



# Venerable

by Mary Wickham rsm  
mary.wickham@mercy.org.au

*Venerable* is prismatic,  
a word that refracts into  
august age and solemnity, due honour, the extraordinary.  
In some ways it puts at a distance the one it esteems,  
renders her superhuman,  
when in reality she was fully human  
because fully given to the Light that is God,  
totally Catherine in her own skin,  
being what she was meant to be,  
uniquely Catherine in her own spirit,  
attuned to God as friend.  
She knew the power of laughter before endorphins had a name,  
she took on whatever landed by sad circumstance-  
becoming adoptive mother, ready ingatherer;  
she received gladly the fortuitous-  
hefty inheritance, likeminded companions;  
she shared life, did not covet it closely to herself –  
animate, she said, and animate she did-  
a word that leaps beyond itself.  
She advised the exquisite care called tenderness,  
this woman who encouraged rather than censured,  
who liberated despite the constraints of culture and church.  
Extraordinary she was, but only because she lived the ordinary,  
seeing the colours of God always,  
the rainbow of need and response,  
help and heal, pray and be present.  
Yes, we venerate her as exemplar,  
standing with reverence by the holy space she fills-  
a human being, a woman,  
who found herself a friend of God, Catherine of Dublin.  
Such a spirit shines on, whatever title it is given.  
We cannot emulate her uniqueness; we must live our own.  
We do our best to live in our way the mercy she gleaned,  
drawn to the friendship- with her, with the great God,  
catching the colours for our day.  
Catherine- such a spirit shines on:  
it helps and heals, prays and is present.  
Venerable is prismatic.  
It refracts into the true colours of  
Sancta, Naomh, Santa, Santu, Saint.

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of Catherine being pronounced Venerable by  
Pope St John Paul, 9 April 1990.

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