

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2011 NO. 123

SAINT GERTRUDE THE GREAT CHURCH 4900 RIALTO ROAD WEST CHESTER OHIO 45069
sgg.org traditionalmass.org

FROM BISHOP DOLAN

My dear Friends,

Here at St. Gertrude the Great, the month of April, and this year's Easter Octave, end with two devotional feasts for the sick and for those who love them and care for them. On Easter Saturday this year the whole Church commemorates St. Catherine of Siena, and we at our church honor as well the Divine Physician under the endearing title: "The Holy Child Jesus, Doctor of the Sick."

St. Catherine, mystic, stigmatic, and highly practical preacher of peace and concord, was raised up by Our Lord to heal the wound of schism which afflicted the Mystical Body of Christ in the fourteenth century with its multiple popes, confusion and division. St. Catherine was willing to suffer anything for the restoration of "Holy Church to her comeliness and beauty," even, she prayed, "let my body, to the very marrow in my bones, be beaten to a jelly." This alone would merit both our interest and devotion today, we who will not compromise the purity of the Immaculate Bride of Christ, the Church.

But saints shine not only in universal truths, but also in personal, practical application. Thus the sick brought out the best in St. Catherine even though she was often repaid only by ingratitude. "Her prayers and penances were constantly offered for the sick. Severe only with herself, she was unalterably kind to the suffering. It is related that she visited a woman suffering with cancer of the breast. Undaunted by the sight of the ugly open sore, she sucked the odorous matter away when she found that she was unable to wash it clean before dressing the wound."

St. Catherine is thus venerated as a patroness of women suffering from cancer, especially of the breast. We have a shrine at St. Gertrude for this compassionate saint, which features an old and very historical oil painting of St. Catherine, presented by Bishop Flaget, the first bishop of Bardstown (and of this whole region) to Mother Catherine Spalding, foundress of the Nazareth, Kentucky Sisters of Charity.

We would be happy to light a candle here for your intentions, or send you a copy of our prayer to St. Catherine for cancer sufferers. But let us also remember to invoke the Stigmatic of Siena, for the healing of Mother



Our annual Lenten Children's Day of Recollection was held on March thirtieth at St. Gertrude the Great Church. Bishop Dolan gives the opening conference to the nearly fifty children who profited from the time they gave over to prayer, spiritual direction and meditation.

Church, St. Catherine's great life's work, and so needed again today.

April 30 is also the day set aside to honor the Child Jesus, as "Doctor of the Sick." St. Catherine herself write beautifully of Jesus, the Divine Physician, but it was reserved to the devotional ingenuity of the much persecuted Mexican Church to honor and depict the Child Jesus as a doctor, the Divine Doctor of both body and soul.

This Devotion was brought to a little hospital in Tepeaca, Puebla state by Josephine Sisters in 1941. A small chapel in the hospital was dedicated to the little Doctor of the Sick. Miracles were multiplied, and with the blessing of the ecclesiastical authorities the image was enshrined in the parish church in the 1950's.

In the Spanish tradition, statues are often richly vested out of devotion. Indeed, it is customary that each year Mexicans should vest anew and enthrone the Baby Jesus used in the family Christmas Crib. These vested statues are then blessed in church at Candlemas. This is perhaps the

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origin of the imaginative and naively charming custom of dressing the Baby Jesus as a doctor, complete with white lab coat, stethoscope, and black bag. At Prague (and throughout the world) the Holy Child is correctly presented as King of Kings. Why should we not also show Him as Divine Physician, for so He is.

Again, we invite you to join us in prayer for our sick at His shrine. Candle offerings are happily received, and holy cards will be sent out on request.

May Mary's month, May, bring you, our sick, and poor Holy Mother Church, great strength and healing through these comforting devotions.

With a blessing, in her who is *the* Health of the Sick,

–The Most Reverend Daniel L. Dolan



Father Cekada assisted at ordinations to minor orders that were conferred by Bishop Donald Sanborn at Most Holy Trinity Seminary in March. (Above) Mr. Bede Nkamuke of Nigeria receives tonsure marking his entrance into the clerical state. (Below) Mr. Villi Lehtoranta receives the order of acolyte. Mr. Lehtoranta is to be ordained a subdeacon on Holy Saturday by Bishop Dolan at St. Gertrude the Great Church. Please support our Seminary and its work of providing priests for the future!



Our young priests Fathers McGuire and Larrabee, both graduates of Most Holy Trinity Seminary, assisted at the Lenten Children's Day of Recollection with their spiritual talks, hearing confessions, offering Mass, making the Way of the Cross, and giving Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. What a blessing it is to have both of them at St. Gertrude the Great Church!



Remember your mother and
our Blessed Mother in a special high
Mass, Procession and May Crowning
this **May 8th.**
Please complete the enclosed envelope
and return it to us.