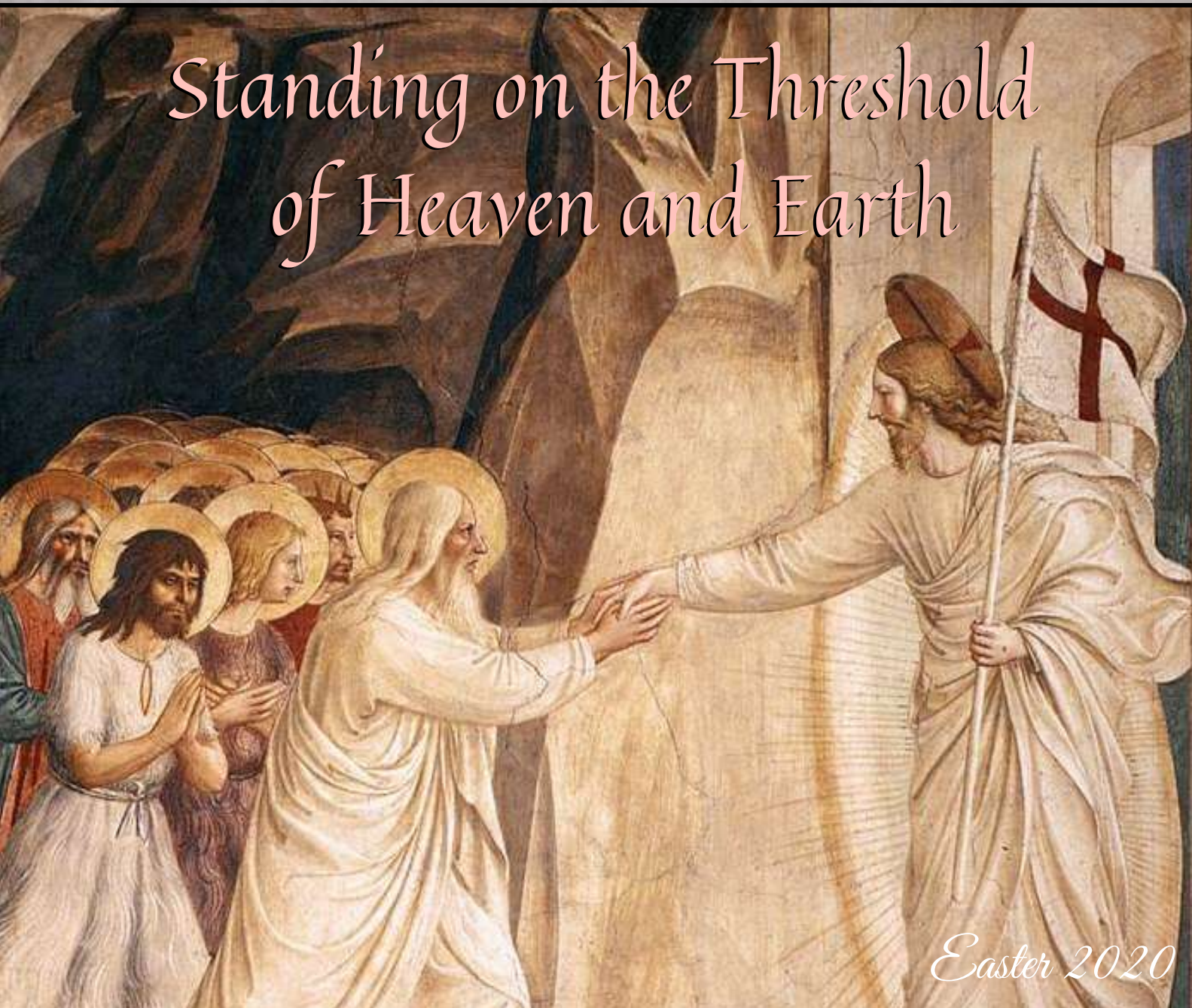


Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia

LAUDARE, BENEDICERE, PRAEDICARE

TO PRAISE, TO BLESS, TO PREACH

Standing on the Threshold of Heaven and Earth



Easter 2020

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Fra Angelico: Christ in Limbo, c. 1450; San Marco, Florence.

Herald of Heavenly Tidings

HOW ST. DOMINIC'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT CAN GUIDE US NOW

"Do not weep. I shall be of more use to you in heaven than in my lifetime." As he lay dying, St. Dominic comforted his brethren with these words.

