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Oration “Catherinam Senensem” of Pope Pius II (29 June 1461, Rome). Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. Final version. (Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II; 62). 2024

Michael Cotta-Schönberg

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Oration “*Catherinam Senensem*” of Pope Pius II (29 June 1461, Rome). Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg

(Collected Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II; 62)

Final Version

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Abstract

On 29 October 1461, Pope Pius II canonized Catherine of Siena during a ceremony held in the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome. On this occasion, the pope gave an oration, the "*Catherinam Senensem*", in which he defined the concepts of holiness and canonization, and spoke of the life and miracles of the saint. The pope was careful to point out that it is not the pope (or the Church) who creates saints but the saints themselves, with the help of God. The Church only declares that they are saints, being with God in Heaven, and allows the faithful to pray to them and ask for their intercession with God.

Keywords

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II; Papa Pio II; Saint Catherine of Siena; Saint Catherina of Siena; Santa Caterina di Siena; Concept of Holiness; Saints; Canonizations; Canonization of Catherine of Siena; Miracles; Asceticism; Renaissance orations; Renaissance oratory; Renaissance rhetorics; 15th century; 1461

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Table of contents

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context
2. Themes
3. Date, place, audience, and format
4. Text
 - 4.1. Manuscripts
 - 4.2. Editions
 - 4.3. Present edition
5. Sources
6. Bibliography
7. Sigla and abbreviations

II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

0. Introduction [1]
1. Concept of Holiness [2-4]
 - 1.1. Holy in the sense of “sacred” and “religious” [2]
 - 1.2. Holy in the sense of “inviolable” [3]
 - 1.3. Holy in the sense of “pertaining to the divine” [4]
2. Concept of canonization [5-10]
3. Life and miracles of Catherine of Siena [11-15]
 - 3.1. Life and character [11-12]
 - 3.2. Asceticism [13]
 - 3.3. Role in the return of the papacy to Rome [14]
 - 3.4. Miracles [15]
4. Canonization of Catherine of Siena [16-18]

Appendix 1: Papal bull “Virgo Catharina” of 29 June 1461 on canonization of Catherine of Siena

Appendix 2: Three hymns composed for the office of Saint Catherine of Siena by Pope Pius II

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context¹

Like many of his predecessors, Pius II systematically promoted the interests of his family, and he also greatly favoured his home city, Siena,² appointing many Siennese to official positions in the Papal States and at the Curia. Moreover, in 1460, he bestowed the papal “Golden Rose” on the city government of Siena, granted it the city of Radicofani, and raised Siena from a diocese to an archdiocese.

In 1461, the time had come to grant the city another saint, Catherine of Siena, besides Bernardino da Siena, canonized by Pius’ predecessor, Nicolaus V, in 1450. As canonizations at that time were much less frequent than in later periods, the canonization of two saints from Siena in eleven years was quite remarkable, as Pius himself says in the oration.

Catherine of Siena was quite worthy of being proclaimed a saint. Indeed, her canonization was a popular measure since she was already considered a saint in parts of Europe,³ and her role in the restoration of the papacy was generally believed to have been quite important.⁴ Her canonization had been prepared by former popes,⁵ and Pius himself had already discussed it at the Congress of Mantua,⁶ where it met with some resistance from the Franciscans who preferred the canonization of one of their own, friar Giovanni da Capistrano.⁷

Pius does not mention it in his oration, but Catherine of Siena had actually been a great believer in the idea of a crusade, and in that sense, her canonization might indirectly promote the crusade project so dear to Pius.⁸

In his *Commentarii*, Pius wrote about the event and the oration:

Meanwhile, the pope had been asked by his fellow citizens to enrol the blessed Catherine of Siena among the holy virgins of Christ;⁹ he called a meeting of the bishops then in Rome, where three cardinals who had investigated her life and miracles reported all they had learned. When the assembly was asked its opinion, they unanimously approved her canonization. Pius had a stage erected in Saint Peter’s Basilica: here, after celebrating mass,

¹ CO, V, 24; Boulting, p. 336; Giunta; Mitchell, pp. 238-239; Paparelli, pp. 259-264; Pastor, II, pp. 202-204; Reinhardt, pp. 301-303; Stolf, p. 377; Voigt, IV, pp. 561-571

² Voigt, IV, pp. 561-571

³ Giunta, pp. 57-59

⁴ Pastor, II, pp. 202-204

⁵ Giunta, pp. 60-63

⁶ Giunta, pp. 63-64

⁷ Zimolo, p. 57, n. 3; Voigt, IV, pp. 599-606; Boulting, p. 336; Paparelli, pp. 259-264

⁸ Castellini

⁹ Already a month after the coronation of the new Siennese pope, the Siennese ambassadors were instructed to raise the matter with the pope, see Giunta p. 63

he delivered a sermon on the merits of the maid.¹ This we will not insert here since it is included in the volume of his collected speeches. When he had finished, he decreed that Catherine be enrolled with the usual ceremonies in the catalogue of sainted virgins, and he established an annual feast day in her honour. He granted a seven-year indulgence to all who visited the tomb where her bones are kept. The cardinals, bishops, and other prelates present all voiced their approval. He himself dictated the bull of canonization, which is included in the volume of his collected letters.²

Pius' contemporary biographer Campano just wrote that, *with splendid ceremony,³ he entered the name Catherine of Siena, who was said to have performed many miracles, in the list of holy virgins.⁴*

2. Themes

The four major themes of the oration are

- The concept of holiness
- The concept of canonization
- The life and miracles of Catherine of Siena, and
- The canonization of Catherine of Siena

Concerning **the concept of holiness**, Pius distinguishes between three subconcepts:

- holiness in the senses of “religious”
- holiness in the sense of “inviolable” (e.g. ambassadors), and
- holiness in the sense of “divine”

Concerning the **concept of canonization**, Pius carefully explains that the canonization is not an act by which the Church makes somebody a holy saint, but a declaration that the Church believes somebody to be a holy saint, having already entered Heaven, and allows worship of the saint in the form of *veneration* (cultus duliae), but not of *worship*, which is reserved for God (cultus

¹ The event was depicted by Pintoricchio in one of the frescoes in the Libreria Piccolominea in the Cathedral of Siena

² CO, V, 24 (Meserve, III, pp. 131-133)

³ Giunta, p. 64

⁴ Zimolo, p. 57: *Caterinam Senensem, cuius multa extare miracula ferebantur, in divarum retulit numerum, apparatu aequo magnifico*

latria). The Church also allows the faithful to pray to the saints for their intercession with God. This is quite important since the veneration of saints and prayers for their intercession give people hope for divine assistance, and therefore they form the basis for a whole system of religious beliefs and practices and for a large economy or industry of holiness, viz. pilgrimages, sale of relics, and offerings to the saints and the churches, where they are buried. There was also a political dimension of sainthood when a royal or princely family wanted to improve its reputation and legitimacy through the canonization of one of its members. Canonizing saints and regulating their veneration are, therefore, significant elements and symbols of papal power.

Pius also explains why it is the Roman See that has the sole right to canonize people. If it was up to the people or local authorities to decide who was a saint or not, it was likely that quite unworthy persons might gain the status of saints - as had indeed happened a number of times.

Concerning **the life and miracles of Saint Catherine**, Pius is not sparing in his praise. He does not overly dwell on the miracles, though.

As might be expected, he describes in some detail Catherine's contribution to the papacy's return from Avignon to Rome. It had not been forgotten by the papacy, and indeed, her achievement in this respect had been of the utmost importance to the development of the papacy. In the context of an ongoing war of succession in the Kingdom of Naples, where Pope Pius II and the Duke of Milan had made an alliance to keep the French out of Italy (and implicitly to prevent the return of the papacy to Avignon after the election of a French pope), the pope's insistence on Saint Catherine's role in the return of the popes from Avignon to Rome was politically significant.

Concerning the **canonization of Saint Catherine**, Pius carefully points out that all the usual criteria of sainthood are present in this case and that the canonization is requested by the faithful and approved by the hierarchy. He may have felt this declaration to have been necessary in view of his rather uninhibited expressions of Sieneese local patriotism in connection with the canonization, even in the papal canonization bull.

3. Date, place, audience, and format

The oration “*Catherinam Senensem*” was given on 29 June 1461 in Saint Peter’s Church in Rome.

The audience consisted of cardinals, prelates, curials, and a large congregation of faithful from many places, including Siena, obviously.

The format was an oration/sermon from the throne.

