

Sustained For More Than 10 Years Solely By The Eucharist

BLESSED ANNE CATHERINE EMMERICH

GERMANY, 1774-1824

Anne Catherine Emmerich was forced to abandon the monastery in which she lived because it was being appropriated by the government. In that period, her health declined and the mystical experiences increased: she received the stigmata and had numerous visions. One of these allowed the finding of the house of Our Lady in Ephesus. In fact, according to antique traditions, it seems that Mary settled, together with John the Apostle, in this city. The miraculous aspect of the life of Anne Catherine is that for years she fed only on the Eucharist.



House where Catherine was born



House where Our Lady lived in Ephesus, found thanks to the visions of Anne Catherine



Portrait of Clemens Brentano



Portrait of Anne Catherine Emmerich



Drawing by Clemens Brentano

Anne Catherine Emmerich was born in Germany on September 8, 1774 into a family of farmers and began to work very early. Later on, a religious vocation matured and she asked to be admitted in several monasteries, but she was always rejected because she was very poor and had no dowry. Only when she was twenty-eight years old she was accepted in the monastery of Agnetenberg, where she joined the monastic life with fervor, always ready to take the most difficult tasks. One night while she was praying, Jesus appeared and offered her a crown of roses and a crown of thorns. She chose the crown of thorns and Jesus put the crown on her head. Suddenly, around her forehead appeared the first stigmata. Later on, after another apparition of Jesus, the wounds also appeared in the hands, feet and side. In 1811, the monastery of Agnetenberg,

was suppressed. Anne Catherine found hospitality, as a housekeeper for a priest; but soon she became ill and was bedridden.

Dr. Wesner, a young doctor, visited her and remained very impressed by the stigmata. During the eleven years that followed, he became her friend and faithful assistant, having also a diary in which he would transcribe her visions. Meanwhile the nun had practically stopped eating: a little bit of water and the Consecrated Host were enough to keep her alive for years. She was very devoted to, and wrote many pages about, the Holy Eucharist: "My desire for the Holy Eucharist was so vehement and irresistible that, at night, I would often leave my cell to enter the Church... Often I would genuflect and prostrate towards the Blessed

Sacrament with extended arms, and sometimes I would enter into ecstasy". Anne Catherine always joined her suffering with that of Jesus, and offered it for the redemption of men. The most famous biographer of Anne Catherine was the German writer, Clemens von Brentano, who wrote all her visions. Brentano compiled thousands of pages about the Blessed, many of which must still be published. In one of his most famous passages he wrote: "Anne Catherine stands like a cross at the side of the street, to indicate the right direction to the faithful. That which she says is brief but simple, full of depth, warmth and life. I understood everything. Always happy, affectionate, dignified, marvelous; always ill, agonizing, but at the same time delicate and fresh, chaste, tried, lucid. To be seated at her side meant to occupy the most beautiful place in the world".