

A WORD FROM BONAVENTURE

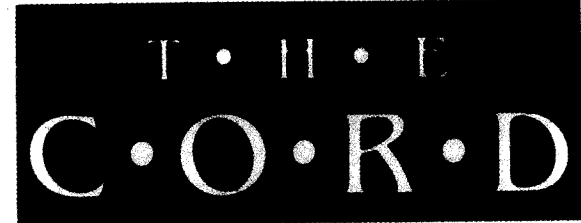
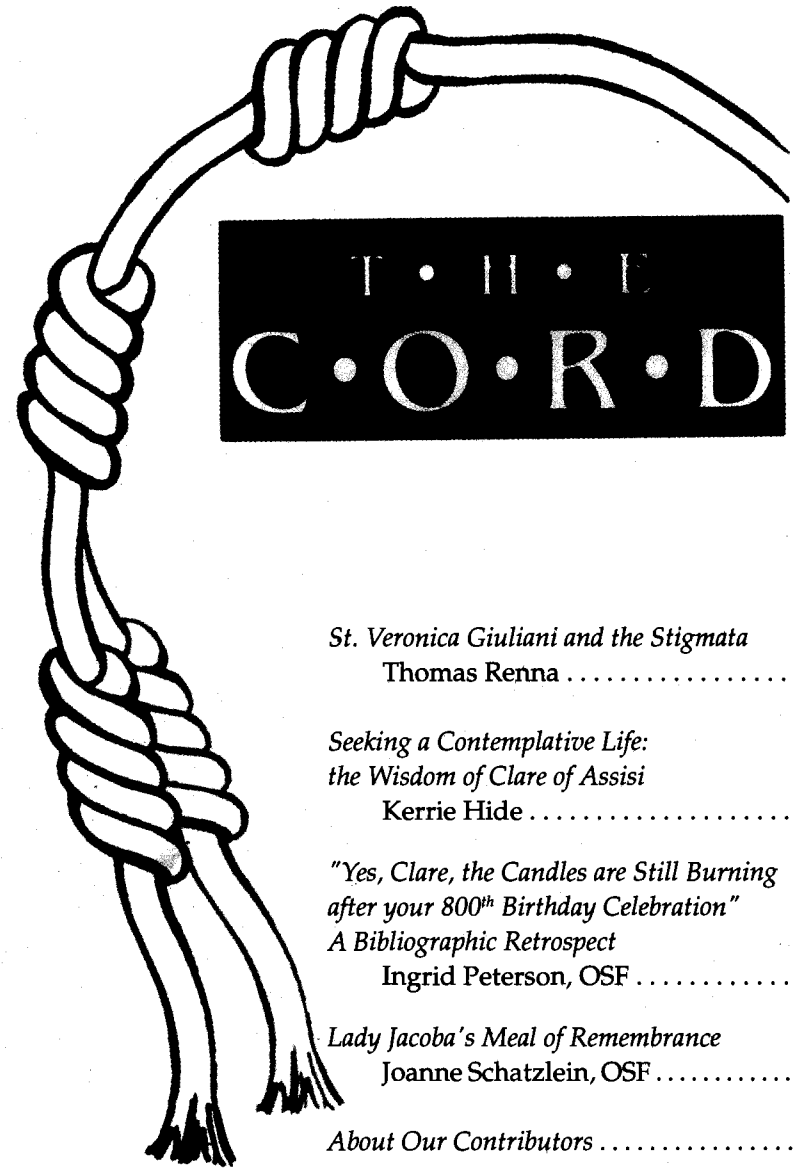
DEAR DAUGHTERS IN THE LORD, I HAVE RECENTLY LEARNED FROM OUR DEAR BROTHER LEO, ONCE A COMPANION OF OUR HOLY FATHER, HOW EAGER YOU ARE . . . TO SERVE THE POOR CRUCIFIED CHRIST IN TOTAL PURITY. I WAS FILLED WITH A VERY GREAT JOY AT THIS, SO THAT I NOW WISH, THROUGH THIS LETTER, TO ENCOURAGE YOUR DEVOTION AND YOUR GENEROUS FOLLOWING OF THE VIRTUOUS FOOTPRINTS OF YOUR HOLY MOTHER, WHO, BY MEANS OF THE LITTLE POOR MAN FRANCIS, WAS TAUGHT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"MAY YOU DESIRE TO HAVE NOTHING ELSE UNDER HEAVEN" EXCEPT WHAT [YOUR] MOTHER TAUGHT. . . .

LETTER OF BROTHER BONAVENTURE, MINISTER GENERAL TO THE ABBESS AND SISTERS OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT CLARE IN ASSISI (1259)

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THE CORD
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To save unnecessary delay and expense, contributors are asked to observe the following directives:

1. MSS should be submitted on disk (or typed on 8 1/2 x 11 paper, one side only, double spaced).
2. The University of Chicago *Manual of Style*, 14th ed., is to be consulted on general questions of style.
3. Titles of books and periodicals should be italicized or, in typed manuscripts, underlined.
Titles of articles should be enclosed in quotation marks and not underlined or italicized.
4. References to Scripture sources or to basic Franciscan sources should not be footnoted, but entered within parenthesis immediately after the cited text, with period following the closed parenthesis. For example:
(1Cor. 13:6). (2Cel 5:8).
(RegNB 23:2). (4LAg 2:13).

A list of standard abbreviations used in *The Cord* can be found inside the back cover. The edition of the Franciscan sources used should be noted in the first reference in a mss.

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The Cord, 54.4 (2004)

Editorial

The July-August issue of this journal is generally dedicated to articles about the life, writing, and heritage of Clare of Assisi. To some extent that is true of this issue, but there is also a major historical piece about St. Veronica Giuliani, a Clarisse of the seventeenth century. One of the requests I have received from my Poor Clare sisters is to provide more material about the real women who have lived the life over the centuries so that they can learn more about the historical realities of a given era. Tom Renna offered his work for consideration last January, and I have been eager to publish it in this issue, as a partial response to the above-mentioned request.

The second article introduces a new name to Clarian writing, that of Kerrie Hide, of Australia. Kerrie is a laywoman much absorbed by mysticism and the possibility of contemplative living in her own life. It is a pleasure to offer her insights about and appreciation of Clare to our readers.

Back in 1993 one of the most important events celebrating the life of Clare was "Clarefest" at Viterbo College in LaCrosse. Attended by hundreds of Franciscan women, it was a momentous event for those of us who knew too little about Clare and Clare's history/spirituality. One of the major figures in pulling "Clarefest" together was Ingrid Peterson, OSF. Ingrid has continued to foster Clare studies over the last decade, and here presents us with a narrative bibliography of the major works (available in English) that have been published in the last ten years. It is a wonderful resource for all who want to keep up with Clare research.

Lastly, Joanne Schatzlein, OSF, shares with us a piece she has used in various places, a piece that we can adapt to the celebration of the feast of Clare, or of Francis, or of Holy Week. It is creative, practical for introducing people in formation to the person of Lady Jacoba, and certainly somewhat different from the other articles in this issue.

This is probably the most eclectic issue of *The Cord* that has emerged in my time as editor, and I must admit that there is a certain amount of uneasiness in me as I send it to press. *The Cord* is presented as "Franciscan Spiritual Review" but often has at least as many historically-oriented pieces as spirituality-focused ones. This issue includes both, and then an article that is just unique. I hope the mixture works for the readers, and is as sweet to the intellectual palate as the recipe for almond-cookies is to the physical palate.

May Clare, Veronica, Jacoba, and all our Franciscan women bless us!

Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF

St. Veronica Giuliani and the Stigmata

Thomas Renna

Veronica Giuliani's stigmata have rarely been examined apart from her mystical thought.¹ Scholars have generally assumed that the stigmata were simply an expression of her Passion spirituality, which was rooted in the Franciscan tradition. A breakthrough came with the work of Metodio da Nembro, which associated her love of the Crucified with her sense of social mission.² In recent decades some critics have noted the subtle changes which occur in Veronica's writings since she began to keep a diary in 1693. Some very fine studies have traced the development of her mystical insights in the period leading up to her stigmata and mystical marriage.³ The appearance of new printed editions of her diary and letters⁴ has stimulated interest in the process of her interior experience.

Yet historians have in general treated Veronica's stigmata as something static, which changed little in the course of her writing. Indeed, it is assumed that her sacred wounds differed little if at all from her prototype, St. Francis.⁵ Her stigmata are taken to be a manifestation of the devotion to the Passion which was always a staple of the Franciscan legacy; Capuchin writings of the 16th and 17th centuries certainly reflect this heritage. Scholars treat her stigmata and her intercessory role as distinct. But these assumptions, it seems to me, have led to misunderstandings of how Veronica perceived her special grace, and how she mirrored something of the concerns of her time period.

I would argue that the stigmata in Veronica's works gradually changed after their initial appearance in 1697, and became integrated into her self-perception as a messenger for her own time. Her stigmata, I believe, passed through five stages: 1) Veronica as another Francis; 2) a sign which indicated her duty to help to release souls from purgatory; 3) proof that she was sent by God to strengthen the Church; 4) Veronica as the self-styled *mezzana* (intercessor) who holds an "office" in the Church; and 5) Veronica as a second Mary. In the final decade of her life (1618-27) these five stages intersect becoming blurred and indistinguishable.