4. Text¹

4.1. Manuscripts²

The text is contained in a good number of manuscripts, among them the following:

- **Bruxelles / Bibliothèque Royale**
Ms. 15564-67, ff. 85r-91r **(R)** * **
- **Lucca / Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana**
544, ff. 135r-138v **(G)** *
- **Mantova / Biblioteca Comunale**
100, ff. 268r-274r
- **Milano / Biblioteca Ambrosiana**
I 97 inf, ff. 172v-176v
- **Roma / Archivio Segreto Vaticano**
Arm. II 3, ff. 6r-16v
Arm. XXXII 1, ff. 138r-145r **(H)** * **

¹ For the textual transmission of Pius II’s orations, see COR, vol. 1, ch. 5

² Manuscripts for which an orthographical profile is given in

COR,, vol. 11, are marked with an asterisk

Borghese I, 121-122, ff. 32v-38r **

- **Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana**

Barb. Lat. 82, ff. 263r ff.

Barb. Lat. 1499, ff. 162r-170r

Chis. J.VI.211, ff. 179r-182r **(D)** *

Chis. J.VIII.284, ff. 135v-138v **(A)** *

Chis. J.VIII.286, ff. 273r-279r **(C)** *

Ross. lat. 771 (X 51)

Vat. Lat. 1788, ff. 191v-195r **(B)** *

Vat. Lat. 5667, ff. 55v-61r **(L)** * **

Vat. Lat. 12255, ff. 38r-43v **

Vat. Lat. 12256, ff. 48r-55r **

- **Roma / Biblioteca Casanatense**

4310, ff. 139r-144v **

- **Roma / Biblioteca Centrale Vittorio Emmanuele**

Vittorio Emmanuele 492, ff. 200v-206v **(T)** **

The oration was included in the Collected Orations of Pius II compiled in 1462, represented by the manuscripts A, B, C, D, G.¹ Later, in 1464, it was also included in Cardinal Nephew's Anthology of Pius II's major orations,² contained in the manuscripts listed above with a double asterisk.

4.2. Editions

The oration was published by Mansi:

- Pius II: *Orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae*. Ed. by Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca: Benedini, 1755-1759 / II, pp. 137-145
[Based on the manuscript in Lucca]

¹ See COR, vol. 1, sect. 5.1.3.

² See COR, vol. 1, sect. 5.1.6.

4.3. Present edition

For principles of edition (incl. orthography) and translation, see COR, vol. 1, ch. 9-10.

Text:

The edition is based on the manuscripts listed above with the siglum, with the Chisianus J.VIII.284 as the lead manuscript.

Pagination:

Pagination follows the lead manuscript.

Textual apparatus:

The variants common to the manuscripts H, L, R, T, i.e. the manuscripts with the Cardinal Nephew's Anthology of Pius II's major orations from 1464, are given in bold type.

5. Sources¹

In this oration, 23 direct and indirect quotations from various sources have been identified, of which 16 are from the Bible and 6 from classical sources.

Biblical: 16

Classical: 6

Patristic and medieval: 1

Contemporary: 0

All: 25

¹ On Piccolomini's use of sources in general, see COR, ch. 8.

Biblical sources: 16

Old Testament: 13

- Exodus: 1
- Leviticus: 1
- Canticle: 1
- 1. Kings: 1
- 1. Esdras: 1
- Proverbs: 1
- Psalms: 7

New Testament: 3

- Matthew: 1
- Apocalypse: 1
- Romans: 1

Classical sources: 6

- Cicero: 1¹
- Macrobius: 1
- Statius: 1²
- Vergilius: 3³

Patristic and medieval sources: 1

- Decretum Gratiani: 1

Contemporary sources: 0

¹ Pro Archia

² Thebais

³ Aeneis

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- *Commentarii rerum memorabilium quae suis temporibus contigerunt.* Ed. by A van Heck. 2 vols. Città del Vaticano, 1984 (Studi e testi; 312-313)
- Pius II: *Commentaries.* Ed. by M. Meserve and M. Simonetta. Vols. 1 ff. Cambridge, MA, 2003 ff.

Pius II: *Orations.* [1436-1464]

- Pius II: *Orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae.* Ed. by Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca: Benedini, 1755-1759

¹ References to the *Annales* are usually given in this form: (e.g.) Rainaldus, ad ann. 1459, nr. 67

(without reference to a specific edition)

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7. Sigla and abbreviations

A = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis. J.VIII. 284

B = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Vat. Lat. 1788

C = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis. J.VIII. 286

D = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis. J.VI. 211

G = Lucca / Bibl. Cap. Feliniana / 544

H = Roma / Archivio Segreto Vaticano / Arm. XXXII 1

L = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Vat. Lat. 5667

R = Bruxelles / Bibliothèque Royale / Ms. 15564-67

T = Roma / Biblioteca Centrale Vittorio Emanuele / Vittorio Emanuele 492

Abbreviations

CAR = Eneas Silvius Piccolomineus (postea Pius II): *Carmina*. Edid. Adrian van Heck. 1994.

CB = *Concilium Basiliense*.

COD = *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. G. Alberigo. 1952.

COM = *Pius II: Commentarii rerum memorabilium quae suis temporibus contigerunt*. [1464].

COR = *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*. Edit. and transl. by Michael v. Cotta-Schönberg. 12 vols. 2019-2020. [Final Version 2024-2025].

CRDM = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Collected Reports of Diplomatic Missions, 1447-1455*. Edit. and transl. by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 2021.

CUG = Cugnoni

DBI = Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani.

DGCB = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *De Gestis Concilii Basiliensis Commentariorum Libri II*. Ed. and transl. by Dennis Hay and W.K. Smith. London, 1967.

DIA = Enea Silvio Piccolomini: *Libellus Dialogorum*. A cura di Simona Iaria. 2015. (Edizione Nazionale dei Testi Umanistici; 12).

DLE = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *De Liberatorum Educatione* [1450]. In: *Humanist Educational Treatises*. Ed. and transl. by C.W. Kallendorf. 2002, pp. 126-259.

DRBG = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *De Rebus Basiliae gestis Commentarius*. [1450]

DV = digital version.

DVI = *De Viris Illustribus and other biographical Writings* of Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Edit. and transl. by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 2021.

EPI = *Collected Letters of Enea Silvio Piccolomini*. Ed. and transl. by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 10 vols. 2023 ff. [Freely available in a digital edition in HAL Archives].

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KO = Koberger

ME = Enea Silvio Piccolomini: *Briefe. Dichtungen*. Übers. Max Mells. 1966.

MPL = Migne. Patrologia Latina.

RE = Reject Aeneas, Accept Pius. Selected Letters of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II). Edit. Th. M. Izbicki. Washington, 2006.

RTA = Deutsche Reichstagsakten.

SC = Scanned image.

ST = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Les misères des gens de cour. Le songe de Fortune*. Trad. Serge Stolf. 2015.

VO = Voigt, Georg: *Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini als Papst Pius der Zweite und sein Zeitalter*. 3 vols. 1856-1863.

WI = Widmer, Berthe (ed.): *Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Papst Pius II. Ausgewählte Texte aus seinen Schriften*. 1960.

WO = Wolkan, Rudolf: *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. 3 Bd. Wien, 1909-1918. (Fontes rerum Austriacarum, II. Abteilung, 61, 62, 67, 68).

II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Oratio Pii II Pontificis Maximi habita Romae in basilica Sancti Petri pro canonizatione beatae Catherinae Senensis¹

[1] {135v} Catherinam Senensem in catalogum² hodie sanctorum³ Christi⁴ virginum relaturi dignum existimamus, venerabiles⁵ fratres ac filii dilectissimi⁶, quid sibi velit sanctitatis vocabulum, cur sanctorum canonizatio sit introducta, et an virgo ipsa hujus honoris digna sit, paucis aperire, ut his satisfiat, qui haec suspensis animis expectant, quales adesse non paucos⁷ {136r} arbitramur.

¹ Oratio ... Senensis : Pii II Pontificis Maximi oratio habita in canonizatione beatae Catherinae Senensis **D, G**; Canonizatio Beatae Caterinae Senensis per Pium

II. Pontificem Maximum facta **H**;
no title L, T

² cathalogum H; cathalogum A,
B, C, D, H, L, R, T

³ sanctoni H

⁴ *omit.* T

⁵ *omit.* C

⁶ venerabiles ... dilectissimi *omit.*
H

⁷ adesse non paucos : non paucos adesse G

Oration of Pius II, Supreme Pontiff, given in the Basilica of Saint Peter's in Rome, on the occasion of the canonization of Saint Catherine of Siena

0. Introduction

[1] Venerable Brethren and beloved Sons, today We shall enter the name of Catherine of Siena into the catalogue of Holy Virgins of Christ. For the benefit of the many eagerly expectant people We see here today, We shall briefly explain the meaning of the word "holiness",¹ the reasons why the canonization of saints was introduced, and why the virgin Catherine is worthy of this honour.