In recent days, we have heard similar words from Jesus to his followers. On the night before he died, He told the apostles, "It is better for you that I go" (Jn 16:7). On the morning of his Resurrection, He told Mary Magdalen, "Do not cling to me" (Jn 20:17). On these occasions, He also told them that He was going to the Father to prepare them a Heavenly home and would send the Holy Spirit to prepare them for Heaven.

It is certainly fitting to invoke St. Dominic under the title "Herald of Heavenly Tidings" during this Easter season, as Scripture draws us to encounter the Risen Christ. This year, we find particular strength as we hear, in faith, the

"Heavenly Tidings" that Jesus Christ has conquered and makes all things new. Even when he stood on the threshold of earth and heaven, St. Dominic continued to encourage his brethren with heavenly tidings: "Have charity for one another, guard humility, and make your treasure out of voluntary poverty."

In any age, these words are good signposts to mark our way to heaven, but perhaps they have special significance for us now.

"Have charity for one another": may our experience of quarantine be a time to mend broken relationships in our homes and to open our hearts to those suffering throughout the world.

"Guard humility": may our experience of uncertainty enable us to let go of the illusions of control and self-sufficiency, and in their place, may we embrace our dependence on God and one another.

"Make your treasure out of voluntary poverty": may our loss of certain conveniences and comforts foster a desire for spiritual treasure and prompt us to use our remaining resources to assist those who have lost even their livelihood.

May St. Dominic's parting words encourage us to live with eyes fixed in Heaven even now, while also trusting that Jesus does not expect us to develop this heavenly gaze on our own. St. Thomas Aquinas explains that, "Jesus makes [the apostles] adequate for their task by giving them the Holy Spirit" (*Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, 2538). He does the same for us through the indwelling of the promised Holy Spirit given to us at our baptism. The glad tidings of the grace that flow from Christ's Passion, Death and glorious Resurrection strengthen us to live in joyful Hope. We have everything we need right now to become the saints God has called us to be.



Stained glass window from our convent chapel in Carmel, Indiana

Celebrate the Easter Season

BY PRAYING THE REGINA CAELI

As a community, we pray the *Regina Caeli*, which is traditionally said during the Eastertide in place of the *Angelus*, three times a day. One way to continue to celebrate the Easter season at home is to memorize the prayer and set a reminder to pray it throughout the day.



Leader: Queen of Heaven,
rejoice, alleluia.

Response: *For He whom you
did merit to bear, alleluia.*

Leader: Has risen, as he said,
alleluia.

Response: *Pray for us to God,
alleluia.*

Leader: Rejoice and be glad,
O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

Response: *For the Lord has
truly risen, alleluia.*

Let us pray. O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Saint Spotlight

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA | FEAST DAY: APRIL 29

Reflection by Pope Benedict XVI during a General Audience on November 24, 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Today I would like to talk to you about a woman who played an eminent role in the history of the Church: St. Catherine of Siena. The century in which she lived — the 14th — was a troubled period in the life of the Church and throughout the social context of Italy and Europe. Yet, even in the most difficult times, the Lord does not cease to bless his People, bringing forth Saints who give a jolt to minds and hearts, provoking conversion and renewal. Catherine is one of these and still today speaks to us and impels us to walk courageously toward holiness to be ever more fully disciples of the Lord.

Born in Siena in 1347, into a very large family, she died in Rome in 1380. When Catherine was 16 years old, motivated by a vision of St. Dominic, she entered the Third Order of the Dominicans, the female branch known as the Mantellate. While living at home, she confirmed her vow of virginity made privately when she was still an adolescent and dedicated herself to prayer, penance and works of charity, especially for the benefit of the sick...

In a vision that was ever present in Catherine's heart and mind Our Lady presented her to Jesus who gave her a splendid ring, saying to her: "*I, your Creator and Saviour, espouse you in the faith, that you will keep ever pure until you celebrate your eternal nuptials with me in Heaven*" (Bl. Raimondo da Capua, S. Caterina da Siena, *Legenda maior*, n. 115, Siena 1998). This ring was visible to her alone. In this extraordinary episode we see the vital centre of Catherine's religious sense, and of all authentic spirituality: Christocentrism. For her Christ was like the spouse with whom a relationship of intimacy, communion and faithfulness exists; he was the best beloved whom she loved above any other good... Catherine truly lived St. Paul's words, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20).