First, in the years preceding the first appearance of the stigmata (1693-97) Veronica occasionally refers to the stigmata of Francis in the same context of her own intense desire to suffer with, and even be crucified with, Christ.⁶ Her notion of the stigmatic Francis as a second Christ was probably influenced by her reading of Bonaventure's Legends of Francis, the monastery's liturgy, and the sermons on Francis and Franciscan saints preached on feast days.⁷ Veronica's description of herself as a *mezzana*⁸—which began almost as soon as she took to writing about her experiences—simply means she saw her role as intercessor for sinners, a role traditionally attributed to saints and other pious Christians. In some vague way Veronica believed that her longing to participate in Christ's suffering resembled Francis's own response to his stigmata. Yet understandably she never explicitly compares herself to Francis.⁹ Perhaps she felt that such an association would be presumptuous. Indeed she refers to the Poverello as her teacher and guide. She is clearly uneasy about any auto-suggestion that she is an *alter-Christus*. The point is that her self-description as a *mezzana* for sinners has some connection with her desire to follow in Christ's steps out of love for Him. The subsequent conceptual link between intercession and stigmata was, one might say, natural, even inevitable. Throughout the five years preceding the imprinting of the stigmata she frequently pleads with Jesus to grant her the crown of thorns;¹⁰ she cried out to be crucified with Him.¹¹ Finally, while she seems to have had a premonition of her special vocation, she mentions that Capuchin nuns like herself should pray for the woes of those in the world.¹² Thus her vocation still retains at this stage some traditional concerns of a cloistered religious.

When in fact Veronica does record the first appearance of the stigmata the connection between her mission as *mezzana* and her physical torments (caused by the five wounds of the Passion) becomes explicit.¹³ Indeed I would argue that the stigmata **confirm** her role to aid sinners (usually left as a general term, rarely specifying particular sins) by rousing them from their torpor and "blindness," and especially their ingratitude for their divine blessings. To a much lesser extent her mystical nuptials also confirm this purpose. It is not clear if she viewed herself at this phase (1697) as *the mezzana* on earth or simply as one among many (including all the saints and previous holy Christians). The latter seems more likely. Thus, the union of *mezzana* and stigmata is made at the very beginning of her life as a stigmatist. This union is a leitmotif in her writings for the rest of her life.

Second, Veronica sometime after the original stigmata—and with increasing frequency—extends her role as *mezzana* to the souls in purgatory.¹⁴ God has granted her the awesome responsibility of easing the agonies of the good souls awaiting heaven. Her suffering, often self-inflicted, adds another dimension to her intercession, and weds her more firmly to the Mystical Body. She feels

more of a part of the larger community of the blessed. Her love for the souls in purgatory—who include blood relatives and sisters of her monastery¹⁵—intensifies her need to suffer now, physically and mentally. Her bond with purgatory widens her mental vista; she belongs to the “convent” of the community of purgatory.

Third, given her rapport with those in purgatory, it was perhaps inevitable that Veronica would lament the injuries to the terrestrial Church. Increasingly she reaches out to the organizational Church threatened by evil, particularly heretics¹⁶ (certainly Jansenists, and probably Quietists), Turks¹⁷ (who threatened Italy during the Wars of the Spanish Succession), and “bad princes,”¹⁸ who fight each other instead of the infidel. The Christian rulers who break the peace give pain to Christ and His Church. Veronica’s Jesuit confessors may have been the most alarmist of her (39!) confessors; some of these confessors were true believers in her gifts of prophecy and intercessory power to strengthen mother Church in her time of peril.¹⁹ Her diary suggests she was frightened by the turmoil in Europe and spread of heresy. (One wonders how much she knew of the state of central Italy and of the nature of the religious movements in the region, apart from the slanted reports of her confessors.) Any Capuchin sister would of course feel obligated to offer prayers and vigils on behalf of the misguided. But Veronica seems to have seen her vocation as something special, if not unique; only her suffering could assist the organizational Church in its tribulations. While she certainly knew of saints who suffered, voluntarily and otherwise, she describes her own distress in increasingly personal ways, rarely comparing herself to previous saintly Christians. She does not compare herself to other stigmatists and their vocation of suffering. In short, her stigmata attach her securely to the entire Church. The stigmata represent the stages in her mystical ascent to God, while retaining a pronounced ecclesial dimension,²⁰ as in Bonaventure’s account of Francis’s sacred wounds.

Veronica, then, views her stigmata not primarily as a phenomenon which occasionally descends to God’s elite as a sign of approval, but as a one-of-a-kind grace granted her in circumstances unique to her and her own historical era. Her sufferings are for the here and now, intended to mitigate the harm done to the Church by heretics, Turks, and warmongering princes. Veronica’s diary seems rife with an aura of impending doom, which gives her prayers a sense of urgency. Her writings do not, to be sure, reveal apocalyptic forecasts; yet the agitation in her pleas for divine intervention in the affairs of the world imply a state of crisis and imminent disaster. Veronica shares little of Bonaventure’s optimism about a world blessed with the advent of the second Christ, who has begun to rejuvenate the gospel life—verified by the unheard-of sight of the visible wounds of the Crucified.

Fourth, Veronica gradually came to view this divine summons to fend off evil as a special “office” in the Church.²¹ She indirectly associates this office with the various duties assigned to the sisters in the monastery.²² She relates this ecclesial office *a fortiori* to her position as mistress of novices and later as abbess.²³ In any case, it is extraordinary that this Capuchin nun would attribute to herself an office in the universal Church, as if she were a prelate or Church functionary. No human appointed her to this exalted position. It would seem that God created this post specifically for her; there is no suggestion of any precedent. The stigmata establish her authority to hold this office, which fixes her function as *mezzana* firmly within the Church militant. Veronica goes far beyond the Bonaventurian Francis whose stigmata offer visible evidence of his being an *alter-Christus*; by extension, Francis’s message of gospel poverty attains credibility.

Fifth, Veronica likens herself to the Virgin Mary. In what may be the most “mystical” sections of the diary, Veronica talks to Jesus’ mother as if she were her equal in suffering. Just as Mary endured the agony of the Passion, Veronica undergoes similar trials on behalf of sinners.²⁴ Incredibly Veronica in these dialogues with Mary often refers to herself in the second person (sic!)—which may be unique in an autobiography!²⁵ Both Mary and Veronica are *mezzane*,²⁶ whose torments expiate the sins of the world. In some of the most eloquent passages in the diary, Veronica describes at length how she receives her commission to participate in the Passion. These sections reveal a self-confidence and sense of purpose which suggest a further clarification of her vocation in the Church.²⁷ Without explicitly saying so, Veronica merges her mission with that of Mary. It is as if her previous attempts to define her prophetic calling had culminated with this intimate relationship with the Mother who stands between her Son and sinners. After 1710 her conversations with Mary become more frequent and more intense. As her devotion to the Virgin Mary deepened, she often recommends her sisters to pray to the Mother of God. Veronica says that Mary is her “teacher”²⁸ since the day she entered religion. Mary tells her daughter that their hearts are joined in their mutual suffering and love of the Savior. Mary directs Veronica’s soul by being a *mezzana* between her and God. It can almost be said that Veronica associates her stigmata with the “stigmata” (sufferings occasioned by the Passion of her Son) of Mary,²⁹ who is the advocate of sinners. Mary is a sort of *co-mezzana* before God for sinners. In her role as intercessor, Mary helps dispense divine grace to humans. But whereas Veronica is but one *mezzana*, Mary is the universal *mezzana* whom God has designated to bring his grace to the world.³⁰ Mary, like her daughter, is the mediator for the souls in purgatory. In her later writings Veronica mentions Mary, not Jesus, as the one who confirms her, Veronica, as the daughter of Mary’s sorrows. Just

as Christ had given Veronica the signs of His Passion, Mary gives her sorrows to her. Mary and Veronica stand at the foot of the cross.

Veronica has no doubt that Mary's grief is experienced in her own stigmata. Indeed Veronica participates in Mary's seven sorrows, which our Capuchin feels when her stigmata are occasionally renewed.³¹ Just as Veronica's stigmata are offered to God, so she offers the sorrows and merits of Mary, who in effect approves of these offerings.³² Amazingly Mary assures Veronica that she, Mary, is the mediator between her and God.³³ Mary "needs" Veronica, so to speak, to enable God to save souls and aid the needs of the Church. Mary is the mediator between God and Veronica in the conversion of sinners. How does Veronica perform this role as mediator? By suffering and prayer to be sure. But also through her writing. In some mysterious way Veronica's writing is an act of suffering, something like Michelangelo's artistic work or Thomas Merton's sense of vocation as a monastic writer. Perhaps Veronica expected others to read her diary after her death. Thus the merits of her suffering are brought to the world in a more mundane way. While it would be ridiculous to assume that Veronica imagined herself as an *altra-Maria*; Mary is after all her guide. Yet it seems that later in life Veronica came to view her own vocation as, at least in this narrow sense, a *mezzana* as was Mary. Somehow they both assisted in God's salvific work.

Conclusion

At least a year before Veronica received the stigmata, she viewed herself as the mediator between God and sinners. But she was not a mediator in the way Francis the alter-Christus interceded before the throne of heaven for wayward souls. Veronica calls herself a "voice" *through which* Christ's merits are distributed to humans.³⁴ Her emphasis on this more humble role indicates that she clearly understands the difference between this relatively modest activity and Christ's supreme act of mediation between God the Father and humankind after the fall of Adam and Eve. The first appearance of the stigmata confirmed her mission to act as a channel through which the fruits of the Redemption come to us, who are then disposed to turn to Him. Her entire life is committed to this salvific task.

In the years after 1697 the meaning of the stigmata, which recur often, becomes at once both more social and more personal. More social in that her vocation as "voice" becomes more explicitly associated with the institutional Church; she is assigned a quasi-official "office" which obliges her to strengthen the Mystical Body as such, as well as strengthen individuals (and also heretics and infidels) who comprise this Body. More personal in that she gradually extends the meaning of *mezzana* beyond the intercessory function to

participation in Christ's suffering. But this co-suffering is ultimately far from the Bonaventuran use of the stigmata as a verification of Francis's function as the second Redeemer who restores apostolic poverty and evangelical virtue. For with Veronica the stigmata are God's way of merging her prophetic calling into the way of the Mother at the foot of the cross. Christ uses the stigmata, as it were, as a teaching device to bring Veronica closer to Himself and to His Mother. This Capuchin stigmatist "becomes" Mary; together they are the vehicle by which the Son takes his redemptive merits to a sinful world.