¹ "Sanctitas"

[2] De sanctitatis significatione primum dicemus. *Sanctum idem esse*¹, quod *sacrum et religiosum* Trebatius jureconsultus diffinivit, cui et sacra eloquia abunde consonant. Nam quod est in Esdra: *Vos sancti estis Deo, et vasa sancta*; et in Libris Regum: *Non habeo panes*² *laicos*³ *ad manum, sed panem tantum*⁴ *sanctum*; et in Psalmis: *Extollite manus vestra in sancta*, ad *sacrum et*⁵ *religiosum* refertur. Et ad hunc intellectum poeta locutus est: *Tuque, o sanctissima vates*; sacram enim Sibyllam vocat. In quo sensu nulli dubium est, quin Romanus pontifex et episcopi⁶ reliqui sanctificare vel homines vel res alias possint, qui sacerdotes idcirco dicuntur, quia⁷ sacra dant resque sanctificant, ut est⁸ illud Exodi: *Facies vestem sanctam Aaron fratri tuo in gloriam et decorem*.

[3] Secundo modo sanctum dicimus, quod neque corrumpi, neque violari debet, quemadmodum sanctas leges et sanctos appellamus legatos: *Sanctum populis per saecula nomen*. Leges autem edere et legatos constituere non solum pontifices⁹, sed reges, et populi consueverunt¹⁰.

¹ est H, R

² pane L, T

³ laycas H

⁴ tamen D, G; totum R

⁵ omit. D, G

⁶ ipsi H, L, T

⁷ qui L, R, T

⁸ omit. D, G

⁹ pontifex R

¹⁰ consueuere H

1. Concept of “holiness”

1.1. “Holy” in the sense of “sacred” and “religious”

[2] First, We shall speak about the meaning of the word “Holiness”. The lawyer Trebatius¹ gave this definition: *Holy is the same as sacred and religious*,² and Holy Scripture entirely agrees with him for we read in Esdras: *You are the holy ones of the Lord and the holy vessels*,³ and in the Book of Kings: *I have no common bread at hand, but only holy bread*,⁴ and in the Psalms: *lift up your hands to the holy places*,⁵ where “holy” means “sacred and religious”.⁶ The poet⁷ speaks in the same sense when he says: *And you, most holy prophetess*,⁸ calling the Sibyl holy. In this sense, there is no doubt that the Roman Pontiff and other bishops can make men and things holy. Indeed, they are called priests⁹ because they “give sacred things”¹⁰ and “make things holy”,¹¹ as it is said in Exodus: *thou shalt make a holy vesture for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty*.¹²

1.2. “Holy” in the sense of “inviolable”

[3] In a second sense of the word, we call that holy¹³ which ought not to be destroyed or violated. In this sense, we call laws and envoys holy: *name sacred to peoples throughout the centuries*.¹⁴ But to issue laws and appoint envoys is done not only by popes but also by kings and peoples.

¹ Trebatius Testa, Gajus (fl. 1st century BCE): jurist of ancient Rome and protégé of Cicero. His writings included a *de religionibus* and *de iure civili* but these books are lost. He was, however, frequently cited by later jurists

² Macrobius: *Saturnalia*, 3.3.5. Piccolomini had already used this quotation in his *De gestis concilii Basiliensis Commentarii*

from 1440: *Sanctum enim (ut Macrobio Trebatium referenti placet) interdum idem est quod sacrum, idemque quod religiosum*

³ 1. Esdras 8, 28

⁴ 1. Kings, 21, 4

⁵ Psalms, 133, 2

⁶ “sacrum et religiosum”

⁷ Vergilius Maro, Publius [Virgil] (70-19 BCE): Roman poet

⁸ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 6.65

⁹ “Sacerdotes”

¹⁰ “sacra dant”, cf. Decretum, D.21.1: 1) *sacerdos autem nomen habet compositum ex Graeco et Latino quod est sacrum dans*; 2) *sacerdotes vocantur quia sacrum dant*. From Isidore: *Etymologiae*, VII, ch. 12

¹¹ “res sanctificant”

¹² Exodus, 28, 2

¹³ “sanctum”

¹⁴ Statius: *Thebais*, 2.486

[4] Tertio modo et¹ pressius² et honorificentius hoc nomen accipimus ad³ sanctum, quod mundum purumque sit, quod beatum, quod immutabile, et aliquo modo⁴ ad divinitatem videtur accedere, sicut⁵ in Levitico legimus: *Estote sancti, quia ego sanctus sum*. Et in Sapientia: *Sanctis tuis maxima erat lux*. Et in Proverbiis: *Novi scientiam sanctorum*. Et illud: *Non dabis sanctum tuum videre corruptionem*. Et apud Maronem: *Tuque, o sanctissima conjunx⁶, felix morte⁷ tua*. Et iterum: *Sancta ad vos anima atque⁸ istius⁹ inscia culpa descendam*. Et Ennius, teste Cicerone, *jure suo sanctos appellat poetas* tamquam divino quodam¹⁰ spiritu grandia canant. In hisce sensibus fatemur neque nostrum esse, neque mortalis cujuspian sanctificare quempiam. Est enim homo sui arbitrii; neque invitus quisquam¹¹ bonus est aut sanctus.

¹ *omit.* G

² et pressius : expressius H

³ **id H, L, R, T**

⁴ aliquo modo : aliquando H

⁵ sicuti G

⁶ **coniux corr. ex. coniunx L;**

coniux H, R, T

⁷ morti T

⁸ et G

⁹ instuis L; instituis T

¹⁰ quoddam H

¹¹ quisque C

1.3. “Holy” in the sense of “pertaining to the divine

[4] In a third, more profound and more solemn sense of the word, we use the word “holy” as meaning that which is unsullied, pure and immutable, and which somehow approaches the divine, as we read in Leviticus: *Be holy because I am holy*;¹ and in Wisdom: *Thy saints had a very great light*;² and in Proverbs: *I have known the science of saints*;³ and this: *Thou wilt not give thy holy one to see corruption*.⁴ And in Maro:⁵ *And you, oh most holy spouse, happy were you in death*;⁶ and again: *I will descend to you, a soul holy and innocent of that reproach*.⁷ And, according to Cicero,⁸ Ennius⁹ rightly calls poets “holy,” for, inspired by the divine spirit, they sing of great things.¹⁰ We declare that in this sense of the word “holy” neither We nor any other mortal man can make anybody else holy. For every man has his own will, and nobody is good or holy without wanting to be.

¹ Leviticus, 11, 44

² Wisdom, 18, 1

³ Proverbs, 30, 3: *Non didici sapientiam, et non novi scientiam sanctorum*

⁴ Psalms, 15, 10; Acts, 2, 27; 13, 15

⁵ Virgil

⁶ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 11.158-159

⁷ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 12.648

⁸ Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 BCE): Roman statesman and author

⁹ Ennius, Quintus (ca. 239-ca. 169 BCE): Roman writer, often considered the father of Roman poetry

¹⁰ Cicero: *Pro Archia poeta*, 17-19

[5] Cum tamen sancti canonizantur, sanctitatis vocabulum ad beatitudinem refertur, et immutabilitatem, et quendam quodammodo¹ divinitatem, quas res nemo praestare potest nisi solus Deus². Mortalis autem immortalem aut miser felicem aut homo Deum efficere quis potest? Sua quemque innocentia et sua virtus beat³, non tamen absque adjutorio⁴ Dei, in cuius gratia morientes humanae opis^{5 6} non egent, dicente scriptura: *Beati mortui, qui in Domino moriuntur. Et: Non derelinquet dominus sanctos suos.* Quod si humana opera esset⁷ opus ad beatitudinem consequendam, multi suo stipendio privarentur, cum fallax sit mortale iudicium. At Deus omnia videns, omnia intelligens, summa iustitia praeditus, pius et misericors, nullum patitur suo praemio fraudari. *Mirabilis {136v} Deus in sanctis suis*, quos ab initio rerum elegit, et scripsit in libro vitae, quando vult et ubi vult, ad se vocat, perfectaue illos beatitudine impartitur⁸, nec nostro indiget ministerio. Nec sanctorum felicitas nostra laude crescit, aut vituperio minuitur; absque ullo metu summo et incommutabili bono fruuntur. Gloria haec est omnibus sanctis ejus.

