

She was just returning home from visiting her sister Bonaventura and walking along with her brother Stefano when her eyes were suddenly captivated by a vision from on high. Catherine of Siena was just six years old at the time when she looked above the Dominican Friary. Yet she saw an elegant regal throne suspended in the air on which our Lord was dressed in kingly attire with a tiara on his head. St. Peter, Paul and St. John were attending to his throne and while she looked at him, he gazed deeply into her eyes with great love and gentleness. He raised his hand and made a gesture in the sign of the cross by which he gave her his eternal benediction.

All this time, her brother was confused as to why his sister was standing there in the middle of the road so transfixed (since he did not see the vision) and so he shook her. She then responded: "If you could see what I can you would not be so cruel and disturb me out of this lovely vision."

This vision would forever change the trajectory of her life. At the age of seven, she made a private vow of virginity, would eventually enter the Dominican sisters and is now recognized as a great saint and a doctor of the Church.

She is a great example and model of what St. Paul speaks of in his letter to the Ephesians: "I pray that[] God...may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you."

Catherine of Siena had the eyes of a heart enlightened. She was given the spirit of wisdom and revelation to know him, to know the hope to which she was called and it radically changed her life. She saw the treasure that awaited her in heaven, Jesus Christ himself, she saw his beauty, his glory and his love and nothing was going to get in the way of that. Catherine's family didn't know about her private vow and they continually tried to force her to marry over and over again. And she faced persecution even from her own family.

But she had the type of love that inspires someone to not deny Jesus Christ before others, to stand fast even when others are trying to pull us away from Jesus. Even suffering persecution from one's own family is nothing compared to the "riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints." The eyes of Catherine's enlightened heart were fixed on the hope set before her, on the hope of knowing her Beloved and even more intimately in the age to come.

Yet we probably wonder, 'when I look up, all I see is snow! I do not see the beauty and grandeur of God...' My brothers and sisters, I urge you to pray to see his beauty and grandeur. I urge you to pray with persistence and confidence that the Father wants to reveal the magnificent wonders of his heart with you. We have to realize that as much as we are seeking God, God is seeking us all the more. He yearns for us more than we yearn for him.

So if God is seeking us why does it seem like it is taking so long? The prophet Jeremiah reminds us: "you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. ¹³You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart, ¹⁴I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes" (Jer 29:12-14).

God wants us to seek him with all of our heart because God is way bigger than our tiny hearts are and in our yearning for him our desire for him grows and so our capacity for the Infinite One increases. Ask to see his beauty, seek the wonders of his love, knock on the door of his heart and you will find the glory and the beauty that is worth giving up everything for. Everything.

"I pray that[] God...may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you."