All this is not of course to deny the obvious association of Veronica's wounds with the stigmata of Francis. Both are in some sense intercessors on behalf of sinners. Both yearn to share in the Passion. Both were blessed with the stigmata as a visible way of God demonstrating His approval of His servants' behavior. Both are given these marks of sanctity as signs of their special missions. Yet Veronica's stigmata is—may one dare say it?—an advanced stage of a more "mature" interpretation of the wounds in the historical development of Franciscan stigmata. Although she is steadfastly within the Franciscan heritage, Veronica is just as much part of her own time and place. Her holy imprints embody the baroque tendencies of early eighteenth-century central Italy: heroic Tridentine spirituality; devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus; pronounced influence of the Spanish mystics (particularly John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila); highly emotional expressions of devotion to Christ's humanity and crucifixion (even to the point of extreme forms of self-inflicted pain); quasi-Jansenist emphasis on the elect who receive irresistible grace (Veronica's mission is, so to speak, assigned to her from above); total and uncompromising abandonment to the divine will; semi-Quietist tendency to downplay external practices and the sacraments (which are hardly ignored in Veronica's diary, but then such "externals" seem not to be in the forefront of her devotions; while evidence is lacking, it may be that the Inquisition accused her of Quietism);³⁵ the need for select holy women to repair a society rent by war, invasion, and heresy.

Veronica's delicate balance between the social and private dimensions of her stigmata would come apart in the 19th and 20th centuries, when many stigmatists are described in the most graphic, even bizarre, ways. By comparison with Veronica, modern stigmatists seem almost "private" in their comments about their signs. Most have been exceedingly reluctant to talk about the phenomenon, while their admirers largely praise their marks as evidence of sanctity. Even the Capuchin Padre Pio,³⁶ who rarely mentioned his stigmata, is lauded today mainly for his holiness and intercessory power on behalf of individual supplicants. Veronica Giuliani might best be thought of as the culmination of the stigmatic tradition of prophetic charisma and ecclesial sense of the entire Church, rather than as the first modern stigmatist.



Endnotes

¹See, e.g., F. da Pio X Riese, *Santa Veronica Giuliani implicata inseguitrice di amore e di dolore* (Padua: Ed. Messaggero 1998), Chap. 12; L. Radi, *Veronica Giuliani e la mistica dell'espiazione* (Assisi: Cittadella 1997), Chap. 15.

²M. da Nembro, *Misticismo e missione di S. Veronica Giuliani* (Milan: Centro Studi Cappuccini Lombardi 1962), Pt. 2; "L'itinerario spirituale di S. Veronica Giuliani dalle pagine del sul 'Diario,'" in *Santa Veronica Giuliani* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Ordinis Fr. Min. Cap. 1961), pp. 35-102.

³See the penetrating study by M. Courbat, *Dico e ridico e non dico niente: il fenomeno del diario sdoppiato in Santa Veronica Giuliani* (Siena: Cantagalli 1994), Pt. 3.

⁴Vols. 1-4 of the *Diario*, ed. O. Fiorucci (Città di Castello: Monastero delle Cappuccine 1969-74); vol. 5 (includes Relazioni autobiografiche), eds. L. Iriarte, A. de Felice (1987); vol. 6 (letters), eds. M. G. C. Fulvi, L. Iriarte (1989); vol. 7 (analytical indices and bibliography), ed. L. Iriarte (1991). These vols. are not critical editions, since Veronica's spelling and grammar are "corrected." A photocopy (61 vols.) of the *Diario* ms. is available at the Centro Studi next to the Monastery. I wish to thank Badessa Suor Serafina and Don Luigi Guerri for their generous assistance during my visits to the Centro in May-June 2002 and 2003.

⁵See U. Picciafuoco, "St. Francis in the Piety and Mystical Experience of St. Veronica Giuliani, Based on Her Diary," *Greyfriars Review* 10.1 (1996), pp. 89-106.

⁶*Diario*, vol. I, p. 360 (henceforth D I, 360); II, 250-55, 264, 274, 515-19, 742, 745, 963-67, 1173; III, 183, 843, 1142; IV, 300-306, 787; V, 63.

⁷For influences on V, see M. G. C. Fulvi, "1697: Anno 'Cerniera' nell'esperienza religiosa di Veronica Giuliani," in M. Duranti, ed., *Il "sentimento" tragico dell'esperienza religiosa Veronica Giuliani (1660-1727)* (Perugia-Naples: Università degli studi di Perugia 2000), pp. 269-301. For the monastery library see Duranti, "La 'fabbrica' del monastero . . ." in this same vol., pp. 149-224.

⁸D I, 173, 212, 251, 371, 380, 426, 478, 493-94, etc. Some of these *mezzana* texts are conveniently assembled in L. Iriarte, ed., *Esperienza e dottrina mistica* (Rome: Laurentianum 1981), pp. 201-30. See L. Iriarte, *Le cappuccine passato e presente* (Rome: Istituto storico dei cappuccini 1997), pp. 154-63.

⁹D I, 368; also 289, 464, 656f.; II, 23, 31, 40, 251, 263-65, etc. At the foot of the cross, Francis offers the merits of Christ through Veronica; I, 23. When the rays of light from Christ's five wounds fall on Francis's stigmata, he is transformed into Jesus as a "new Christ"; I, 251. When Jesus permits V to see this vision, Francis gives thanks "for me" for the same stigmata. Francis not V is transformed into Christ. V is the means by which Christ's merits enter the world.

¹⁰D I, 179, 181, 188, 194, 286, 289, 355, 371, etc.

¹¹D I, 289, 510, 771, etc.

¹²V assumes that religious should pray for the world as a matter of course. But even as early as 1695 V classifies herself among the elect who desire to suffer more than the others. Souls carry the cross in three ways: in the hand, on the shoulders, and "by embrace." V and some religious are included among those who "embrace the cross"; D I, 455, 462. Presumably her sisters are members of merely one Order among others.

¹³V discusses her first stigmata in D I, 97-103 (Relazione), 894-99; V, 796-98.

¹⁴D II, 330, 645, 822, 825, 826, 924, 927, 930, 948, 956, 1130, 1064-67; III, 104, 107, 168, 171, 185, 319, 390, 436; IV, 88, 91, 104, 663, etc.

¹⁵Intercedes for her father: II, 791, 821-28; V, 742-45. For her sisters: II, 924-34, 946; III, 1118; VI, 90, 280, etc.

¹⁶D III, 81, 93, 991, 1013.

¹⁷D III, 990, 991, 1013, 1018, 1022-24, 1084, etc. Presumably "infidels" means Turks. See I, 748-49; II, 302, 320; IV, 165, 328, etc. Cf. "infidel nations" and Jews; I, 690, 738, 777. V prays often for their conversion.

¹⁸D III, 25, 34, 71, 171, 184, 189, 986, 999, 1146, 1205, 1207, 1237. V prays for victory over the Turks: III, 990, 999, 1018, 1022-24, 1084. See F. Pierli, "Lo spirito missionario di Santa Veronica Giuliani," in L. Iriarte, ed., *Testimonianza e messaggio di Santa Veronica Giuliani* (Rome: Laurentianum 1983), vol. 2, pp. 295-311.

¹⁹D I, 402; II, 416, 522; III, 748-54, 844, 852-967, 878-888, 971-76. See L. Iriarte, "I confessori di Santa Veronica," *L'Italia Francescana* 64 (1989) 389-416; P. Zovatto, "Veronica Giuliani tra esperienza mistica e direzione spirituale," in Duranti, *Il "sentimento" tragico*, pp. 35-107; M. Borchiellini, *Le colline della speranza* (Città di Castello: Edimond 1999), pp. 106-109; Fulvi article in n. 7 above.

²⁰See P. Palazzini, "Significato e influsso di s. Veronica Giuliani nella vita della Chiesa," in *Santa Veronica Giuliani dottore della Chiesa?* Atti del Convegno di Studi (Città di Castello: Centro Studi S. Veronica Giuliani 1979), pp. 49-70; P. Fiordelli, "Chiesa e mondo nell'intercessione di Santa Veronica," in *Testimonianza e messaggio*, II, 261-76; Z. Anthonisse, "Il senso di chiesa in santa Veronica Giuliani," *Testimonianza*, II, 277-94; S. da Campagnola, "L'immagine di Veronica Giuliani tra agiografia e biografia," in Duranti, *Il "sentimento" tragico*, pp. 1-33.

²¹D II, 670, 673, 946; IV, 412, 432, 436, 763; V, 567. V sometimes mentions her two offices (mediator between Christ and sinners; mediator for souls in purgatory): II,

948, 956, 1130, 1208; III, 83, 88. Sometimes she holds three offices (the third is “del patire”; III, 72; IV, 763; V, 567. V’s stigmata are associated with her office (s); III, 72, 80-83, 86, 93, 104, 187.

²²E.g., as rotare: VI, 350, 383, 492, 523; as abbes: VI, 475, 539.

²³D I, 423, 433; II, 90, 413, 527; III, 139-46, 698-700, 730, 742f., 754, 931, 1169; V, 818.

²⁴D I, 636, 915; II, 166-68; III, 275, 279, 352, 373-75; 422, 484, 544, 547, 557; V, 446, 463.

²⁵D V, 730-37. See M. Courbat, “Veronica Giuliani: Writing and Rewriting,” *Greyfriars Review* 13.3 (1999) 297-317 at 302; G. Pozzi, “Il ‘parere’ autobiografico di Veronica Giuliani,” *Strumenti critici* 2 (1987) 161-92.

²⁶D I, 711, 715, 777, 899; II, 126, 669, 713, 932, 1099, 1113, 1142; III, 115, 168, 405, 362; IV, 443, 445, 449, 540; VI, 309, 452. For *mezzana* and office see R. Piccinelli, *La teologia della croce nell’esperienza mistica di s. Veronica Giuliani* (Assisi: Porziuncola 1989), Chap. 5.