[6] Quidquid illis a nobis praestatur, nostra causa praestatur. Namque cum pii et religiosi sumus, cum Deum cultu patriae et sanctos ejus cultu duliae veneramus, peccata nostra redimimus⁹. Cumque propter iniquitates nostras summi Dei pulsare aures saepenumero vereamur¹⁰, ad sanctos ipsos recurrimus, qui nostris infirmitatibus intercedendo subveniant. Sed cavendum fuit, ne dum patrocinium quaerimus, offensionem incurramus, eis intercessoribus¹¹ utentes, quos Deus odierit¹². Irritatur enim divinitas, non placatur, cum propitiator minus idoneus adhibetur. Quibus ex rebus provide statuit antiquitas, eos tantummodo sanctos a Christifidelibus colendos esse decernens, qui magno et alto sanctae¹³ sedis apostolicae iudicio probati receptique essent.

¹ quodammodo H

² *omit.* R

³ habeat H, L, T

⁴ auditorio D

⁵ operis L, T

⁶ humanae opis : humani operis

H

⁷ esse H

⁸ impartitur T

⁹ reddimimus R

¹⁰ veneramus R

¹¹ intercessionibus R

¹² oderit G

¹³ *omit.* H

2. Concept of canonization

[5] As regards the canonization of saints,¹ the word “holy” refers to beatitude and immutability and some kind of divinity,² things that only God can give. For who else can make a mortal immortal, an unhappy happy, or a man God? All men are made blessed by their own innocence and virtue, but not without the help of God. Those who die in His grace do not need human assistance, as Scripture says: *Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord.*³ And: *The Lord will not forsake his saints.*⁴ If human assistance was needed to attain the state of beatitude, many would be deprived of their reward since human judgment is fallacious. But God sees all, he understands all, He is supremely just, pious, and merciful, and He will not suffer anybody to be deprived of his reward. *God is wonderful in his saints,*⁵ whom he has chosen from the beginning and written into the book of life. He calls them to Him when and where He wishes, and He grants them perfect beatitude without need for our ministry. The felicity of the saints is not increased by our praise, nor is it diminished by our blame: they are enjoying their supreme and unchangeable boon without any fear. Such is the glory of all saints.

[6] What we give them, we give for our own sake.⁶ For when we are pious and religious, when we adore God and venerate the saints, we redeem our own sins. And if we, as often happens, fear to address⁷ God directly because of our iniquities, we have recourse to the saints [asking them] to intercede for our infirmities. But when we ask for protection, we must take care not to commit an offence by using intercessors⁸ who are not pleasing to God. For the divinity becomes displeased and is not happy if we use unsuitable propitiators. Therefore, in Antiquity, it was decided that the Christians might only venerate such persons as saints who had been approved and accepted by the great and high judgment of the Apostolic See.

¹ “sancti”

² I.e. the third sense of the word, see above

³ Apocalypse, 14, 13

⁴ Psalms, 36, 28

⁵ Psalms, 67, 36

⁶ Cf. oration “*Si quis me roget*”, sect. 1: *If anybody asks me, Reverend Fathers, why our forefathers introduced commemorations of holy men, I can answer easily: they did not do so for the sake of the holy men themselves so that they would receive praise for a well-lived life, but for*

our sake so that we will follow their examples. For why would they need our praise when they have been received by the Great God and are enjoying the supreme and ineffable splendour of divinity? And why would they want the praise of mortal men when they are living with Christ and are continuously praised by the voices of angels? No, they are blessed, and we are not able to give them anything or take anything away from them. This passage is from 1438, i.e. 23

years before the “*Catherinam Senensem*”. Pius also used the theme in the introduction to his *Commentarii*, written about a year afterwards: *The perfect happiness of the blessed [the saints] is neither increased by the praise of mortals nor diminished by their scorn*, CO, Preface (Meserve, I, p. 3)

⁷ “pulsare aures” : i.e. knock on God’s ears

⁸ “intercessores”

[7] Similis cautio apud gentiles fuit, qui etsi caeci erant, verae lucis cognitione privati¹, non tamen² apud eos sibi quisque colendos deos³ assumpsit, sed cultus ex auctoritate majoris pependit. Et apud Romanos quidem in potestate senatus hoc fuit decernere. Scribit enim Tertullianus Tiberium Caesarem, cum per litteras Pilati de Christi miraculis fuisset edoctus, voluisse illi divinos honores decernere, senatumque⁴ non aliam ob causam adversatum, nisi quia sibi⁵ non⁶ fuisset scriptum. Sed noluit verus Deus diis⁷ falsis adnumerari, neque cum pluribus coli, qui⁸ unus est et ipse zelotes. Senatus autem, qui Christum respuit, Simonem magum amplexus est eique statuam decrevit, tamquam Deus esset. Multos illi deos colebant; sed unum omnium regem putabant Jovem, non illum Cretensem, Saturni filium, sed numen⁹ quoddam aeternum et incomprehensibile. Quod si rite gentilitatem interpretemur, perinde apud eos facti ex hominibus dii habebantur, ac¹⁰ illi, quos nos appellamus sanctos. Siquidem sacri codices nunc angelos, nunc homines deos vocant, ut est illud: *Deus stetit in medio deorum, in medio autem deus dijudicat*. Et iterum: *Vos dii estis et filii excelsi omnes*.

¹ ~~deceptique essent~~ *add.* H; ~~re-~~
~~ceptique essent~~ *add.* L;
receptique essent *add.* T

² tantum B

³ colendos deos : deos colendos
G

⁴ senatusque H, L, T

⁵ *omit.* H, L, T

⁶ sibi *add. suprascr.* H

⁷ deis H

⁸ et *add.* H

⁹ nomen H

¹⁰ et H

[7] Similar caution was used by the gentiles: although they were blind and did not know the true light, nobody could choose themselves which gods to worship: divine worship depended on higher authority. In Rome, it was the Senate which had the power to decide this. For Tertullian writes that when Emperor Tiberius had been informed by Pilate about the miracles of Christ, he wanted to grant him divine honours. But the Senate was against it purely because Pilate had written to the emperor, not the Senate. However, the true God did not want to be numbered among false Gods, and He, who is the One God and even a jealous God, did not want to be worshipped together with many gods. The Senate, spurning Christ, accepted Simon Magus instead and decreed a statue in his honour as if he were a god. The Romans worshipped many gods, but they believed Jupiter to be the one king of all, not the Jupiter of Crete, son of Saturn, but some eternal and incomprehensible divinity. If We understand the gentiles correctly, those men they considered gods were such as we call saints. Indeed, Holy Scripture sometimes call angels or men gods, as in: *God hath stood in the congregation of gods: and being in the midst of them he judgeth gods.*¹ And again: *You are gods and all of you the sons of the most High.*²

¹ Psalms, 81, 1: *Deus stetit in synagoga deorum; in medio autem*

deos [Pius' text has "deus"]
dijudicat

² Psalms, 81, 6: *Dii estis, et filii
Excelsi omnes*

[8] Quod si apud caecam gentilitatem nefas fuit deos sibi quemquam¹ pro sua voluntate deligere, ne falsa illorum religio confunderetur, quanto id magis de sanctis inter Christianos debet esse prohibitum, quos nihil absque ordine facere decet? Scimus, quia magister noster Christus est Dei filius et sapientia patris ab aeterno ordinata. Nec illud ignoramus Pauli, qui² *omnia ordinata esse* dicit, *quae sunt a Deo*. Quod si ecclesia Dei opus est, ut est profecto, {137r} extra ecclesiam omnes agunt, qui ordinem intervertunt, quales sunt, qui Romano pontifici³ non oboediunt; et cum debeant esse membra, ea⁴ sibi arrogant, quae sunt capitis. Ecclesiam quippe super apostolica petra Christus fundavit et ordinavit. Ubi ordo, ibi caput et membra; et illud imperat, ista parent. Est enim ecclesia sicut *castrorum acies ordinata* et verus Christi exercitus, in quo ducis⁵ imperio cuncta per ordinem geruntur. Qua regnum Dei patet, ibi⁶ ordo est et concordia. In inferno autem nullus ordo, sed sempiternus horror inhabitat, qui Luciferi sedes est, et omnium carcer, qui Romanae adversantur ecclesiae⁷.

[9] Nostri vero antecessores idonei dispensatores ministeriorum Dei omnia secundum ordinem statuerunt. Ii⁸, cum animadverterent defunctorum memoriae modo imagines, modo statuas, modo etiam fana dicari et sacra peragi, veriti⁹ ne plebes deciperentur aut daemonibus¹⁰ aut damnatis animabus litantes, eos tantum pro sanctis colendos esse mandavere, quos Romana primaque sedes recepisset, quae non levi rumore aut opinione vana, sed maturo consilio et longa digestionem sanctorum canonizationes admittit, nec sanctum aut beatum aut immortalem efficit¹¹ quem canonizat, sed sanctificatum a Deo, immortalem factum, ac beatitate donatum esse declarat.

