



Catherine of Siena - Catherine's Chamber

The image of Saint Catherine of Siena, who lived in the 14th century, was immortalized on the north side of the church's choir window at the end of the Middle Ages. Catherine is depicted wearing a white dress and a dark cloak, with a crown of thorns on her head. Catherine of Siena was often portrayed with a crown of thorns to symbolize her sacrificial attitude towards life and her dedication to Christ.

The spirituality of the time included mysticism, contemplation, and visions. Early on, Catherine began to experience visions, often with Christ himself appearing to her and teaching her. In one vision, Jesus offered Catherine a golden crown, but she chose the crown of thorns instead.

Catherine's sacrificial attitude towards life was strongly reflected in her charitable work. She helped the poor and the sick in her hometown. During the dark days of the Black Death, Catherine fearlessly and tirelessly worked to assist those afflicted by the plague and those dying from it.

Catherine prayed, fasted, had visions, and often entered into ecstatic states. Gradually, she started sharing her visions and teachings with the people she encountered. She gathered students and followers around her. The 14th century was a time of great controversies for the Church, and Catherine actively expressed her opinions on current church matters. She addressed not only the Pope and the cardinals but also secular rulers, conveying what God wanted them to do and emphasizing love in decision-making. According to Catherine, the only way to reach God was through love.

Catherine of Siena was considered a saint even during her lifetime, and her status was later officially confirmed. She was canonized in 1461. In 1938, she was named the patron saint of Italy, and in 1999, she was chosen as one of the patron saints of Europe. The dedication of Saint Catherine's Church to Catherine of Siena indicates the strong influence of the Dominican Order in the region's history. More recently, the Turku Student Village has been established in the Nummi area, which is quite fitting: both Catherines of the church – Catherine of Siena and Catherine of Alexandria – are patron saints of learned women.

Catherine's Chamber

"Create a chamber for yourself in your own mind from which you never need to emerge."

– Catherine of Siena

Catherine's Chamber is a relaxation exercise that guides the listener into gentle restfulness and meditation, one breath at a time.