²⁷D I, 486, 671, 688, 828, 895; II, 1233, 1235, 1241; III, 275, 279, 364, 403, 389, 718-19, 959, 1181; IV, 330-31, 349, 391, 393-94, 438, 443, 501, 503; V, 384, 446, 484. Mary makes V the “daughter of my sorrows”; III, 1233-35, 1241.

²⁸D II, 511, 662, 678, 682, 727, 738, 741; III, 508, 512, 655 813, 1311; IV, 574, 728, 851, 898; V, 220, 226, 253, 278, 457, 468.

²⁹D III, 828-30, 427, 433, 535, 538, 1058; IV, 540, 738, 785; V, 315; VI, 418.

³⁰D II, 126, 669, 713; III, 115, 168; IV, 443-47. V is well aware of the difference between her role as mediator and that of Mary. The Lord gave thorns to V, and gems to Mary: I, 795. When He gave a palm to V, it became a cross. When He gave lily to Mary, it became joy. The thorns are the voyagers in this life; the gems are eternity; III, 796. The lily is pure intention; the palm, battles to prepare one’s soul.

³¹D III, 1058; IV, 540, 738. Cf. D III, 427, 433, 535, 538, 828-30, 726-66; IV, 841, 846; V, 127, 315; VI, 228, 418.

³²D III, 275, 279, 364, 403, 406, 413, 422, 553.

³³D I, 711, 715, 777; II, 932, 1099, 1142, 1145; III, 405. V is not the mediator between Mary and sinners; she is merely the instrument by which Mary’s merits come to humans. Similarly V is the means by which Christ’s redemptive merits flow to men. Cf. II, 182.

³⁴D I, 765, 790f.; II, 13 (Christ’s wounds are voices through me), 23.

³⁵V is clearly upset when the Inquisitors tell her that her stigmata are from the devil. She writes that they don’t understand that she is a *mezzana* with a special office in the Church; D II, 366-67. Cf. II, 3, 7, 170, 178-81, 200, 572. See Borchiellini, *Le Colline*, 86-92. Scholars have paid little attention to the relationship between V and Jansenism and Quietism.

³⁶In referring to his stigmata, Padre Pio reveals little of V’s sense of the broader social significance of his gift, except for a mention of the “presente guerra”; G. Pasquale, ed., *Padre Pio: Le mie stimmate: Le lettere del santo di Pietrelcina* (Milan: San Paolo 2002), 23-27.

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Seeking a Contemplative Life: the Wisdom of Clare of Assisi

Kerrie Hide

*Place your mind before the mirror of eternity
Place your soul in the brilliance of glory
Place your heart in the figure of divine substance
Transform your whole being
into the image of the Godhead itself
through contemplation.¹*

Contemplation is a gift from God. It utterly transcends all that we are, and yet, it is the only thing that can give authentic meaning to our lives. A desire for contemplative prayer is intrinsic to our being. It has its source in the extravagance of divine love that loves us into being and ceaselessly draws us to God’s self in love. God’s desire for us to live our lives in loving awareness of our source creates a restless yearning and longing to respond to this gift. It urges us make ourselves open and ready to receive this gift and be transformed in love until we are one. For Christians, contemplative prayer is a response to God’s loving expressed most poignantly in and through the Incarnation. In the words of Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians, contemplatives seek to have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth, until knowing the love of Christ which is beyond all knowledge (we) are filled with the utter fullness of God (Eph 3:18-19). A growing number of people, both within and outside formal religious structures, seek to live a spiritual life, to be contemplative and live in harmony with God, self, all people and all creation.² There are a growing number of people who cry out, as the disciples did: Lord teach us to pray (Lk 11:1).

Clare of Assisi (1193-1253) is a voice from the tradition whose writings about contemplation can enrich our prayer and give trustworthy guidelines to those who seek to companion others on their spiritual journey. And since, from Easter 2003 until Easter 2004, Franciscans throughout the world commemorated the 750th anniversary of the death of Clare, it seems timely to ex-

plore her wisdom. While Clare is widely known as the companion of St. Francis, *the little plant of Francis*, as she calls herself in her rule, *The Form of Life of the Poor Sisters*,³ what is still coming to light in contemporary theology is the eloquence and depth of her brief writings and the significant insights about how we can nourish and support the human longing for union with God. She gives fresh, time-transcending teachings about prayer that can inspire those seeking to live a contemplative life today.

Clare writes powerful passionate letters to her dear friend Agnes (1205-1282). Although Agnes is an historical figure, a princess who founded a monastery of Poor Sisters in Prague in 1234, she also represents all those who seek union in Christ. Unfortunately, there are only four short letters to Agnes preserved to guide us.⁴ The letters, composed over an eighteen-year period from 1234, 1235, 1238 to 1252, reveal an increasingly intense desire for God and a maturing capacity to surrender to the all-consuming love of the Trinity. Clare is a talented and creative writer who seems fluent in Latin. She draws on an extensive spectrum of Latin words with delicate nuance in meaning. Her language is articulate, eloquent and abundantly rich in imagery. She saturates her letters in loved quotes from scriptures, particularly the psalms, Song of Songs, the gospels of John, Matthew and Luke, and Paul's letters, which she would have integrated into her being through reading and reciting the *Divine Office*. Clare has a captivating letter hand that draws on her experience in prayer and engages the reader personally. Because she is writing to a like-minded contemplative, her instructions about contemplation assume a depth of knowledge.

Christ-centered Prayer

In essence, Clare's way of prayer is Christ centered. Christ is the alpha and omega, the one who holds all things together in love. Clare shows us how to become one in love in union with the Godhead through a dynamic ever-deepening union with both the humanity and divinity of Christ, whom she affectionately refers to as the *Poor Crucified (pauperis Crucifixi)*.⁵ As the letters progress, the poor one becomes the beloved from the Song of Songs, her spouse. She teaches us how to look deeply into the Poor One, to gaze, to remember, to participate in and seek the mind of the Crucified. She encourages us to live in intimacy with Christ, loving with all our being until we *feel what his friends feel and taste the hidden sweetness that God keeps for those who love Christ*.⁶ Clare gives us a way of prayer that can assist us to come to a place of total loving where we can say with Paul: *it is no longer I but Christ lives in me* (Gal 2:20).

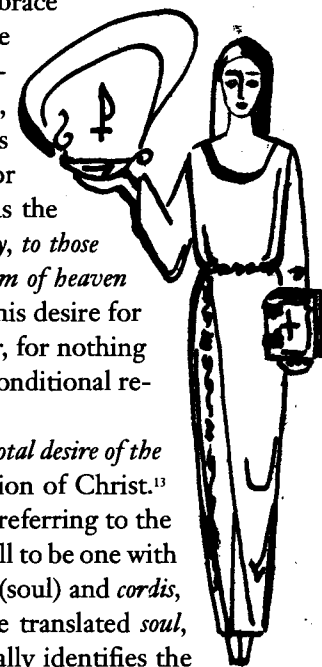
Clare's Teaching about Contemplative Prayer

Clare shows great sensitivity to the delicate nature of contemplative prayer. Her letters are distinctive for the variety of ways she invites Agnes to contemplative seeing, to seeing Christ in a way that unites and makes one. Careful gazing at Clare's advice to Agnes reveals a deeply intensifying circular movement that begins in Christ, brings all things together in Christ and ends in Christ, only to begin again the journey of deeper transforming union. Each letter conveys a maturing sense of union, encapsulating fundamental aspects of the content and dynamic of contemplative prayer.

Desiring Christ

The First Letter to Agnes, that Clare writes when she is about thirty-nine, oozes with desire. Every word is grounded in an insatiable longing for Christ, for union with *the poor crucified*.⁷ From the very first lines of the letter to its conclusion, Clare rejoices and affirms Agnes in her choice to surrender all, *to choose with her total soul and heart (toto animo et cordis) a life of holy poverty*.⁸ In the third letter Clare elaborates on what she means by *total: love Him totally who gave himself totally for your love (illum totaliter diligas, qui se totum pro tua dilectione donavit)*.⁹ Our *total* desire reflects the total giving of love of the Crucified. Clare seeks to strengthen Agnes in her resolve to embrace poverty *out of ardent desire for the poor Christ*.¹⁰ She contrasts the life of earthly royalty to the splendor of God-centered poverty. Poverty is blessed, holy, not for its own sake, but because it creates an emptiness where desire to be one with the poor crucified can flourish.¹¹ Clare reveres poverty as the only true possession and acclaims: *O holy poverty, to those who possess and desire you God promises the kingdom of heaven and offers, indeed, eternal glory and blessed life*.¹² This desire for poverty is in essence, a desire for *total* surrender, for nothing but God. There is no room for a half-hearted, conditional response.

Clare recognizes that Agnes longs with *the total desire of the mind (toto mentis desiderio)* to live a life in imitation of Christ.¹³ The reference to *mentis (mind)* is significant. In referring to the total nature of the desire of Agnes, to surrender all to be one with Christ, Clare has already used the words *anima* (soul) and *cordis*, heart. While *anima*, *cordis* and *mentis* can all be translated *soul*, each word has its own nuance.¹⁴ *Anima* specifically identifies the soul as the breath or animating principle.¹⁵ *Cordis* highlights the



source of feelings and emotions,¹⁶ while *mentis* refers to mind. In common usage *mentis* distinguishes the intellect, reason, judgment, discernment, consideration and reflection.¹⁷ In mystical literature *mind* often includes the memory, understanding, will and imagination.¹⁸ *Total desire of the mind* expands the seat of desire to include, not only feelings, affections, and the spiritual senses, but also the memory, intellect and understanding. It invites us to seek to have all that we *think* and *imagine* permeated in desire for God. It encourages us to saturate all distracting thoughts in desire. By the end of the letter, Clare distinguishes the *total* desire of our soul, our heart and our mind, the whole of our being.

