

# Saint Catherine (Vigri) of Bologna

∞ 1413-1463 ∞

*Catherine Vigri* was born in Bologna on the 8th of September 1413 from a noble family. She was educated in the Court of Este, which in that time was at the peak of its splendor. But it was right here that the vocation to the consecrated life sprouted in her: at a very young age she joined the Poor Clares in Ferrara.

In 1456 she founded the Monastery of Corpus Domini in Bologna. She died on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1463. Catherine was often favored with heavenly visions but had to very often endure attacks from the devil. One time, “while being assailed by a mental suggestion, and understanding that in it the devil was present, she spoke to him with great ardor:

and in it she placed all of her attentiveness. Therefore her enemy, by means of that, sought to trick her and began to put in her heart thoughts always contrary to obedience, to the point that on almost every action or word from her abbess, judgments and grumblings came to her mind. This caused her great pain and bitterness, and she confessed it to the abbess



‘Understand, O Evil One, that you cannot give me any temptation that I will not recognize.’ But God, wishing to humble her and let her know that the enemy was more malicious and astute than she, permitted a subtle deception, which is that the devil himself appeared to her in the figure of the Virgin Mary and said to her: ‘If you distance yourself from sinful love, I will give you the virtuous one.’ She was convinced she had seen the Mother of Christ. After the departure she began to think about what the Virgin had said to her. She thought, because of the hidden deception, that she was to rid herself of the love of her sensuality and of her own opinion. For that reason she put herself with renewed commitment to obey her abbess without any discernment or concern for herself. She had acted this way from the time of her conversion; nevertheless, more than all of the other virtues, she loved and desired that virtue of true and holy obedience,

very often and with much shame; however the battle did not cease... And so, returning to the weapon of prayer, she received some comfort, for in this way she was not consenting completely; and for that reason she thought she was in disgrace with the Virgin Mary, because she had told her to put aside her own way of judging things, and now every day she thought the contrary. In this way the religious nun arrived at a great desperation, not thinking that this could have been caused by diabolic instigation, but only by herself. She passed much time in great suffering, until God permitted that she would know the supposed apparitions came from the devil, and that God permitted it to bring her to a great knowledge of herself. Therefore, she became somewhat of an expert of diabolical deceits and she acquired a great humility.”