

## Reflection from Fr. Colm on the feast of St Catherine of Siena

*Audio posted to the Parish Website on Wednesday 29th April 2020*

Good morning everybody. Today we celebrate the feast of a very special lady - St Catherine of Siena. I was fortunate to be in Siena some years ago for a meeting and when the meeting ended I with a confer we went into the centre of Siena, sat down had a coffee. And just to get that sense of this great woman's presence there was just so tangible, it was in the Autumn, not many tourists around and there are moments like that that really leave a, that I can actually remember it now and speak about it is significant in the sense of the impact it had on me. That's beside the point, however.

She was an extraordinary woman; she's described as a mystic but of course she was much more than that. She was a political activist, both religiously and politically and at the time of great tensions within the Church, separation of Papacy she was hugely influential in negotiating the unification of the Papacy.

However, it was the things she said and did that have inspired and let me just quote: *"Preach the truth as if you had a million voices, it is silence that kills the world."* *"It is silence that kills the world."*

How relevant this woman's voice is today when yesterday in a letter to The Times ,Church leaders published a very strong criticism of bail outs that are being sought and sometimes given to multi billionaires who want to have their own staff bailed out in this time of crisis.

Let me just quote perhaps to you the substance of the letter that the Church leaders wrote: *"During this crisis many of the most vulnerable people in our society are paying the price for a health and welfare system woefully unprepared for an epidemic. Meanwhile, some large corporations continue to avoid responsibility, making huge profits but yet hiding their wealth in tax havens."*

So ran that letter to The Times and of course France, Denmark, Poland are refusing to bail out such greed, for want of another word, and it seems to me that really whose side I think perhaps Catherine of Siena is speaking a profound truth to us today and will be encouraged indeed by that letter. Good morning to you all.