

FEAST OF ST. CLARE

Gathering Song *We Are Mirrors* by Cathy Tisel Nelson

Refrain: We are mirrors reflecting Jesus Christ,
we are mirrors reflecting Jesus Christ,
we are mirrors reflecting Jesus Christ,
so revealing the beauty of our God.

Verse 1: In the image of our God we are created.
We are filled with goodness brightly shining forth.
As our lives reflect the brilliance of God's glory,
We reveal the source of radiant light divine.

Verse 3: As we contemplate the myst'ry of the Holy One,
we are gifted with the wisdom of the Spirit.
As we strive to imitate and follow Jesus,
we draw near to God, the Source of endless joy.

Verse 4: In this way of living we are all transformed.
More and more our inner beings now are changed.
Leading others on this pathway into holiness,
we receive the greatest gift of life eternal.

Prayer

God of mercy, you inspired St. Clare with the love of poverty. By the help of her prayers, may we follow Christ in poverty of spirit and come to the joyful vision of your glory in the reign of heaven. We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Opening Prayer from *Presider's Manual: Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs*)

Pilgrims in Spirit

Clare: A Light in the Garden by Murray Bodo

She had known almost at once that she would follow him. The first time she heard Francis preach, his words pierced her heart with love for Jesus, and his soul was one with hers. She soon learned that they could never be together, for then they would not be free, they would not be who they really were, two pilgrims in love with Christ, two souls who were closer apart than they could ever be together. Together they might end up loving each other more than the treasure they had found in one another's heart. She had heard the echo of her own voice in Francis' words, and he had found in her the incarnation of every word he spoke. They were pilgrims in spirit, poor and wandering hearts in love with God; and knowing they loved each other, they were never lonely. Clare drew her ideals from Francis' words and Francis, she felt, drew his words at times from the inspiration of her life. She made it possible for him to believe that what he spoke was livable, that the gospel life brought joy indeed, and that every word that Jesus uttered could be lived by those who heard his words with open hearts. Clare hoped that she would become the living proof of everything that Francis believed in. And that was why she had to follow him the moment she heard him speak. They had been fashioned for each other out of the solitude of the ages. And they had known each other longer than they knew.

Psalm 45

R. I am drawn to you, Beloved of my heart, and find you beautiful beyond all others.

Hear, O peoples, consider, and incline your ear;
forget what has gone before you; turn your feet to the path of Love.

All glorious is the soul within, the abode of the Merciful One;
through many trials and suffering do you come to the Beloved,
refined by fire as you follow Love's way.

With joy and gladness you are led along, as you awaken to the Heart of your heart.

(Psalms for Praying: An Invitation to Wholeness by Nan C. Merrill)

Quiet Reflection

Who are your "Pilgrims in Spirit?"

Litany

Let us remember the presence of other “Pilgrims in Spirit,” inspired by Clare and Francis, and invite them to journey with us today.

Lady Pica, you gave birth to Francis and taught him the way of a mother of tenderness.
Lady Pica move here with us.

Ortolana, you gave light to the daughter you named “light,” Clare, the light in your garden.
Ortolana move here with us.

Clare Faverone, you had the courage to respond wholeheartedly to the call of God in your life and became the first woman to compose a Rule of Life approved by the Church.
Clare Faverone move here with us.

Agnes of Assisi, sister of Clare, you followed Clare into the solitude of San Damiano and later to lead the monastery of Monticelli as abbess. **Agnes of Assisi move here with us.**

Lady Jacoba, you befriended Francis and walked with him in lasting friendship until the day of his death. **Lady Jacoba move here with us.**

Agnes of Prague, daughter of royalty, you “chose most holy poverty ... (and) united yourself to a Spouse of more noble lineage, Christ Jesus.” **Agnes of Prague move here with us.**

Angela of Marsciano, you were the first women of our Order to gather with other women in community outside a monastery and care for the sick, poor, widows, and orphans.
Angela of Marsciano move here with us.

Louise Albertoni, secular Franciscan, you so generously gave of your income, often hiding money in the bread you gave to the poor. **Louise Albertoni move here with us.**

Margaret of Cortona, you focused your tender love of Jesus on the poor and the sick.
Margaret of Cortona move here with us.

(Pilgrim’s Companion to Franciscan Places, Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, The Assisi Experience)

Final Blessing

May we cling with all our hearts to Christ;
may Christ's love inflame our love,
Christ's graciousness be our joy,
Christ's gentleness fill us to overflowing,
and the remembrance of Christ bring us a gentle light.

(Happy Is She from the Fourth Letter to Blessed Agnes)

Closing Song *All Praise for Lady Clare* (Tune: All Glory, Laud and Honor)

All praise for Lady Clare
Bright mirror of the Lord.
The little plant of Francis
Receives her true reward.
She lived as a poor virgin
And now embraces Christ
To reign with him forever
A light for all the Church.

All praise for Lady Clare
Who counsels us in truth
To walk the path of Jesus
The way of lasting love.
To give up all that binds us
To things that cannot last.
And with swift pace and light step
Tread in Christ's footsteps fast.

All praise for Lady Clare
Adorned with virtues fair.
Because she prized above all
The love of the Poor Christ.
She gazed upon Christ daily
Considered Christ in love;
And contemplated deeply
Her dear, Beloved One.