Clare's first preserved letter reminds us that being attentive to our deepest desire, that is God's desire for us to be one, is the beginning of prayer. It is critical in Clare's way of prayer that the desire she describes is focused on Christ and seeks to imitate Christ's total love for us. Desire for Christ leads us to long to see Christ, to gaze at Christ in a way that leads to transforming union.

Gazing at Christ

The second letter to Agnes, written approximately a year later, develops the prayer of gazing. It gives explicit guidelines in how to realize our longing to love with the *total desire* of the whole of our being. In this second letter, Clare invites Agnes to *embrace* (*amplectere*) the Poor Christ. Literally, to *embrace* is to wind around, touching and drawing the Beloved to one's self, holding the Beloved to our breast, hugging, encircling, surrounding, enclosing.¹⁹ Clare continues: "Look upon him (*vide*), gaze upon (*intuere*), consider (*considera*), contemplate (*contemplara*) as you desire to imitate (*desiderans imitari*) the poor Christ."²⁰ The emphasis on contemplative seeing is striking.²¹ The movement encapsulates an organic sense of looking deeply into the Crucified One and noticing his gazing at us, so that the mutual gaze unites.²² "Look" (*videre*) accentuates corporeal or bodily sight. It invites us to fix our eyes on the humanity of Christ, the flesh and bones, the body of Jesus of Nazareth. The emphasis is on coming to a bodily awareness of all the details, seeking, searching, examining, watching the colors, shapes, facial expressions and visual emotions. As we look and experience a deepening sense of mutual recognition, seeing interiorly magnifies until we "gaze" (*intuere*). *Intuere* draws us into a deeper interior seeing.²³ *To gaze* is to wonder, to behold, to gently stay with, to admire and come to deeper intuitive seeing, seeing with *the eye of the heart*. When we gaze we see with a deeply felt understanding of love. Thus, *intuere* is an inner gazing, a looking with every particle of our being, sharing ourselves in the gaze and reverencing what we receive.²⁴ Subsequently, as the surrender to the gaze intensifies, Clare invites us to "consider" (*considera*). This is not an analytical

considering of the facts of Jesus' life, but meditating, remembering, pondering, dwelling on,²⁵ until the gaze unites us with Christ and we rest in contemplation (*contemplari*),²⁶ one with Christ. In the Third Letter Clare quotes John 14:21 in order to describe the experience of contemplation: "we shall come to him and make our dwelling place with him." Significantly, she adds:

*always carry him spiritually in your chaste and virginal body. And you will hold him by whom you and all things are held together.*²⁷

Contemplation is the experience of holding Christ and being held by the beloved who holds all things together. Contemplation makes us aware of our mutual indwelling, not just in specific prayer periods, but in the whole of our lives in a spiritually embodied way. *We always carry Christ spiritually* in our body. The increasing intensity of the prayer of gazing draws us into the being of Christ, to rest in Christ as Christ rests in us. Contemplation in turn evokes a "desire to imitate" (*desiderans imitari*) Christ.²⁸ Each time we enter this embrace union intensifies.

Being Transformed into Christ

The prayer of gazing draws us from an outside bodily awareness, into a deeper and deeper experience of mutual indwelling in contemplative prayer. The Third preserved letter to Agnes, written when Clare was about forty-four or forty-five, expands our understanding of Clare's teaching about *contemplari*. It gives profound insights into how we may dwell in the presence of the Beloved and be more and more completely transformed into the Beloved. Clare advises Agnes:

Place your mind in the mirror of eternity
(Pone mentem tuam in speculo aeternitatis)
 Place (*pone*) your soul (*animam*) in the brilliance of glory
(splendore gloriae)
 Place (*pone*) your heart (*cor*) in the figure of divine
 substance (*divinae substantiae*)
 Transform your total being (*totam ipsam*)
 into the image of the Godhead itself
 through contemplation.²⁹

In this exquisite description of contemplative prayer, Clare adopts refined visual imagery to convey the intimate, immanent presence of Christ in contemplation. She does not explain the meaning of her images, but allows the imagery to touch the heart of the beholder. Notice the repetition of *mind*, *soul* and *heart* that we saw in the earlier letters, distinguishing an integrated three-

fold movement of our mind in the mirror of eternity, our soul in the brilliance of glory and our heart in the divine substance. The imagery describes a transcending progression that becomes more and more ineffable. There is also another reference to *total*. This way of prayer involves the totality of our being. The whole of who we are is transformed.

The first movement in being transformed into the image of the Godhead through contemplation is to “place our mind in the mirror of eternity” (*pone mentem tuam in speculo aeternitatis*).³⁰ In Clare’s hands, the image of the mirror of eternity becomes a symbol, in the dense doctrinal sense, of an image that gives rise to thought and then shapes the thought to which it gives rise.³¹ When we encounter the symbolic nature of the mirror of eternity, it inspires what Avery Dulles refers to as “engaged participatory knowledge.”³² It becomes what Brian Purfield describes as “an emblem of contemplation.”³³

For Clare the “mirror of eternity” is the means of contemplation. In medieval times a mirror was a bronze slightly convex disk that reflected light. Because of its rounded surface, only in certain depths, and from a certain angle, was the image reflected clearly. It was only when the gaze remained steady in the depths of the center of the mirror that the image crystallized.³⁴ In literally gazing into a medieval mirror, we would expect to see an opaque vision of ourselves. But in stark contrast to what we may expect to see, Clare quotes from Hebrews and Wisdom, to reveal how the mirror is Christ, “the splendor of eternal glory” (Heb 1:3), “the brilliance of eternal light and the mirror without blemish” (Wis 7:26).³⁵ It is noteworthy that as we steady our gaze on Christ our vision transforms from the Pauline sense of “now in a mirror dimly” (1 Cor 13:12) to seeing the brilliance of the light of Christ.

Clare skillfully portrays how from the depths of the mirror shine the whole of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. She directs us to place our mind in Christ, “the mirror of eternity” (*pone mentem tuam in speculo aeternitatis*). We recall that mind (*mentis*) distinguishes our intellect, understanding, memory, will, imagination and capacity for discernment. This suggests that we must use our intellect, reason and judgment to discern Christ’s presence and to choose to be present to Christ. Faint reflections of Paul’s image of “those who turn to the Lord have the veil over their minds removed” (2 Cor 3:12-18) and his invocation to have “the mind of Christ” (1 Cor 2:16) seem apparent. “Place” (*pone*) emphasizes the activity of stationing and focusing our mind on Christ, but it also has the added nuance of surrendering, laying down, giving over the whole of ourselves so that we may become one with, and be transformed by Christ.³⁶ Moreover, Clare advises us to place our mind in the mirror not simply to gaze at the mirror from a distance, but to seek to enter the mirror, to participate *in* the image reflected *in* the mirror.

In her Fourth Letter, written not long before her death, the mature Clare expounds on how the mirror reflects the whole of Christ’s life. She advises:

*Gaze (intuere) into that mirror each day . . . and continually reflect (speculare) your face in it, (et in eo faciem tuam iugiter speculari) so that you may adorn yourself within and without with beautiful robes, and cover yourself with flowers and garments of all virtues. . . . (vv. 14-17)*³⁸

The stress on gaze (*intuere*) is important, because it describes deep interior seeing with the eye of the heart rather than the more external nature of looking. The gaze naturally draws us into the mirror, to linger, to stay with and participate in the presence of Christ, more and more deeply and completely. Clare’s suggestion to “reflect (*speculari*) your face in it” is critical, for Clare is telling us that our loving gaze can sensitize us to see our love reflected in the love of the Beloved. She is inviting us to become a reflection of Christ. This implies that we come to deeper self-knowledge by gazing into the mirror of Christ, because Christ is the Beloved in whom we discover our true spiritual nature. As we see Christ in the mirror, and consider our face reflected in the face of Christ, we grow in loving awareness of Christ who is always present. We also discover what makes us a true reflection of Christ, and what tarnishes the image. Clare does not focus on our tarnished image, but rather encourages us to gaze daily at the resemblance, to see our beauty and adorn ourselves within and without with garments that reflect Christ’s love. Continual gazing creates deeper and deeper resemblance.

Concurrently, as we reflect our face in Christ, the mirror of eternity, Clare invites us to deeper and deeper contemplation of the life of Christ. The contemplative guides us: “attend (*attende*) to the parameters (*principium*) of the mirror that is the poverty of Him who was placed in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes. . . .”³⁹ The edges (*principium*) draw us to enter the mystery of the incarnation. Through the activity of attending (*attende*) we stretch towards the infant Christ, tend, care for, hold the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes.⁴⁰ Next we focus our gaze in the middle (*in medio*) of the mirror and consider (*considera*) the holy humility, the blessed poverty, the untold labours and burdens which he endured for the redemption of all humankind.⁴¹ *In medio* identifies the middle between the center and the edge of the mirror.

As we have already noted, to consider (*considera*) is to meditate, remember, ponder, dwell on. Through *considering* Christ’s humility, poverty and suffering we embody how Christ has restored our broken, fractured, scarred image. Subsequently, as our gaze penetrates into the depths (*finis*) of the mirror, Clare invites us to contemplate (*contemplare*) the ineffable charity (*ineffabilem caritatem*) which led him to suffer on the wood of the cross and die there-on⁴² We recall that contemplation (*contemplare*) is the experience of holding and being held by the Beloved who holds all things together. In the depths of the mirror in contemplation we hold and are held by ineffable charity

(*ineffabilem caritatem*). We dwell in a love that is so complete that the limitations of language can never describe the wonder of this mutual indwelling. Contemplating the cross shining in the mirror of eternity, infinitely holding all things together in love, evokes in Clare the lament from Lamentations 1:12: "All you who pass by the way, attend (*attendite*) and see (*videte*) if there is any suffering like my suffering."⁴³ Paradoxically, the center of mirror is an icon of suffering that we must *attend to* and *see*. The activity of attending enables us to surrender to the suffering, to tenderly embrace the suffering and to see divine love suffering with us in the midst of our suffering. The icon of suffering at the center of the mirror, reminds us that the way of transforming union through contemplation is the way of the cross. Contemplation involves the experience of having to die with Christ, to die to all that is not a reflection of Christ. But it is also in the center, in silence and stillness, devoid of our attachments, where we encounter the suffering Christ, that we discover that we exist within ineffable charity. Ultimately the mirror is the mirror of eternity. Time and eternity, humanity and divinity become one in love in the mirror of eternity.

