

## HISTORY OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA



Catherine Benincasa

The parish community enjoys the name and the patronage of St. Catherine of Siena. Born in Siena, Italy, Catherine was the twenty-third child of Jacopo and Lipa Benincasa. She was a pioneer in speaking out against social injustice. Catherine was labeled a mystic and many sought her spiritual guidance.

In an effort to bring unity to the Church during the Great Schism, she was instrumental in effecting the return of the Pope to Rome from Avignon. Although Catherine never learned to read or write, she dictated a book entitled The Dialogue, now considered a classic of religious literature. This work earned her the title “Doctor of the Church.”

We commemorate our patroness with a hammered copper statue standing in the Siena Conference Room. In her hands, Catherine holds an olive branch symbolizing the peace for which she constantly worked, a scroll representing her profound writings, and a ribbon of metal forming the Chi-Rho insignia denoting her mysticism and incessant spiritual counseling.