¹ quemcumque H

² quia C

³ pontifice G

⁴ *omit.* H, L, T

⁵ duas T

⁶ ubi H

⁷ adversantur ecclesiae :
ecclesiae adversantur G

⁸ hii R

⁹ Veneti B

¹⁰ demoniis H

¹¹ efficit D, G, H, R, T

[8] If the blind gentiles considered it wrong to choose gods after one's own head because it would bring disorder to their false religion, should such practice in relation to saints not be even more forbidden to Christians, among whom all must done according to order? We know that our master, Jesus Christ, is the Son of God and the Wisdom of the Father, ordained from eternity. And we heed these words of Paul: *all that is, is ordained of God*.¹ But if the Church is the work of God - as indeed it is - then all who act outside the Church overturn order, as they do who disobey the Roman Pontiff and, despite being members, usurp the right of the head. Christ founded and ordained his Church on the apostolic rock. Where there is order, there is both head and members. The head commands, and the members obey. For the Church is *as an army set in array*,² the true army of Christ, where all is done in an orderly fashion on the general's command. Where the Kingdom of God is, there, too, is order and harmony. In Hell, there is no order but only eternal horror, the seat of Lucifer, and the prison of all who oppose the Roman Church.

[9] But as proper dispensers of the ministries of God, Our predecessors established an orderly practice: when they saw that people sometimes dedicated images, statues and even shrines to the memory of the dead and performed sacred rites to them, they feared that people would be deceived into making offerings to demons or damned souls. Therefore, they decided that only those accepted as saints by the Roman and First See might be revered as saints. This See only permits the canonization of saints after mature deliberation and a lengthy procedure, and not on based on superficial rumour or fickle public opinion. And when it canonizes a person, it does not make him or her holy, blessed or immortal but only declares that he or she is made holy and immortal and blessed by God Himself.

¹ *Romans, 13, 1: there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God*

(non est enim potestas nisi a Deo: quae autem sunt, a Deo ordinatae sunt)

² *Canticle, 6, 9*

[10] Neque hodie demum beata virgo Catherina caelum ingreditur, sed tum¹ primum ingressa est, cum ex hac luce migravit. Neque salvator dominus in ultima tantum iudicii magni die auditur dicens: *Venite, benedicti patris mei, percipite regnum*, sed quotidie vox² ejus apud bene pieque morientes auditur: *Sancti mei, qui in carne positi certamen habuistis, mercedem laboris ego reddam vobis*. Quod beatae Catherinae nemo dictum³ negaverit, cum carnis ergastulum relinquens: *In manus tuas, inquit, domine, commendo spiritum meum*. Nec nos in praesentiarum virginem ipsam sanctificaturi sumus, sed sanctam esse et publice colendam declaraturi. De cujus meritis pauca nunc attingenda recepimus, quando superioribus diebus⁴ de vita et miraculis ejus et multa et maxima publice audivistis. Verum taceri prorsus ejus praeconia in hac solemnitate non convenit, in qua sua canonizatio celebratur. Libet igitur pauca in medium adducere, quae ut⁵, opinamur, non inviti audietis.

[11] Virgo haec parentibus nata bonis melior ipsa emersit, prius Deo se dedicans⁶ quam⁷ Deum posset per aetatem cognoscere⁸. Virguncula sex annorum, ut domino serviret, eremum concupivit. Angelicam salutationem edocta quotiens paternam domum ascendit, per singulos gradus flexo geniculo beatissimam virginem matrem domini salutavit, et⁹ anno major virginitatem suam consecravit {137v} Christo, quem sua in majestate sedentem manifestissima visione contemplata est, et arcana caelestis aulae vidit, quae non potest effari lingua mortalis. Mundanas¹⁰ delicias a se omnes abdicavit, orationi totam se dedit, corpusculum suum¹¹ jejuniis, vigiliis¹², ac verberibus afflixit. Coaequales puellas, ut idem facerent, et docuit et persuasit. Pubes effecta scissis crinibus mortale¹³ conjugium recusavit, convicia et maledicta hominum sprexit.

¹ cum H, L, R, T

² vos R

³ deberi H; deum L, R, T

⁴ omit. R

⁵ in hac solemnitate ... adducere quae ut omit. H, L, T

⁶ se dedicans : sede dicans L, T

⁷ quoniam H, L, T

⁸ agnoscere H

⁹ omit. R

¹⁰ mundanas R

¹¹ omit. H, R

¹² omit. R

¹³ maritale H

[10] Moreover, the blessed virgin Catherine does not enter Heaven today, for she already entered it when she left this world. Nor is it only on the last day of the great judgment that the Lord Saviour says: *Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom.*¹ No, whenever people die well and piously, he says: *My saints, who fought when you were in the flesh, I shall reward you for your labours.*² Nobody will deny that this is what he said to the blessed Catherine when she left the prison of the body, saying: *Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*³ Thus, today We do not make this virgin holy, but We only declare that she is holy and may be venerated publicly. Concerning her merits, We shall only say a few things now since you have heard so many and so great things about her life and miracles over the last days. However, it is not proper to completely omit her praises on this solemn feast of her canonization. So let Us just say a few words - We think you will hear them gladly.

3. Life and miracles of Catherine of Siena

3.1. Life and character

[11] This virgin was born of good parents, and she became even better herself. She dedicated herself to God even before she was old enough to really know him. As a small girl of six years, she wanted to go to the desert to serve the Lord. Having been taught the Salutation of the Angel,⁴ she saluted the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Our Lord, on bended knees and on each step, every time she went up the stairs in her father's house. When she grew older, she dedicated her virginity to Christ, whom, in a clear vision, she saw enthroned in majesty. She also saw the secrets of the Heavenly Court, which no mortal tongue can speak of. She renounced all worldly pleasures, gave herself totally to prayer, and chastised her little body with fasting, vigils and scourging. She taught and persuaded her girlfriends of the same age to do the same. When she reached the age of puberty, she cut off her hair and refused marriage with a mortal man, disdaining the mockery and insults of men.

¹ Matthew, 25, 34: *Venite benedicti Patris mei, possidete paratum vobis regnum*

² Liturgical text from the Feast of Martyrs

³ Psalms, 30, 6; Luke, 23, 46

⁴ The prayer *Angelus*

[12] Beati Dominici habitum, quem vocant de poenitentia, extorsit potius quam impetravit¹. Ancillare officium in paterna domo exercuit. Pauperibus Christi larga manu subvenit. Aegrotantibus summa diligentia ministravit. Diabolicas temptationes et assiduas malignantium spirituum pugnas² patientiae clipeo et fidei galea superavit. Incarceratos³ et oppressos, quibus valuit, modis consolata est. Nullum⁴ ab ea verbum non religiosum, non sanctum excidit, omnis sermo ejus de moribus fuit, de bonarum artium studiis, de religione, de pietate, de contemptu mundi, de Dei amore et proximi⁵, de caelesti patria. Nemo eam accessit, qui non doctior meliorque abierit. Doctrina ejus infusa fuit, non acquisita. Prius magistra visa est quam discipula, quippe quae sacrarum litterarum professoribus ipsisque magnarum ecclesiarum episcopis difficillimas de divinitate quaestiones per arrogantiam proponentibus prudentissime respondit et adeo satisfacit, ut agnos mansuetos remiserit, quos tamquam lupos ac⁶ leones acceperit, quorum nonnulli divinam in virgine⁷ sapientiam admirati. Distributis mox inter Christi pauperes, quae possidebant, bonis et accepta domini cruce vitam deinde evangelicam egerint.

[13] Quid de vitae austeritate summaque abstinentia dicemus? Miramur Moysem⁸ et Eliam, qui XL dierum jejunia tolerarunt: haec virgo a die cineris⁹ usque in Pentecostem¹⁰ jejunium¹¹ produxit, sola¹² eucharistiae communione contenta. Miramur Antoniorum, Paulorum, Machariorum, et Hilarionum¹³ abstinentiam, qui solis aut oleribus aut leguminibus victitarunt: hujus virginis tenuior cibus extitit, quae per annos ferme octo minimo herbarum succo, eoque parum¹⁴ retento sustentata est. Miramur Bragmanos¹⁵ Indiae gymnosophistas, quos ferunt frigus et aestum pertulisse nudos: majora haec virgo sub veste perpessa est, quae strato jacens duro, dies ac noctes ducebat insomnes, nec vigesimam partem sui temporis quieti dabat. Spinosis cordulis carnem suam macerabat, dolore capitis paene assiduo torquebatur, aestuabat febribus, nec iliorum¹⁶ cruciatu carebat, luctabatur cum {138r} daemonibus¹⁷, multisque illorum¹⁸ molestiis vexabatur. Nec tamen in tantis laboribus deficiebat, nec caritatis opera negligebat. Assistebat miseris indigna ferentibus, peccatores arguebat et ad poenitentiam revocabat; dissidentes componebat, praecepta salutis omnibus laeta dabat.