When Clare asks Agnes to place her mind in the *mirror of eternity* she is inviting Agnes to become the spouse of Christ in the deepest possible way by offering her entire being to Christ. The placing of her mind in the mirror is the first movement of prayer that naturally evolves into placing her "soul in the brilliance of glory" and her "heart in the divine substance" where the distinctions between mind, soul and heart dissipate. In letter four, Clare eloquently describes Christ's brilliance of glory, sensuously evoking all our senses. When we place our soul in Christ's illuminating glory, surrender all that we are into the embrace of the Beloved, we become more and more one with Christ:

whose beauty all the heavenly host admire unceasingly,
 whose love inflames our love,
 whose contemplation is our refreshment,
 whose graciousness is our joy,
 whose gentleness fills us to overflowing,
 whose remembrance brings gentle light,
 whose fragrance will revive the dead
 whose gracious vision will be the happiness of all the citizens
 of Jerusalem (4LAg10-13).⁴⁴

Our insatiable desire for God draws us to contemplation where our soul is subsumed into the beauty, love, graciousness, gentleness, remembrance and fragrance of our Beloved. In contemplating Christ we come to resemble Christ, and this resemblance evokes joy.

We gain more insight into what Clare means by "place your heart in the divine substance" in her advice to Agnes to "cling with all her heart to Christ" (*ut ei adhaereatur totis cordis praecordiis*).⁴⁵ *Adhaereatur* is a strong word that encourages Agnes to cleave to, stick to, to hang on to Christ so as to never let go.⁴⁶ Again we see the repetition of *totis cordis* but the addition of *praecordiis* (the breast, the seat of feelings, passions and desire) makes the *total desire of the heart* even stronger.⁴⁷ The movement is to become attentive to our passions and feelings, to our desire to be one with Christ and to place this in the divinity of Christ. There is a sense of our feelings and passions, our desire, being divinized in Christ. This description of the intimacy and capacity for human beings to unite with the Godhead stretches our imagination to the limits. The hidden sweetness is exquisite. Yet Clare continues to encourage Agnes to deepen her contemplative experience: "Let yourself be inflamed more strongly with the fervor of charity."⁴⁸ The journey of being enflamed in love is infinite. We never tire of seeking such love. Clare continues:

As you contemplate further His ineffable delights, eternal riches and honors, and sigh for them with great desire and love of your heart may you cry out: Draw me after you and we will run in the fragrance of your perfume, O heavenly spouse! I will run and not tire, until you bring me into the wine cellar, until your left hand is under my head and your right hand embrace me happily and you will kiss me with the happiest kisses of your mouth (4 LAg30-31).⁴⁹

Contemplation awakens a deeper and more insatiable desire for contemplative union with the Beloved and an awareness that all the pain and suffering endured in becoming free of attachments that hinder deeper union with God are transformed into riches, honors and ineffable delights. Each new experience of placing our mind in the mirror of eternity, our soul in the brilliance of glory and our heart in the divine substance makes us yearn more deeply for total transformation in Christ. The fragrance of the perfume is so sweet that we can do nothing but follow Christ. We cry out, begging to be drawn beyond all limitations, to enter the wine cellar⁵⁰ and fall into the arms of the Beloved in the mystical marriage. Clare describes a profound peace ("I will run and not tire") that comes when we surrender our woundedness to the healing power of God's transforming love through the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. She shows how in experiencing the divine embrace and *kiss* we know, at the deepest level of our being, that we are irrevocably one with Christ and share in his relationship with the Trinity. Our whole being is transformed into the Godhead. She reassures us that the weariness of longing to follow in the footsteps of the Beloved gives way to the deep joy of being always in the presence of the Beloved, always in the wine cellar, the place of ever renewing and

recreating life in Christ the mirror of eternity. Silence seems the only response to such ineffable love.

Implications

Some critical theological and spiritual implications emerge from these brief but profound letters. Six key elements come into view:

- First, Clare describes contemplation in rich, evocative, visual imagery that draws us from seeing, to gazing, to attending, to considering, to contemplating. She gives value to the visual, imaginative way of prayer, but this way of prayer is not an end in itself. Visual prayer creates fertile ground for a way of contemplation that engenders a deeper and deeper experience of divine love that is ultimately beyond vision, beyond words. Clare shows us how the prayer of gazing unites us with the Beloved.
- Second, Clare gives lucid descriptions of the content and process of contemplative prayer. She is unique in her ability to honor both the role of our mind and heart in prayer. She teaches us how to integrate the mind, soul and heart into a totality of love that reflects the total love of Christ. She assists us to find our own way of placing our mind in the mirror of eternity, our soul in the brilliance of glory and our heart in the divine substance.
- Third, for Clare, desire is the essence of prayer. She encourages us to actively engage our desire that is grounded in God's desire that we be one in Christ. She explores the role of desire in prayer in a way that incites our desire to be one with the Beloved. Her rich evocative imagery honors the expression of passion and sensuality in prayer. She shows us how to prepare for the grace of the mystical marriage.
- Fourth, Clare reminds us that Christ is the center of all things, the one who holds all things together in love. He is the mirror who becomes an icon, a window into the contemplative awareness of the divine presence drawing us to union in the mystical marriage.
- Fifth, Clare gives us a profoundly affirmative image of human beings who have the potential to discover their life reflected in the life of Christ. She places before us the wonder and joy of the incarnation. She reminds us that the essential process of the spiritual life is the reformation of the image of Christ in human nature. We do this through gazing at the mirror of eternity every day. Through Christ, God is with us in our humanity drawing us to unite with Christ in his divinity.
- Sixth, Clare's symbol of the mirror of eternity evokes deeper and deeper interior knowledge that ultimately we are created to find our identity in Christ. When we reflect our face in Christ, the mirror of eternity, there is

a growing awareness that we are made for one another and complete one another. As we contemplate the life of Christ from the edges of the mirror to its centre, we align our lives with the life of Christ. Darkness and light unite in a transforming illumination.

Clare is a wise spiritual guide, whose brief words enkindle in us the eternal fire of love. They give us

strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth, until knowing the love of Christ which is beyond all knowledge [we] are filled with the utter fullness of God (Eph 3:18-19).

This filling of our emptiness with divine love illuminating our darkness empowers us to seek a contemplative stance in life and create a world that is filled with the utter fullness of God.

Endnotes

¹3LAg12-13. I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to the Poor Clare Sisters of Sydney and Cambeltown who inspired and encouraged me to write this paper.

²See Sandra M. Schneiders, "Religion vs. Spirituality: A Contemporary Conundrum," *Spiritus* 3 (2003): 163-85 where she describes this growth, especially in the United States.

³Christopher Stace, *Saint Clare of Assisi: Her Legend and Selected Writings* (London: Triangle, 2001), 86.

⁴There is another letter to Ermentrude of Bruges which will not be the subject of this essay. There are many reasons why Clare's letters were not preserved, such as the reusing of the vellum on which they were penned, the fragility of letters being hand delivered, and the possible lack of historical awareness of some of her contemporaries.

⁵1LAg13. Translations are from *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works*, trans. Regis J. Armstrong and Ignatius C. Brady, *Classics of Western Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), unless noted. (Each reference gives letter and line number). I underline key words that differ in translations.

⁶3LAg14.

⁷1LAg13.

⁸1LAg6. I have maintained the word *total* rather than *whole* so we can see how this rather strong word *total* echoes throughout the letters. *Toto* describes *all, the entire thing*. See Charlton T. Lewis, *A Latin Dictionary: Lewis and Short. Founded on Andrew's Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary Revised, Enlarged and in Great Part Rewritten* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984, 1881). (Hereafter cited as LD). Joan Mueller, *Clare's Letters to Agnes: Texts and Sources* (New York: The Franciscan Institute, 2001), translates this as *whole heart and mind*.

⁹3LAg15.

¹⁰1LAg32.

¹¹Clare is often misunderstood in this regard. She does not advocate severe austerity. See 3LAg40 where she advises Agnes to wisely and prudently refrain from harsh fasting.

¹²1LAg16.

¹³1LAg32. Cf. Armstrong and Brady's translation: *total desire of your soul* and Mueller's *every desire of your mind*. I prefer the literal Latin: *total desire of your mind* because it reinforces the repetition of *total* throughout the text.

¹⁴Chatillon suggests that medieval writers use heart, soul and mind interchangeably to refer to the centre. But I want to explore the possibility that because Clare chooses different words in the Latin, that she envisages a distinction. Ultimately though she is referring to the journey to the centre. See *Dictionnaire De Spiritualité Ascétique Et Mystique, Doctrine Et Histoire* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1937), 2289-2300.

¹⁵*Anima* also describes the vital principle, the breath of life, that which blows or breathes. It conveys a sense of the soul as the animating principle. See LD, 120.

¹⁶We are reminded that physically the heart is the chief source of circulation of the blood and of life. Spiritually it is the seat of feeling and emotion. See LD, 468; Michael Downey, ed., *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993), 468-69, (Hereafter NDCS).

¹⁷See LD, 1132.

¹⁸This emphasis on the *mind* has its source in Augustine, who gave great importance to the intellect. He described a pattern of ascent to God that evolved from purgative through illuminative, to a unitive way of approaching God. For Augustine, union with God occurs in a series of stages at the level of understanding and wisdom. By Clare's day the concept of purgative, illuminative and unitive stages of contemplative prayer was commonplace. Clare could well have integrated Augustine's stress on communion through understanding and wisdom. See Mary T. Clark in NDCS, 69.

