

The legend of St. Catherine is unsupported by solid historical authority. Devotion to her began in the West about the Eleventh Century and was widely spread by the Crusaders. We have still much to learn about the personality of St. Catherine, but although the particulars of her life are uncertain, God has been pleased to glorify his saint on Mount Sinai, where her tomb is still venerated by pilgrims.

St. Gertrude, who from childhood had had a great devotion to St. Catherine, once asked of Our Lord to be allowed to see the heavenly glory of her patron. Her prayer was heard, and she beheld the virgin of Alexandria on a golden throne surrounded by the sages whom she had led to a knowledge of the faith, and who formed her brightest crown in heaven.

INTROIT Psalms 118: 46, 47

Loquébar de testimoniis tuis in conspectu regum, et non confundébar: et meditábar in mandátiis tuis, quæ diléxi nimis. (Ps. 118: 1) Beáti immaculáti in via: qui ámbulant in lege Dómini. Glória Patri et Filio et Spirítui Sancto, sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen. Loquébar de testimoniis tuis in conspectu regum, et non confundébar: et meditábar in mandátiis tuis, quæ diléxi nimis.

COLLECT

Deus, qui dedísti legem Móysi in summitáte montis Sinai, et in eódem loco per sanctos Angelos tuos corpus beátæ Catharínæ Virginis et Mártiris tuæ mirabiliter collocásti: præsta, quæsumus; ut, ejus méritis et intercessióne, ad montem, qui Christus est, pervenire valeámus: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

LESSON Ecclesiasticus 51: 1-8, 12

Confitébor tibi, Dómine, Rex, et collaudábo te Deum, Salvatórem meum. Confitébor nómini tuo: quóniam adjútor et protéctor factus es mihi, et liberásti corpus meum a perditíone, a láqueo línguæ iniquæ et a lábiis operántium mendácium, et in conspectu astántium factus es mihi adjútor. Et liberasti me secúndum multitudinem misericórdiæ nóminis tui a rugiéntibus, præparátiis ad escam, de mánibus quæréntium ánimam meam, et de portis tribulatiónum, quæ circumdedérunt me: a pressúra flammæ, quæ circumdedit me, et in médio ignis non sum æstuáta: de altitúdine ventris inféri, et a lingua coinquináta, et a verbo mendáci, a rege iníquo, et a lingua injústa: laudábit usque ad mortem ánima mea Dóminum: quóniam éruis sustinéntes te, et liberas eos de mánibus géntium, Dómine, Deus noster.

GRADUAL Psalms 44: 8, 15, 16

Dilexisti iustitiam, et odisti iniquitatem. Propterea unxit te Deus, Deus tuus, oleo lætitiæ.

LESSER ALLELUIA

Psalms 44: 15, 16

Allelúja, allelúja. Adducentur Regi virgines post eam: proximæ eius afferentur tibi in lætitia. Allelúja.

GOSPEL Matthew 25: 1-13

In illo témpore: Dixit Jesus discípulis suis parábolam hanc: Simile erit regnum cælórum decem virgínibus: quæ, accipiéntes lámpades suas, exiérunt óbviám sponso et sponsæ. Quinque autem ex eis erant fátuæ, et quinque prudétes: sed quinque fátuæ, accéptis lámpádibus, non sumpsérunt óleum secum: prudéntes vero accepérunt óleum in vasis suis cum lámpádibus. Horam autem faciénte sponso, dormitavérunt omnes et dormiérunt. Média autem nocte clamor factus est: Ecce, sponsum venit, exíte óbviám ei. Tunc surrexérunt omnes virgines illæ, et ornávérunt lámpades suas. Fátuæ autem sapiéntibus dixérunt: Date nobis de óleo vestro: quia lámpades nostræ exstinguúntur. Respondérunt prudéntes, dicéntes: Ne forte non sufficiat nobis et vobis, ite pótius ad vendéntes, et émite vobis. Dum autem irent émere, venit sponsus: et quæ parátæ erant, intravérunt cum eo ad núptias, et clausa est iánua. Novíssime vero véniunt et réliquæ virgines, dicéntes: Dómine, Dómine, áperi nobis. At ille respóndens, ait: Amen, dico vobis, nescio vos. Vigiláte itaque, quia nescítis diem neque horam.

OFFERTORY Psalms 44: 15, 16

Afferéntur Regi Virgines post eam: próximæ eius afferéntur tibi in lætitia et exultatióne: adducántur in templum Regi Dómino.

SECRET

Súscipe, Dómine, múnera, quæ in beátæ Catharínæ, Virginis et Mártiris tuæ solemnitate deférimus: cujus nos confidimus patrocínio liberári. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

COMMUNION Psalms 118: 78-80

Confundántur supérbi, quia injúste iniquitatem fecérunt in me: ego autem in mandátiis tuis exercébor, in tuis justificatióibus, ut non confundar.

POSTCOMMUNION

Auxiliéntur nobis, Dómine, sumpta mystéria: et, intercedénte beáta Catharínæ., Virgine et Mártire tua, sempitérna fáciant protectióne gaudere. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

I spoke of Thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed: I meditated also on Thy commandments, which I loved exceedingly. (Ps. 118: 1) Blessed are the undefiled in the way: who walk in the law of the Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. I spoke of Thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed: I meditated also on Thy commandments, which I loved exceedingly.

O God, Who didst give the law to Moses on the summit of Mount Sinai and by means of Thy holy angels didst miraculously place there the body of blessed Catherine, Thy Virgin and Martyr: grant we beseech Thee, that, by her merits and intercession, we may be able to come unto the mountain which is Christ: Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

I will give glory to Thee, O Lord, O King, and I will praise Thee, O God my Savior. I will give glory to Thy Name, for Thou hast been a helper and protector to me, and hast preserved my body from destruction, from the snare of an unjust tongue, and from the lips of them that forge lies; and in the sight of them that stood by Thou hast been my helper. And Thou hast delivered me, according to the multitude of the mercy of Thy Name, from them that did roar, prepared to devour; out of the hands of them that sought my life, and from the gates of afflictions which compassed me about: from the oppression of the flame which surrounded me, and in the midst of the fire I was not burnt: from the depth of the body of hell, and from an unclean tongue, and from lying words, from an unjust king, and from a slanderous tongue. My soul shall praise the Lord even unto death: because Thou, O Lord our God, deliverest them that wait for Thee, and savest them out of the hands of the nations.

Thou hast loved justice and hated iniquity. Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness.

Alleluia, alleluia. After her shall virgins be brought to the King: her neighbors shall be brought to Thee with gladness. Alleluia.

At that time, Jesus spoke to His disciples this parable: The Kingdom of Heaven shall be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five wise. But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered, saying: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came: and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. But at last come also the other virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answering said: Amen I say to you, I know you not. Watch ye therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour.

After her shall virgins be brought to the King: her neighbors shall be brought to Thee with gladness and rejoicing: they shall be brought into the temple of the King, the Lord.

Receive, O Lord, the gifts which we bring Thee, on the feast of blessed Catherine, Thy Virgin and Martyr, by whose patronage we hope to be delivered. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

COMMUNION Psalms 118: 78-80

Let the proud be ashamed, because they have done unjustly towards me: but I will be employed in Thy commandments, in Thy justifications, that I may not be confounded.

May the Mysteries which we have received, help us, O Lord; and by the intercession of blessed Catherine, Thy Virgin and Martyr, may we ever enjoy their protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.