¹ increpavit H, L, R, T

² pugnas *corr.* ex pugnans L; pugnans T

³ carceratos H

⁴ *omit.* R

⁵ et proximi *omit.* H

⁶ et H

⁷ *em.*; virginem A, B, C, D, G, H, L, R, T

⁸ Moysen D, H, R, T

⁹ cinerum H

¹⁰ Penthecosten C; Pentecosten D, G, R

¹¹ jejunia G

¹² solam L, T

¹³ Hi/yliariorum H, R

¹⁴ *omit.* C

¹⁵ Bragmanos G; Braginanos L, T

¹⁶ illorum R

¹⁷ demoniis H

¹⁸ *omit.* H, L, R, T

[12] She received or rather extorted the so-called penitential habit of Saint Dominic. She performed the services of a maid in her father's house, generously helped the paupers of Christ, took diligent care of the sick, and, with patience as her shield and Faith as her helmet, overcame the temptations of the Devil and the incessant attacks of malign spirits. She comforted the imprisoned and the distressed as best she could. Only religious and holy words came from her. All her talk was about morals, the studies of the good arts,¹ religion, piety, contempt of the world, the love of God and one's neighbour, and the Heavenly Fatherland. No visitor left her without having learned something and become a better person. Learning had been infused into her; it was not acquired. She was a teacher before she was a disciple. Indeed, when teachers of Holy Scripture and even bishops from great dioceses arrogantly asked tough questions about the divinity, she answered them wisely and so well that those who had come to her as wolves and lions left her meek as lambs. Indeed, many of them greatly admired the virgin's divine wisdom, and, having distributed their possessions among the poor, they accepted the Cross of the Lord and afterwards lived an evangelical life.

3.2. Asceticism

[13] What shall We say about her austerity of life? We admire Moses and Eliah, who were able to fast for 40 days: this virgin extended the fast from Ash Wednesday to Pentecost, having the Eucharist as her only food. We admire the abstinence of an Antonius, a Paulus, a Macharius, and a Hilarion who only ate cabbages and legumes: this virgin ate even less, subsisting for almost eight years on vegetable juice, and she was even only able to keep a little of it down. We are amazed by the Brahmans, the Indian gymnosophists, who reportedly sustain both cold and hot weather, though nude: this virgin suffered even more, though clothed, for she lay on a hard bed, slept neither day nor night and did not rest even for a twentieth part of her time. She disciplined her flesh with knotted strings, had almost permanent headaches, burnt from fever, and suffered from back pain. She also fought with demons and was much plagued by them. But even in such difficult circumstances, she did not neglect the works of charity. She assisted people who were treated badly; she rebuked sinners and called them to penitence; she made peace among people who were quarrelling; and she gladly gave precepts for salvation to all.

¹ Here, the humanist pope manages to slip in the liberal arts – though it is doubtful that Catherine would have been much con-

cerned with these and that they would really be a sign of holiness. Interestingly, the passage on the liberal arts is not repeated

in the papal bull (see appendix), which otherwise quotes the oration verbatim

[14] Pro pace Florentinorum usque in Avenionem profecta est, ipsique gratias habere Italos decet, per cujus operam Romana curia ad eos rediit. Audite, Romani, audite omnes: res memoranda sacris annalibus atque recenti digna historia: Annos¹ quattuor et septuaginta Romana curia trans alpes peregrinata fuerat. Apostolica sedes per multas deducta manus tandem ad Gregorium XI. sanctitatis opinione celebrem pervenerat. Is cum episcopum quemdam redargueret, quod procul ab ecclesia et sponsa sua vitam ageret, hoc responsum habuit: "Cur tu, pater sancte, qui me arguis, apud ecclesiam tuam non trahis moram, sed multo quam ego meam, tu tuam sponsam a te procul absentem contemnis?" Tactus hoc responso veluti monitu divino pontifex penitioem palatii partem ingressus solus Deo vovit, quam primum posset Romam petere, neque hoc mortali cuipiam revelavit. Sed cum navaret ad recessum operas, et rex Franciae multique Galliarum principes ejus propositum impedire nunc precibus, nunc minis adniterentur, dubius quid ageret, hanc virginem ad se accersitam consuluit, an Romam accedere deberet. Cui virgo: "Quid me," inquit, "pontifex, vilem femellam² interrogas? Tute scis, quae Deo promiseris; servato, quae vovisti." Attonitus his dictis praesul omni haesitatione rejecta itineri se commisit, et navigio in Italiam vectus Romam petiit.

[15] Fuit enim in hac virgine spiritus³ prophetiae, multa praedixit antequam fierent, et cum⁴ hoc Gregorii votum tum alia multa occultissima revelavit. Rapiebatur a spiritu extra se et in aere suspensa frequenter visione divina⁵ fruebatur. Languores⁶ multos curavit, febribus ceterisque morbis in Christi nomine imperans. Propter quas res duobus Romanis pontificibus, Gregorio, cujus modo meminimus, et Urbano sexto acceptissima fuit, ita ut eorum legationibus fungeretur, multisque et magnis spiritualibus gratiis ab eis donaretur.

¹ annis R

² famellam C; heminellam H

³ species *corr.* ex spes H

⁴ tum H

⁵ visione divina : divina visione
H, L, T

⁶ languores A, B, C, D, R, L

3.3. Role in the return of the papacy to Rome

[14] She even went to Avignon in a matter of peace for the Florentines. The Italians owe her thanks because it was through her efforts that the Roman Curia returned to them. Hear it, Romans, hear it, all of you, for it is worthy of being recorded in the sacred annals and an important event in recent history. For 74 years, the Roman Curia had been residing in a foreign country beyond the Alps.¹ The Apostolic See passed through many hands and finally came to Gregory XI,² whom many consider to be a saint. When he rebuked a bishop for living far away from his church and spouse, the bishop answered him: “Why do you rebuke me, Holy Father, when You yourself do not stay with your own Church and, much more than I, disdain your spouse who is far away from you?” The Pontiff was struck by this answer as if it was a rebuke from God. He went into his private rooms in the palace, and when he was alone, he swore to God he would return to Rome as soon as possible, telling nobody about it. But when he tried to leave, the King of France³ and many French princes strove by entreaties and threats to prevent him from doing as he wished. Unsure what to do, he summoned the virgin and asked her advice about returning to Rome. The virgin answered him: “Why, o Pontiff, do you ask me, a lowly woman? You know quite well what you promised to God. Keep your promise!” Deeply moved by this answer, the Pontiff cast all hesitation away, left [Avignon], sailed to Italy, and came to Rome.

3.4. Miracles

[15] This virgin also had the spirit of prophecy and predicted many things before they happened. Apart from Gregory’s vow, she revealed many other hidden things. Frequently, her spirit left the body, and floating above the ground, she enjoyed the vision of God. She cured many melancholics and commanded fevers and other illnesses in the name of Christ. For these reasons, two Roman Pontiffs, Gregory, whom We have just mentioned, and Urban VI,⁴ held her in the greatest esteem, used her on missions, and granted her many great spiritual boons of grace.

¹ In Avignon, France

² Gregorius XI [Pierre Roger de Beaufort] (ca. 1329-1378): Pope from 1370 to his death. Seventh

and last of the Avignon popes, and last pope before the Great Western Schism

³ Charles V (1338-1380): King of France from 1364 to his death.

⁴ Urbanus VI [Bartolomeo Prignano] (ca. 1318-1389): Pope from 1378 to his death

[16] O igitur gloriosa et beatissima virgo, quae tantum decus patrum¹ nostrorum memoriae tradidisti, atque urbem Senam tantopere exornasti. Gaudemus² sane, fratres, et gloriamur³ patriae nostrae secundum carnem tantum splendorem esse concessum, ut nostra aetate cives duo⁴ Senenses in caelesti Jerusalem ascriberentur⁵: rara laus et nostris alias inaudita temporibus. Bernardinum, nobili loco apud {138v} Senenses natum, Nicolaus V., praedecessor noster, pontifex maximus, in catalogo⁶ sanctorum Christi confessorum adnumeravit, cujus excellentissimas virtutes et admiranda opera non solum audivistis ab aliis, sed ipsi vidistis, qui vestro⁷ sub aevo clarens, doctrina sua mundum implevit. Catherinam, ejusdem urbis alumnam, ipsi modo inter acceptas Deo⁸ virgines et caelo donatas relaturo sumus, cujus ante annos octuaginta defunctae tam clara et illustra fama est, ac si heri aut nudiustertius decessisset. Neque enim ingentia facta facile obscurantur.