¹⁹See LD, 110. *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*. Vol. 1 and 2, ed. Lesley Brown. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), (Hereafter NSOED).

²⁰2LAg20. Cf. Mueller: "*Gaze upon, examine, contemplate...desiring to follow your spouse....*"

²¹This emphasis on sight is very common in many women mystics' descriptions of contemplation. See Elizabeth Petroff. *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

²²Because there are only four letters there are possibly many gaps that Clare would have developed in her other letters. We have a hint that Christ's gazing at us is important in this process when she says: *his eyes don't see any imperfection in you*. 2LAg4.

²³See LD, 991.

²⁴*Gazing* seems to bear a close resemblance to *beholding* in Julian of Norwich. See Kerrie Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment: The Soteriology of Julian of Norwich* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2001), Chapter 2 where I develop the meaning of *beholding*.

²⁵LD, 431.

²⁶It is noteworthy that *contemplari* still has a sense of gazing. LD, 445.

²⁷3LAg26. The point that Clare is making here is not so much literal virginity, but the *total* giving of one's self.

²⁸LD 890.

²⁹3LAg12-13. Again, I have stayed with *total*.

³⁰The image of the mirror is a wonderful classical image that draws on the Greek myth of Narcissus. Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection. In Augustine on the sixth step on the ladder of understanding we attain the purity of heart to be attentive to God and to see God as a mirror. This leads to the final step of wisdom where we contemplate God and as a peacemaker live in tranquility, seeing all things in God and

God in all things. See Mary T. Clark in NDCS, 69. In medieval love poetry the beloved is often mirrored in the eyes of the beloved. It is also found in Cistercian texts e.g. William of St. Thierry, *Mirror of Faith* and Aelred of Rievaulx, *Mirror of Charity*.

³¹See Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: Beacon Books, 1967), 348.

³²Avery Dulles, "The Symbolic Structure of Revelation," *Theological Studies*, 41 (1980): 60-61.

³³See Brian E. Purfield, *Reflects Dans Le Miroir: Images Du Christ Dans La Vie Spirituelle De Sainte Claire D'Assis* (Paris: Editions Franciscaines, 1993), back cover.

³⁴*Francis and Clare*, 204.

³⁵4LAg14.

³⁶See LD, 1396. Ledoux makes the beautiful connection that we lay ourselves in the mirror as Christ was laid in the manger. Claire Marie Ledoux, *Clare of Assisi: Her Spirituality Revealed in Her Letters* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1997), 105.

³⁷3LAg7. *In* also maintains the sense of the presence of Christ within our being: *the incomparable treasure hidden in the field of the world and in the hearts of humanity*. Cf. Armstrong and Brady who have *before* and Mueller, *in*.

³⁸4LAg14-17. My translation. See Edith van den Goorbergh, "Clare's Prayer as a Spiritual Journey," *The Way Supplement* 80 (1994): 51-60, 54, who has: *Gaze upon the mirror . . . and continually reflect your face on it*. Cf. Armstrong and Brady's *Look upon the mirror each day . . . and continually study your face within it . . .*, and Mueller's *Look into this mirror every day . . . and continually examine your face in it . . .*

³⁹4LAg19.

⁴⁰See LD, 194 and NOED, 143.

⁴¹4LAg22.

⁴²4LAg23

⁴³4LAg25.

⁴⁴4LAg 10-13.

⁴⁵4LAg9. Cf. Mueller, *to be joined with all the feelings of her heart to him*.

⁴⁶See LD, 34.

⁴⁷LD, 1415.

⁴⁸4LAg17.

⁴⁹4LAg 30-32.

⁵⁰This classic image for mystical union comes from the final verses of the Song of Songs. It seems apt that Clare's last preserved letter would end in this way.

CONTEMPLATION IS THE EXPERIENCE OF HOLDING CHRIST AND BEING HELD BY THE BELOVED WHO HOLDS ALL THINGS TOGETHER. CONTEMPLATION MAKES US AWARE OF OUR MUTUAL INDWELLING, NOT JUST IN SPECIFIC PRAYER PERIODS, BUT IN THE WHOLE OF OUR LIVES IN A SPIRITUALLY EMBODIED WAY.

About Our Contributors

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Ingrid Peterson, OSF, is a member of the Rochester, MN Franciscans. She is well-known for her work on Clare of Assisi and is much involved in promoting Clare Studies while continuing her reading and research on other Franciscan women. Ingrid also coordinates annual sessions at the International Medieval Congress for the Franciscan Federation, giving a platform to new scholarship on Franciscan women.

Joanne Schatzlein, OSF, is a graduate of the Franciscan Institute, an internationally-known speaker and author, and now ministers as Vice-president for Programs of Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Joanne's work has appeared numerous times in *The Cord*.

Thomas Renna is professor of history at Saginaw Valley State University. He has done work on another Franciscan woman, Margaret of Cortona. His translation of her legend is in the manuscript stage.

About the Art Images

The "deathbed of Veronica" image on p. 176 is a reproduction of a woodcut by N. Moneta, based upon an oil painting by Franz von Rhoden, 1839. The woodcut is in the Museo Francescano in Rome. Both images can be found in *Santa Veronica Guiliani implacate inseguitrice di amore e di dolore*, published by Edizioni Messagero Padova, 1985.

The image of Clare found on p. 186 was first used in *The Cord* in 1983. The artist is identified on the original drawing as Sr. M. Regina.

The woodcut image on p. 198 is taken from the frontispiece in a medieval Belgian work on Clare. The image was supplied by Jean-François Godet-Calogeras.

The image of Clare and her sisters at San Damiano used on p. 203 is one section of the well-known Dossal of Clare which hangs in the Basilica di S. Chiara in Assisi.

The Cord, 54.4 (2004)

"Yes, Clare, the Candles are Still Burning after your 800th Birthday Celebration" A Bibliographic Retrospect

Ingrid Peterson, OSF

Clare of Assisi has emerged from the shadow of Francis in the decade since the celebration of the eighth centenary of her birth. A plethora of new studies surrounding Clare has been produced across the globe. Anthologies treating influential models of women's holiness now include essays on Clare. Clare and Francis are now being cited as the co-founders of the Franciscan tradition. Conferences, workshops, and university and graduate classes continue to investigate the enigma of Clare as a medieval woman, so distant and yet so close. Pilgrims are beginning to visit the shrines of Agnes in Prague in an effort to reconstruct the feel of history surrounding the Přemysl dynasty and to touch the impact of Clare's influence on Agnes. Popular awareness and interest in Clare is rapidly growing. Churches and infants are being named in honor of Clare. Well-informed Catholics are no longer asking, "Who is Clare of Assisi?" A plastic statue of Clare (made in China, of course), is marketed including a little story of her life and of the Christmas night vision that caused her to be named patroness of television. Generally, much that is popularly written about her is accurate scholarship.

More pertinent than interest in Clare in current religious writing is the increased amount of insightful scholarship that has recently been published. Lay scholars from the European academic community are studying the early women of the Franciscan tradition and with fresh perspective breaking through some of the ways Franciscan writers within the family have always told their stories. How the writings attributed to Clare as well as the papal documents significant to her life have been traditionally viewed has been jarred by the work of the German scholar, Werner Maleczek. The previous understanding of the explosive growth of religious houses modeled upon Clare's life at San Damiano has recently been undercut by the scholarly work of Maria Pia Alberzoni. While such new insights create a stir within Franciscan studies,

they also demand a revised view of what has been said and written about Clare. This is especially true in the English-speaking world. Consequently, much of the swell of publishing occasioned by the 800th birthday of Clare already seems outdated and in need of revision.

New Research by Maleczek and Alberzoni

In 1995 Maleczek published an article questioning two primary documents used to establish Clare's story and influence ("Questions about the Authenticity of the Privilege of Poverty of Innocent III and of the Testament of Clare" in *Greyfriars Review* Supplement [12: 1998], 1-80). First, he challenges the authenticity of Clare's *Privilege of Poverty*, allegedly given by Pope Innocent III; next, he disputes Clare's authorship of the *Testament*. Maleczek notes the formal inconsistencies between the text of Clare's *Privilege of Poverty* and the papal chancery's formula for solemn privileges. In examining the history of Clare's community and the papal initiatives favoring the women's religious movement, he maintains there was no reason for anyone to request such a privilege prior to Gregory IX's pontificate. Maleczek argues that while a general reference to poverty is made in the *Legend of Saint Clare*, it is not sufficiently reliable evidence to trace the document to Innocent III.

Maleczek re-examines the paucity of an accurate manuscript tradition for the *Testament*, questions why the *Testament* is not cited in any thirteenth-century source, and why, if it had been such a milestone in the lives of the Poor Ladies at San Damiano, none of the witnesses in the *Process of Canonization* mention Clare's *Privilege of Poverty*. The extant manuscripts of the *Testament* apparently were written in the monasteries of Santa Luce in Foligno which was reformed in 1424, and Montelucio in Perugia, where the Observant reform was introduced in 1448. Maleczek claims that its urgent appeal to poverty reflects the concerns of the fifteenth-century Observant reform and are not consistent with the content and style of Clare's other writings. Because the nuns of these houses wanted to return to the observance of Clare's *Form of Life* which had been supplanted by Urban IV's Rule for the Order of Saint Clare, Maleczek finds cause for its fabrication. The teaching on poverty in the *Testament* of Francis had been a core text for the Observant reform among the friars. There being no similar document for a reform of the Clares, he argues it could well have been falsified as the evidence needed by the Observants. Maleczek concludes by pointing out that the original manuscript copy of the *Privilege of Poverty*, supposedly addressed to the nuns of Perugia, was also found in Montelucio. In conclusion, he dates the *Testament* of Clare to the time of the Observant Movement, contending that it was fabricated as a political statement to draw the Poor Clare's back to the primitive vision of Clare.

