



“Pray that you may be granted the grace to read the Fathers with the right understanding, the grace to live up to the standards they put before you, and the grace to clearly see your own frailty. You will not long be left wanting and waiting. God will give you help.”

~ St. Macarius of Optina



**PRAYER OF THE HOLY HIERARCH JOHN CHRYSOSTOM
BEFORE READING OR LISTENING TO THE LIVES AND
SAYINGS OF THE SAINTS.**

○ Lord Jesus Christ, open Thou the eyes of my heart, that I may hear Thy word and understand and do Thy will, for I am a sojourner upon the earth. Hide not Thy commandments from me, but open mine eyes, that I may perceive the wonders of Thy law. Speak unto me the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom. On Thee do I set my hope, ○ my God, that Thou shalt enlighten my mind and understanding with the light of Thy knowledge, not only to cherish those things which are written, but to do them; that in reading the lives and sayings of the saints I may not sin, but that such may serve for my restoration, enlightenment and sanctification, for the salvation of my soul, and the inheritance of life everlasting. For Thou art the enlightenment of those who lie in darkness, and from Thee cometh every good deed and every gift. Amen.

The Holy And Great Martyr Catherine

November 24th



Catherine was the daughter of King Constus. After the death of her father, she lived with her mother in Alexandria. Her mother was secretly a Christian who, through her spiritual father, brought Catherine to the Christian Faith. In a vision, St. Catherine received a ring from the Lord Jesus Himself as a sign of her betrothal to Him. This ring remains on her finger even today. Catherine was greatly gifted by God and was well educated in Greek philosophy, medicine, rhetoric and logic. In addition to that, she was of unusual physical beauty. When the iniquitous Emperor Maxentius offered sacrifices to the idols and ordered others to do the same, Catherine boldly confronted the emperor and denounced his idolatrous errors. The emperor, seeing that she was greater than he in wisdom and knowledge, summoned fifty of his wisest men to debate with her on matters of faith and to put her to shame. Catherine outwitted and shamed them. In a rage, the emperor ordered all fifty of those men burned. By St. Catherine's prayers, all fifty confessed the name of Christ and declared themselves Christians before their execution. After Catherine had been put in prison, she converted the emperor's commander, Porphyrius, and two hundred soldiers to the true Faith, as well as Empress Augusta-Vasilissa herself. They all suffered for Christ. During the torture of St. Catherine, an angel of God came to her and destroyed the wheel on which the holy virgin was being tortured. Afterward, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared to her and comforted her. After many tortures, Catherine was beheaded at the age of eighteen, on November 24, 310. Milk, instead of blood, flowed from her body. Her miracle-working relics repose on Mount Sinai.

THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR CATHERINE

Troparion

Let us praise the all-

lauded and noble bride of

Christ, the godly

Catherine, the guardian

of Sinai and its defence,

THE HOLY MARTYR CATHERINE

who is also our support

and succour and our help;

for with the Holy Spirit's

sword she hath silenced

brilliantly the clever

THE HOLY MARTYR CATHERINE

among the godless; and

being crowned as a

Martyr, she now doth

ask great mercy for us

all.