Like the Sienese Saint, every believer feels the need to be conformed with the sentiments of the heart of Christ to love God and his neighbour as Christ himself loves. And we can all let our hearts be transformed and learn to love like Christ in a familiarity with him that is nourished by prayer [and] by meditation on the Word of God... Another trait of Catherine's spirituality is linked to the gift of tears. They express an exquisite, profound sensitivity, a capacity for being moved and for tenderness. Many Saints have had the gift of tears, renewing the emotion of Jesus himself who did not hold back or hide his tears at the tomb of his friend Lazarus and at the grief of Mary and Martha or at the sight of Jerusalem during his last days on this earth...

Dear brothers and sisters, let us learn from St. Catherine to love Christ and the Church with courage, intensely and sincerely. Therefore let us make our own St. Catherine's words that we read in the *Dialogue of Divine Providence*... "*out of mercy you have washed us in his Blood, out of mercy you have wished to converse with creatures. O crazed with love! It did not suffice for you to take flesh, but you also wished to die!... O mercy! My heart drowns in thinking of you: for no matter where I turn to think, I find only mercy*" (chapter 30, pp. 79-80).

TO READ THE ENTIRE GENERAL AUDIENCE, PLEASE [CLICK HERE](#).

Timely Advice from St. Catherine

MERCIFUL MOTHER OF THE SICK AND REFUGE OF THE SORROWFUL, PRAY FOR US

Excerpt from a letter to Madonna Mitarella, wife of a Senator of Siena

...I long to see you a faithful servant in God's sight, firm in the faith that gives joy and happiness to our soul. We must have the sort of faith our Saviour spoke of:

"If you had faith as small as a grain of mustard seed and you commanded this mountain, it would move."

I beg you, dearest sister, to keep living in this faith... If you want to give life to this holy faith, I ask you to keep two things in mind. **The first is that God cannot will anything but our good.** To give us that true good – because through sin we had lost it – he gave himself even to the shameful death of the cross. Graciously he humbled himself to restore that grace to us and to do away with our pride. How true it is then that God wills only our good! **The second thing to keep in mind is this: I want you to believe that truly nothing happens to us except by God's will and permission** – death or life, sickness or health, riches or poverty, even the wrongs done us by friends or relatives or anyone else. **God gives us what we can bear and no more.** If you believe that God wants only our good, you will stay perfectly happy. Be comforted in Christ crucified, and don't be afraid...



LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ST. CATHERINE

- Litany to St. Catherine of Siena
- Link to purchase the biography of *St. Catherine of Siena* by: Sigrid Undset
- Link to purchase the first volume of *The Letters of St. Catherine of Siena*

JOIN US FOR THE ROSARY RALLY FOR THE WHOLE DOMINICAN FAMILY

29 April 2020 – **9:00pm** – 5 Glorious Mysteries



“I exhort the whole Dominican Family—friars, nuns, sisters, laity, secular institutes, priestly fraternities, and youth—throughout the world to pray the Rosary together according to this plan prepared by fr. Lawrence Lew O.P., our Promoter General of the Holy Rosary.”

**– fr. Gerard Timoner O.P.,
Master of the Order.**

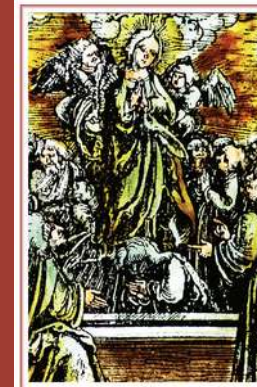
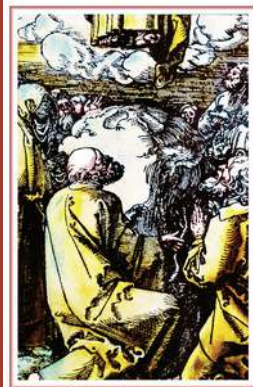
On Wednesday **29 April 2020**, let's gather in our communities and homes to pray the five **Glorious Mysteries of the Holy Rosary**, at **9:00 pm in your local time**. If possible, share it live online.