[17] Loquuntur Catherinam, ejusque signa et prodigia mirantur et celebrant non Senenses modo, apud quos nata et adulta est, aut Romani, apud quos obiit, sed Florentini, Pisani, Lucenses, Genuenses, et ipsi transalpes Avenionenses, inter quos aliquandiu summa cum laude versata est. Veneti quoque huic virgini testimonium perhibent⁹, miro¹⁰ virtutum¹¹ suarum odore¹² afflati. Ad Germanos insuper et Hungaros flagrantia¹³ sanctitatis ejus pervenit. Si quidem rex Hungariae, dux Austriae et Pataviensis episcopus¹⁴ canonizationem ipsius a nostris antecessoribus per nuntios et epistolas petierunt. Idemque pari modo a nobis efflagitavit carissimus in Christo filius noster¹⁵, Fridericus, Romanorum imperator Augustus.

¹ patrum A, B, D, G, L, T

² **gaudeamus H, L, R, T**

³ gloriemur H, R

⁴ duos H, L, T

⁵ adscriberentur H

⁶ cathalogo A, B, C, D, R;

cathalogum H; cathalagum L, T

⁷ nostro R

⁸ Dei R

⁹ prohibent L, T

¹⁰ mirum H

¹¹ in *add.* L, T

¹² odorem H, L, T

¹³ fragrantia H

¹⁴ Pataviensis episcopus *omit.* C

¹⁵ *omit.* R

4. Canonization of Catherine of Siena

[16] Oh, glorious and blessed virgin, who has so greatly contributed to the reputation of our fathers and adorned the City of Siena so magnificently. We rejoice, brethren, and are proud that this splendid honour has been given to Our fatherland after the flesh and that, in our time, two Sienese have been inscribed in the Heavenly Jerusalem. It is a rare distinction, indeed, and otherwise unheard of in our time. Bernardino,¹ who came from a noble family in Siena, was entered into the catalogue of the Holy Confessors of Christ by Our predecessor, Supreme Pontiff Nicolaus V. You yourselves have not only heard from others about his excellent virtues and admirable works but have seen them yourselves, for he was renowned in your own time and filled the world with his teaching. And Catherine, a native daughter of the same city, We Ourselves shall now declare to be among the virgins pleasing to God and given to Heaven. Though she died 80 years ago, her fame is as great and illustrious as if she had died only some days ago. Great deeds are not easily forgotten.

[17] Catherine and her signs and miracles are told, admired and celebrated not only by the people of Siena, where she was born and grew up, or of Rome, where she died, but also by the people of Florence, Pisa, Lucca, Genoa and even Avignon beyond the Alps where she lived for a time in great honour. Also the Venetians bear witness to this virgin, moved by the wonderful odour of her virtues. The splendour of her holiness has even reached the Germans and the Hungarians. Indeed, the King of Hungary, the Duke of Austria, and the Bishop of Passau have sent envoys and letters to Our predecessors requesting her canonization. And the August Emperor of the Romans, Friedrich,² Our dear son in Christ, has begged Us to do the same.

¹ Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444): Franciscan preacher and saint

² Friedrich III (Habsburg) (1415-1493): Duke of Austria (as Friedrich V) from 1424. Elected King

of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor in 1440, crowned in Rome in 1452

[18] Non est igitur, venerabiles fratres, cur dubitemus hanc prudentissimam virginem apud militantem ecclesiam sua dignitate donare, quae jampridem coronata est apud triumphantem. Conveniunt omnia, quae tanto in opere desiderari solent. Adest vita purissima, nullius conscia culpae¹. Adest integerrima fides. Adest flagrantissima² caritas. Adest signorum et miraculorum supra naturam virtus, sicut perpulchre recitavit advocatus. Adest fama celebris. Adsunt preces principum et rogamina populorum. Adhbita est omnis solemnitas, quae in tanto negotio requiritur. Audacter igitur canonizationem ejus absolvere possumus. Sed nihil est, quod sine³ divina⁴ gratia rite perfici queat. Homines sumus, labi, errare, et decipi possumus. Solus Deus est, qui falli non potest. Quapropter oratos vos omnes, qui adestis, facimus, ut⁵ una nobiscum spiritus sancti misericordiam et assistentiam imploretis, ne⁶ nos in hoc negotio sinat aberrare, sed ea nobis inspiret, quae suae sint beneplacita⁷ voluntati et fidelium utilitati conducant^{8,9}.

¹ conscia culpae : culpae conscia
R

² fragrantissima H

³ **omit. H, L, R, T**

⁴ *omit.* H

⁵ **omit. H, L, R, T**

⁶ **neque D, G**

⁷ *omit.* R

⁸ **concedant H, L, R, T**

⁹ Amen *add.* R

[18] Thus, there is no reason, venerable Brethren, why We should hesitate to let the Church Militant recognize the honour of this wise virgin,¹ who has already been crowned by the Church Triumphant. All the proper conditions in such an important case have been fulfilled: Her life was pure and without any sin.² Her faith was unblemished, and her love burning. Her signs and miracles showed supernatural virtue, as it was movingly told by the advocate.³ Her fame is great, and We have received requests from the princes and demands from the peoples. All the solemn procedures required in such an important affair have been followed. We can, therefore, proceed to her canonization with confidence. But nothing can be done rightly without the grace of God. We are men, we may fall, err and be deceived. Only God cannot be deceived. Therefore, We ask all of you who are present to beg, together with Us, for the mercy and assistance of the Holy Spirit that He will not let Us err in this matter but inspire Us to do what may please His will and benefit the faithful.

¹ Probably an allusion to the ten prudent virgins - and a reuse of a title of the Virgin Mary

² Here Pius - unabashedly - applies the expression "in scia culpae" which Vergil had used about Queen Amata of Latium (Aeneid, 12.648), to a Catholic saint. The

office he wrote for Saint Catherine also contains some expressions and concepts from classical pagan literature. The world would know and note that the pope himself knew, appreciated, and used such literature, true humanist and lover of the liberal

arts, such as he also claimed Saint Catherine to have been

³ The advocate charged with defending Catherine's holiness in the procedure of canonization had made a public report on one of the preceding days

Appendix 1: Papal bull *Virgo Catharina* of 29 June 1461 on the canonization of Catherine of Siena

After Rainaldus, ad ann. 1461, nr. 124

Pius Papa II ad perpetuae rei memoriam

[1] Virgo Catharina ex civitate Senensi oriunda, mediocribus orta parentibus, prius Deo sese dedicavit, quam Deum posset per aetatem cognoscere. Sex annos nata, ut domino serviret, eremum concupivit, et urbe egressa in caverna quadam loco solitario delituit, quamvis jubente spiritu paululum demorata domum redierit. Angelicam salutationem edocta quoties paternae domus scalam ascendit, toties per singulos gradus flexo geniculo beatissimam virginem matrem domini salutavit, et anno major virginitatem suam consecravit Christo, quem sua in majestate sedentem mirabili visione contemplata est, et arcana caelistis aulae vidit, quae non potest effari lingua mortalis. Mundanas delicias a se omnes abdicavit, orationi totam se dedit, corpusculum suum jejuniis, vigiliis, ac verberibus afflixit. Coaequales puellas, ut idem facerent, et docuit et persuasit. Pubes effecta scissis crinibus mortale conjugium recusavit, convicia et maledicta hominum sprexit. Beati Dominici habitum, quem feminae gestant, de poenitentia nuncupatae, extorsit potius quam impetravit. Ancillare officium in paterna domo exercuit, nihil magis cupiens quam vilis apud homines et abjecta videri. Pauperibus Christi, nam id pater sibi indulserat, larga manu subvenit, aegrotantibus summa diligentia ministravit. Diabolicas temptationes et assiduas malignantium spirituum pugnas patientiae clipeo et fidei galea superavit. Incarceratos et oppressos, quibus valuit, modis consolata est. Nullum ab ea verbum non religiosum, non sanctum excidit, omnis sermo ejus de moribus fuit, de religione, de pietate, de contemptu mundi, de Dei amore et proximi, de caelesti patria. Nemo ad eam accessit, qui non doctior meliorque abierit. Doctrina ejus infusa fuit, non acquisita. Prius magistra visa est quam discipula, quippe quae sacrarum litterarum professoribus ipsisque magnarum ecclesiarum episcopis difficillimas de divinitate quaestiones proponentibus prudentissime respondit et adeo satisfecit, ut tamquam agnos mansuetos remisit, quos tamquam lupos et leones acceperat, quorum nonnulli divinam in virgine sapientiam admirati, distributis mox inter Christi pauperes, quae possidebant, substantiis accepta domini cruce vitam deinde evangelicam egerint.

