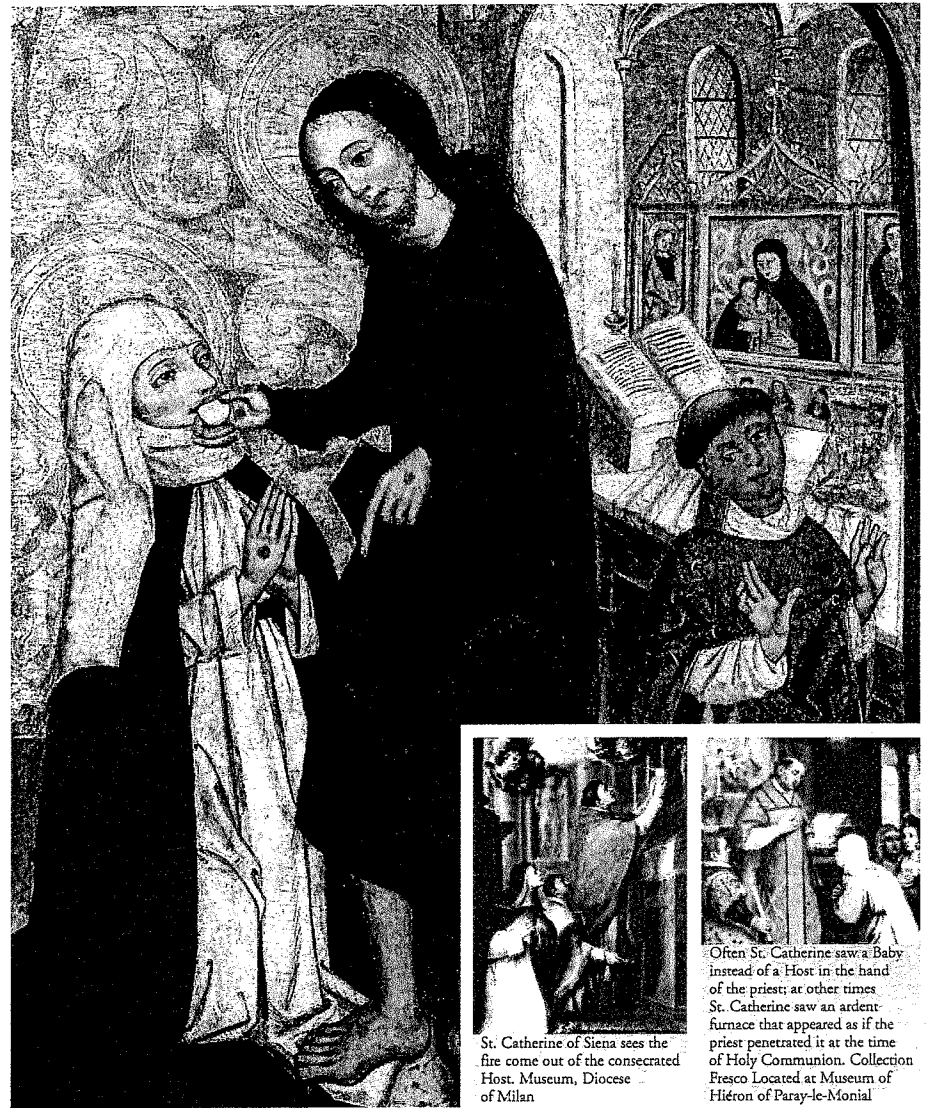


SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

1347-1380

Jesus appeared to St. Catherine of Siena to assure her that a great flame does not diminish, even if it is used to light many candles. Such is the flame of the Holy Eucharist, because it does not weaken while enflaming the loyal faithful who come with their strong or weak faith. The stronger and weaker charity of each of the faithful is symbolic only by the flame's dimension of the candles.



St. Catherine of Siena sees the fire come out of the consecrated Host. Museum, Diocese of Milan

Often St. Catherine saw a 'Baby' instead of a Host in the hand of the priest; at other times St. Catherine saw an ardent furnace that appeared as if the priest penetrated it at the time of Holy Communion. Collection Fresco Located at Museum of Hiéron of Paray-le-Monial

Regarding the Eucharist, Jesus confided the following words to St. Catherine of Siena: "You receive all the divine essence of the sweetest Sacrament in the whiteness in the bread. Just like the sun cannot be divided in the whiteness of the Holy Host. Let us suppose that the Sacred Host could be divided: even if it would be possible to fragment the Holy Eucharist into thousands of tiny Particles, in each one of the tiny Particles there is the presence of Christ, the whole God and the whole Man. In the same manner that a mirror would shatter into thousands of pieces, the Sacred Host will not shatter or divide the image of God and Man that you see in the Host; the image of God and Man is in each fragmented part. Contrary to fire, the image of the Host does not diminish in faith or divinity. Let us look at the following example: If you had

one candle and the whole world would light its candle from that single candle, the light of the candle would not diminish and everybody would have a lighted candle. While it is true that those who participate in the candlelighting may have more or less flame, everyone would receive exactly the amount of fire to light their candle. Until that time that it can be better, this example stands.

"If there were a lot of people bringing candles of all sizes – one person with two candles and one with six candles and one with a candle weighing an ounce and one with a candle weighing a pound or more - then you could see all the lit candles by color. By color, by its light, by its heat, you would judge that the person that has a one-ounce candle has less light than

the one with a pound candle. This is how it is for those receiving the Holy Sacrament. Man carries his own candle so that he can receive the sacrament; however, that candle is unlit, but it is ignited when he receives the Eucharist. As a matter of fact, as you are all alike, made and created in my image and likeness and as Christians you are anointed with Holy Baptism, you can, therefore, grow in virtue as much as you like through my divine grace. You are not changing your spiritual life that I bestowed upon you, but you can grow and increase in love of virtue, using your free will with virtue, with charitable affection, while you still have the time, because once time has elapsed, it will no longer be possible."