Across the world, on the feast of Saint Catherine, all Dominicans and their friends shall thus unite in praying the Rosary against this pandemic:

We pray for the sick; for the healthcare services; for the families of the sick; for those who suffer economically, socially, and psychologically; for protection and healing. After each decade, please pray the prayer given by Our Lady of the Rosary at Fatima: “O my Jesus...”

Meditations on the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

COMPOSED BY: SISTER MARY MADELINE TODD, O.P.



During the 800th anniversary of the Dominican Order, one of our sisters wrote meditations on the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. We would like to share them with you now as we ponder the great mysteries of our redemption during the Easter Season. The meditations are "based first on the Word of God, drawn especially from the Gospels and the Letters of Saint Paul, the wellsprings from which Saint Dominic constantly drew the waters of his own contemplation. In addition to the Scriptures, these meditations include thought from the writings of the saints of the Order of Preachers, namely Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Catherine of Siena." - Taken from the Introduction to the booklet.

To view the Meditations for the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary, please click [HERE](#) or on the preview above.



To purchase a copy of this booklet, which includes meditations on all four Mysteries of the Rosary, please click [HERE](#).

Recommended Reading

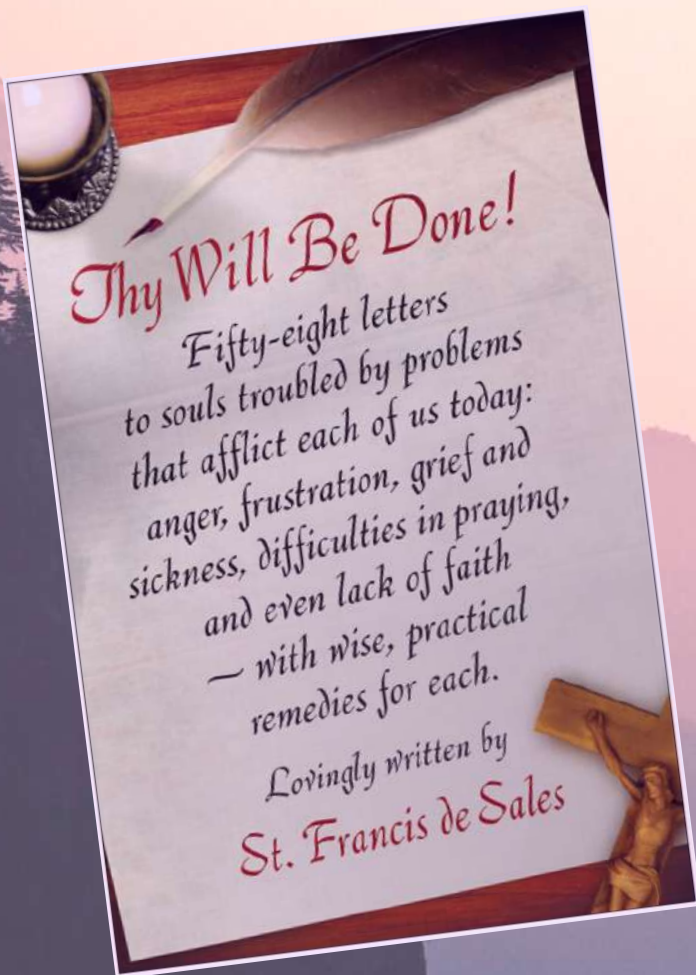
THY WILL BE DONE

Letters of St. Francis de Sales

Three centuries ago, people flocked to St. Francis de Sales, seeking his help for their problems. St. Francis spent countless hours ministering to them face-to-face and wrote over 20,000 letters! From these letters to persons in many countries and in all walks of life, we've selected the ones which will be most helpful to you today.

Each is a hand-written response to someone like you seeking help with an actual problem. You'll be consoled by the warmth, the wisdom, and the holy sympathy you'll find in these pages as the love of this great saint reaches out to us across the centuries. Whatever your circumstances may be, there's wisdom here to make your life holier . . . *and happier*.

- from the back cover of the book



"Courage, I beseech you; let nothing move you. It is still night, but the day approaches; yes, it will not delay. But in the meantime, let us put into practice the saying of David: "Lift up your hands to holy places in the night, and bless the Lord" (Psalm 134:2)."

- from a Letter to St. Jane Frances de Chantel, p.210

Click [HERE](#) or on the image of the book to purchase this book.

Click [HERE](#) to preview this book from the Sophia Institute Press.