[2] Summa hujus virginis abstinencia fuit et mirabilis vitae austeritas, nam cum vini et carni-um usum prorsus abjecisset, nec pulmentariis ullis uteretur, ad extremum eo deducta est, ut nec legumina ederet, nec pane visceretur nisi caelesti, quem verus Christianus in sacramento sumit altaris. Inventa est aliquando a die cinerum usque in Pentecostem jejunium perduxisse, sola eucharistiae communionem contenta, per annos circiter octo minimo herbarum succo, eorumque parum retento et communionem sacra sustentata est: ad cibum quasi ad supplicium pergebat. Ad communionem altaris, quae illi fere quotidiana fuit, quasi ad caelestes nuptias invitata esset, summa cum alacritate proficiscebatur. Cilico sub veste utebatur, quo carnem macerabat: nullae illi plumae, nulla pulminaria erant, lectum sibi ex asscribus confecerat, atque in eo jacens brevissimum somnum accipiebat, raro enim ultra duas horas interdum noctuque dormiebat, reliquum omne tempus vigilando, orando, praedicando, opera misericordiae agendo, contrivit. Spinosis cordulis carnem suam macerabat, dolore capitis paene assiduo torquebatur, aestuabat febribus, nec illorum cruciatu carebat, luctabatur cum daemonibus, multisque illorum molestiis vexabatur, sed aiebat cum apostolo: *Cum informor, tum fortior sum*. Nec enim in tantis laboribus deficiebat, nec caritatis opera negligebat. Assistebat miseris indigna ferentibus, arguebat peccatores et blandissimis verbis ad poenitentiam revocabat; praecepta salutis omnibus laeta dabat, quid sectandum, quid fugiendum esset alacri vultu ostendebat; dissidentes summo studio componebat, multa extinxit odia, et mortales sedavit inimicitias.

[3] Pro pace Florentinorum, qui cum ecclesia dissidebant et interdicto suppositi erant ecclesiastico, Appeninum et Alpes transire atque usque in Avenionem ad Gregorium XI. pontificem maximum proficisci non dubitavit, cui votum suum de petenda urbe Roma in occulto factum et soli sibi ac Deo notum sese divinitus cognovisse monstravit. Fuit enim in ea spiritus prophetiae, et multa praedixit antequam fierent, et occultissima revelavit. Rapiebatur saepe a spiritu et in aere suspensa divinis contemplationibus pascebatur, adeo extra se acta, ut expuncta percussaque nihil omnino sentiret, idque frequenter sibi contingebat, cum divinissima reficeretur Eucharistia. Magnum et sanctum erat in plebibus Catharinae nomen: undique ad eam aegroti et malignis vexati spiritibus deducebantur, et multi curabantur languoribus et febribus in Christi nomine: imperabat et daemones coge- bat ab obsessis abire corporibus propter quas res duobus Romanis pontificibus, Gregorio, cujus paulo ante meminimus, et Urbano sexto acceptissima fuit, ita ut legationibus eorum fungeretur, multisque et magnis spiritualibus gratiis ab eis donaretur.

[4] Eadem cum vitae agonem jam peregisset anno aetatis suae tertio circiter ac trigesimo, in urbe Roma diem suum clausit, de cujus animae in caelum assumptione et gloriosa receptione, stupendae et admirabiles revelationes factae reperiuntur apud eas personas, quae virginem dilexere, maxime vero apud ejus confessorem Raymundum Capuanum, sacrae theologiae magistrum, qui postea generalis totius Ordinis Praedicatorum pater, magister et rector effectus est: is namque, cum Genuae ageret, ea nocte, qua virgo migravit, hora matutina intra

dormitorium apud imaginem matris domini eam contemplatus est miro splendore fulgentem, et verba ad se consolatoria dicentem. Corpus aliquandiu servatum, denique in ecclesia fratrum Praedicatorum, quae de Minerva dicitur, Rome conditum est non sine maxima populi devotione ac reverentia, cujus tactu plerique aegroti salutem consecuti sunt, adeo ut nonnullis saluti fuit ea tetigisse, qua sacrata virginis membra tetigere. Postea quoque virgo ipsa jam caelo recepta vota supplicantium benigne audivit, et, ut a sponso et domino suo Christo Salvatore exaudirentur, curavit: multi enim ex diversis aegritudinibus curati sunt, qui audita Beatae Catharinae gloriosissima fama, ejus patrocinium supplices petivere.

Addidit pontifex haec omnia rite probata perpensaque, et cardinalium senatum ac praesules caelitem honores illi decernendos censuisse, quorum secutus sententiam illam in sanctorum ordine reposuit, et sacram illius memoriae recolendae diem primam Maji recurrentis singulis annis Dominicam instituit: tum ejus sepulchrum in Praedicatorum ecclesia eadem die lustraturis nonnulla indulgentiarum praemia elargitus est, adjecta diplomati haec temporis nota: "Datum Romae apud Sanctum Petrum anno incarnationis dominicae MCDLXI. III. Kal. Julii, Pontificatus nostri anno III."

Appendix 2: Three hymns composed for the office of Saint Catherine of Siena by Pope Pius II

After: Enee Silvii Piccolominei postea Pii PP. II *Carmina*. Ed. A. van Heck. Città del Vaticano, 1994. (Studi e Testi; 464), pp. 209-213

Ad (primas) vesperas

Hec tue, uirgo, monimenta laudis,
Que tuis leti, Catherina, sacris
Hoc quidem pacto modulamur omnes
perfer Olympo.

Si satis digne nequeant referri,
annuas nobis ueniam, precamur:
non sumus tanti ingenii, fatemur,
optima virgo.

quis fuit dignas modulatus unquam
uirginis laudes? quis in orbe toto
femine inuicte peritura nunquam
carmina pandet?

predita exemplis, Catherina, claris
moribus prestans, sapiens abunde,
temperans, fortis, pia, iusta, prudens
ethera scandis.

quem latet virtus facinusque clarum,
quo nequit dici sanctius per orbem?
uulnerum formam miserata Christi
exprimis ipsa.

nam breuis, meste misereque vite
et malis cunctis penitus referte
fortiter spernens pretiosa queque
sidera adisti.

gratias summas habeamus omnes
filio magni genitoris almo,
spiritum sanctum ueneremur et sit
laus tamen tua.

Amen.

Ad laudes

iam ferox miles tibi sepe cessit
et duces iras posuere sevas,
in necem diram populo minati
sepe senensi.

quid quod et sacris studiis frequenter
uiribus summis operam dedisti?
littere docte lepideque claris
urbibus extant.

niteris uerbis reuocare lapsos,
niteris rectum suadere cunctis;
sic ais: "tantum probitas beatos
efficit omnes."

iura tu seue tremebunda mortis
fortiter temnens, nihil extimescens
premium nostre vocitare uite
sepe solebas.

unde cum tempus properaret ipsum,
quo sacros artus cineresque busto
linqueres, celos aditura flentes
 ipsa docebas.

sic sacrum Christi uenerata corpus,
hostiam libans lacrymis abortis
dixeras cunctis documenta uite
 uoce suprema.

gratias summas habeamus omnes
filio magni genitoris almo,
spiritum sanctum ueneremur et sit
 laus tamen tua.

Amen.

Ad matutinum

Laudibus, virgo, nimis efferenda
iure censeris, quoniam triumphos
ipsa celorum probitate mira
 nacta refulges.

premium sancte tamen ipsa vite
et simul munus probitatis alme
accipis celo cumulata cunctis
 denique rebus.

tu grauem sacris meritis refertum
orbis exemplar pietate plenum,
predicatorum uenerata patrem
 ordine fulges.

nulla iam rerum placuit uoluptas,
nullus ornatus, nitor ecce nullus
corporis. semper fugiens inique
 crimina vite.

sepius corpus domitans acerbe
(quam pie flagris, cruor hinc et inde
fluxerat riuis!) hominumque demum
 crimine flebas.

qui per ingentes uariosque casus
orbe terrarum cruciantur omnes
quotque vel curis agitantur ipsi
 undique diris.

suppetent nobis totidem canenda
si tue laudes repetantur omnes;
tu quidem longe pietate cunctis
 inclyta, prestas.

gratias summas habeamus omnes
filio magni genitoris almo,
spiritum sanctum ueneremur et sit
 laus tamen tua.

Amen.