

Dear Friends,

I know it's still a little bit early, but you know how time flies. And, while it's not in my nature to think of things like this so far in advance, I would like to invite you to consider something that could be spiritually enriching, and maybe even kind of fun. Both the spiritual and fun aspects of this proposal have to do with food, so maybe that can keep your interest for just a few more lines.

A few weeks ago Juan Ayala and I were having a conversation and he had a terrific idea. He was telling me about his parish in Mexico where he grew up. It is a strong tradition for the people of Mexico to celebrate the feast day of their parish's patron saint in a big way. The Spanish word for feast is fiesta. And when we think of the word fiesta, we think of a party.

St. Catherine of Genoa's feast day is September 15. Here is a plagiarized copy of a history someone prepared for the parish several years ago.

*"Catherine, born in 1447 to James Fieschi and Francesca di Negro, the fifth and last of the children, married Julian Adorno at a young age. She and her husband lived a life of luxury and extravagance. But realizing more important values in life, they turned their attention to God's poor.*

*From the year 1473, St. Catherine, without intermission, led a most intense spiritual life, combined with tireless activity on behalf of the sick, the suffering, not only in hospitals and institutions, but throughout the city of Genoa, Italy.*

*In 1496, after many years of long hours working with the sick and dying, Catherine's health failed drastically and she had to resign her work at the hospital. A year later her husband died. Her condition deteriorated rapidly. For the last months of her life she suffered in great pain and agony, but offered her suffering to the Lord. She died at 63 years of age. She was beatified in 1737 and Pope Benedict XIV added her name to the list of saints for her life of concern and love.*

*St. Catherine left two written works, a treatise on Purgatory, and a Dialogue on the soul and the body, which the Holy Office used as an example of her faith and holiness. These books are used widely today by those who want to deepen their faith and love following the Christian tradition. St. Catherine of Genoa has inspired many thousands of people to reach out with care and love for God's suffering people in their local communities."*

St. Catherine of Genoa lived a heroic, compassionate and generous Christian life and is a wonderful example for us as our patron saint. I would like to invite everyone who can, to consider coming to Mass on Tuesday, September 15 (Also the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows). Mass that day will be celebrated in the church. I thought we could also have a smorgasbord breakfast afterward in the parish hall. September 15 is an important day because it is the day Catherine of Genoa entered eternal life. She intercedes for the Church's poor even to this day. Let us celebrate the goodness of her life.

In joyful hope,

Fr. Tim Seigel