



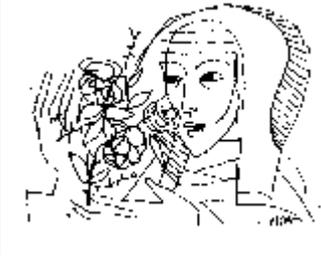
- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 3: Prayer

Chapter 8. Saint Clare

St Bonaventure says of Clare:

She was the first flower in Francis' garden, and she shone like a radiant star, fragrant as a flower blossoming while and pure in spring-time.



Clare's name means 'light'. She is the bright, shining one who reflected God's love into the world of a cloistered convent where she lived with her spiritual sisters, first known as the Order of Poor Ladies, later Poor Clares. That light continues today to shine through Poor Clares throughout the world as they pray for our world.

Clare is also referred to as the 'little plant' of Francis. One can visualise a branch plucked from a plant and stuck in the soil to take root to become a plant of its own. So was Clare's spiritual being rooted in Francis. Both of them were the branches grown from the Lord who proclaimed, 'I am the vine, you are the branches' (John 15.5).

Christ is the mirror of God. 'Mirror of Perfection' is a term used to describe Francis. And Clare was indeed a mirror of Francis. She caught what he taught by his way of life, then she sent it into the world through her sisters, her prayer, her writing, and the Order she established. You and I can become mirrors of Jesus, Francis and Clare in our own ways, in our own times. (Foley, Weigel, Normile *To Live as Francis Lived* Reflection 30 (p 113))

To Bl Agnes of Prague:

Place your mind before the mirror of eternity! Place your soul in *the brilliance of glory!* (Cf. Heb 1.3) Place your heart in *the figure of the divine substance!* (Cf. Heb 1.3) And *transform* your whole being *into the image* of the Godhead itself through contemplation! (II Cor 3.18) So that you may feel what his friends feel as they taste *the hidden sweetness* which God himself has reserved from the beginning for those who love him.

Francis and Clare: the complete works (p 200)

1. What aspect of Clare's way of following Jesus and Francis do you think you might develop in your own life?
2. What would you have to sacrifice to do this?

Great St Clare,
Your steadfast faith and burning love brought down on you from God sublime gifts of grace and great power of intercession.

Win for us in your prayers the grace to trust God completely, and like you, always cling to him in faith and love, living in the consciousness of divine protection. Amen



Scripture—

Rev 5. 8-13

When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; you have made them a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth.'

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, singing with full voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!'

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them singing: 'To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever!'