Maria Pia Alberzoni extends Maleczek's ground-breaking work by suggesting, first, that San Damiano may have existed as a double monastery, and secondly, that the Order of San Damian was the brain child of Pope Gregory IX, not Clare ("San Damiano in 1228: A Contribution to the Clare Question" in *Greyfriars Review* [13.1: 1998], 105-23). Alberzoni concludes that the "sisters minor" described by Jacques de Vitry in 1216 were located next to communities of men, since San Damiano was always known as a Franciscan place. Brother Bentavenga, the questor Clare named in connection with the miracle of the oil, as well as her couriers, Brother Amatus and Brother Bonaguara, must have had some institutional connection with San Damiano. Alberzoni holds that since Clare in 1216 was considered part of Francis's fraternity, there would have been no necessity for her to appeal to Rome on her own for a privilege. Furthermore, she claims that not only was Clare bound by the same statutes as Francis, but that she would have known how unwilling Francis was to request special papal privileges.

Alberzoni's re-examination of old evidence regarding Clare's relationship to the papacy, especially that of Pope Gregory IX in 1228, has persuaded other scholars to re-appraise their traditional interpretations about Clare and the instigation of the "Order of San Damian." Alberzoni places the Order of Saint Damian within the context of the papal program for the reform and renewal of religious women, which included both those cloistered and those within the new penitential movements. She concludes that Gregory IX attempted to unite Clare's Poor Ladies with the women's order he founded and named the Order of San Damian. Alberzoni determines that Gregory named his new one-size-fits-all order after the well-known and highly respected Poor Ladies of San Damiano. However, Gregory's Order of San Damian followed the Benedictine rule with constitutions based on the Cistercian observance. At the same time Gregory tried to impose the care of these nuns on Francis's friars. As a result, Gregory's Order of San Damian did not turn into the one big happy family he must have envisioned.

Alberzoni also reads the embellished account of the ladies living in the church of San Damiano given in Chapter VII of "The Life of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano," as a panegyric about Gregory's Order of Saint Damian, rather than as personal praise of Clare and the Poor Ladies of Assisi. In fact, Thomas concludes this section by acknowledging that to tell their story would require another book. Since Gregory IX commissioned Thomas to write Francis's life at the time of Francis's canonization, Thomas's intense enthusiasm for Gregory's project becomes more understandable as a savvy pope-pleasing move on his part. Alberzoni's research charges students of Clare to be careful in not ascribing to Clare every religious house identified as belonging to the Order of San Damian.

Moreover, Alberzoni argues that in order to preserve her commitment to live without common property, Clare of Assisi could not identify with Gregory's version of the cloistered life, but was compelled to withdraw from his Order of San Damian and repeatedly to ask for a different form of life. It took years of papal correspondence before Clare received permission to live without property in imitation of Jesus and Francis under the *Form of Life* which she began to write in 1247 for the Poor Ladies who lived at San Damiano. However, in 1263 Pope Urban drew up yet another form of life following the Cistercian tradition which he called "The Order of Saint Clare." As Thomas says of the Order of San Damian, this subsequent history of Clare's *Form of Life* is also another story.

In short, the work on Clare by Maleczek and Alberzoni has incited additional discussion. At this point, most scholars are willing to acknowledge that between 1212 and 1215 Pope Innocent III probably did not give Clare the document known as his *Privilege of Poverty*. However, in 1228 Pope Gregory IX undisputedly recognized Clare's desire to live without communal property as the *Privilege of Poverty*. It was her life's project to have this poor way of gospel life recognized juridically as a *Form of Life*. In order not to confuse the way of life for women which corresponded to the gospel practices of Francis and his brothers, scholars are beginning to identify Clare and the Poor Ladies in Assisi and several other houses as the Order of San Damiano. The other diverse communities of women religious whose way of life was sanctioned by Gregory IX are being identified as his Order of San Damian. It is not until Pope Urban's pontificate in 1263 that the Order of Saint Clare is established.

Jacques Dalarun, *The Misadventures of Francis of Assisi* (St. Bonaventure NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2002) rigorously examines the early stories of Francis against the new work of the European scholarly community. He contends that the beginning development of Francis's "fraternity" can only be understood as a community including Clare along with Elias, Philip, Leo, Juniper and Angelo. Attilio Bartoli Langeli's meticulous study of the Messina codex, the manuscript source of Clare's four Letters, *Testament* and *Form of Life* raises new questions of authorship and suggests scribal assistance by Brother Leo (*Gli autografi di frate Francesco e di frate Leone*, Corpus Christianorum Autographa Medii Aevi 5 [Turnout: Brepols, 2000]). One of Maria Pia Alberzoni's books appears this fall, translated as *Clare and the Poor Sisters in the Thirteenth Century* (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications: forthcoming). Marco Bartoli's second book on Clare (*Chiara: una donna tra silenzio e memoria* [Milano: San Paolo, 2001]) is yet to be translated for the English-speaking world.

A Decade of Articles and Books

During the past years, *Greyfriars Review* introduced a decade of the best thought from the European scholarly community to the English-speaking world, much of it translated by Edward Hagman. It generally includes three translations of scholarly works on Clare annually, including these key writings by Maleczek and Alberzoni. Their conclusions have stimulated new discussions about the historical Clare, and formulation of the expression "the Clarian question," implying that the discussion continues about many of these issues. Two annual *Greyfriars Review* supplements have been given to these on-going studies of Clare, allowing dissemination of Bezenartha's full-length Spanish work on Clare and the discernment of Spirits ("Clare of Assisi and the Discernment of Spirits" in *Greyfriars Review* Supp. [8: 1998]). Jean-Francois Godet's "A New look at Clare's Gospel Plan of Life," was published earlier (*Greyfriars Review* Supp. [5: 1991]). Kuster's response to Maleczek and Alberzoni, is translated as "Clare's *Testament* and Innocent III's *Privilege of Poverty*: Genuine or Clever Forgeries?" in *Greyfriars Review* [15.3: 2001], 171-252). *Franciscan Studies* published Mueller's early work on Agnes, "Agnes of Prague and the Juridical Implications of the Privilege of Poverty," *Franciscan Studies* [58: 2000], 261-87). *The Cord* printed another product of Mueller's Eastern European research, an interesting account of her experience in Prague, "Visiting Agnes of Prague: A Visitor's Report," (*The Cord* [50.4: 2000], 261-287).

The year 2001 brought three full-length books on Clare to the English-speaking world. The Dutch work by Edith Van den Goorbergh and Theodore Zweerman appeared in an English translation entitled *Light Shining through a Veil: On Saint Clare's Letters to Agnes of Prague* (Trans. Aline Looman-Graaskamp and Frances Teresa OSC, Leuven: Peeters, 2000). It is the most extensive and insightful study of Clare's letters written to date. Joan Mueller's *Clare's Letters to Agnes: Texts and Sources*, introduces the Czech studies on the Přemysl line to the English-speaking world to augment an understanding of Agnes of Prague, her royal family, and her influence. Mueller's work also contributes three valuable sources for the study of Clare: a translation of "The Legend of Saint Agnes," essays on the primitive climate of the early brothers, and on the royal correspondence surrounding the privilege of poverty. The correspondence between Agnes and the papacy which revolves around her wish to live without property parallels the long struggle of Clare to live without common ownership of property.

Both Van den Goorbergh and Mueller present the Latin texts of Clare's letters and new translations and insights that complement the familiar translations by Regis Armstrong and Ignatius Brady in the Paulist Press Classics of Spirituality, *Francis and Clare: The Writings* (Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 1982),

and *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents*, rev. Regis Armstrong, *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents* (St. Bonaventure NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1993). Mueller's translations appear again with her personal reflections in *Clare of Assisi: The Letters to Agnes* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003).

Poor Clares Speaking from Experience

In addition to the work of Edith Van den Goorbergh, other Poor Clare sisters have produced high quality writing authenticated by their lived experience. Teresa Frances Downing's *Living the Incarnation* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1993), and *This Living Mirror: Reflections on Clare of Assisi* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995) provide penetrating reflections around themes of compassion and community. The intelligence of Marie Beha coupled with practical insight is evident in numerous articles throughout the years appearing in *The Cord*, *Human Development* and *Review for Religious*.



Besides her earlier work in *The Cord*, Beth Lynn's succinct summary of Maleczek and Alberzoni's research, "What Difference Does a Rule Make? Clare's Poor Sisters and Gregory IX's Nuns" digests pages of dense argument into reader-friendly prose (*Magistra* [5.1: 1999], 25-42). Among many unsung accomplishments, Mary Francis Hone's, *St. Clare and her Order: A Bibliographic Guide*, lays out a menu for future study of the Clare tradition (Clare Centenary Series 5, St. Bonaventure NY: 1995). These and other

tireless Poor Clare sisters deserve attention as highly credible scholars.

After completing an extensive succession of theological reflections involving the Poor Clares from the Holy Name Federation and the Mother Bentivoglio Federation, *Doing What Is Ours to Do: A Clarian Theology of Life* was published in 2000 by the Franciscan Institute. The book describes the efforts of the Poor Clares themselves to articulate a theology of life. The results are synthesized in five essays written by women who continue to live the tradition of Clare in the modern world. Their project is described and summarized under themes of place, love and suffering, family, relationships, and the Trinity.

Claire Marie Ledoux presents a book-length reflection on Clare's writings in *Clare of Assisi: Her Spirituality Revealed in her Letters* (Trans. Colette Joly Dees, Cincinnati: Saint Anthony Messenger Press, 2003).

Clare in the Multi-Media World

New images of Clare crop up to accompany the new words being spoken. Artistic representations of Clare as healer, spiritual leader, and peacemaker are being commissioned by health care institutions, religious houses, and organizations dedicated to peace and social justice. Historical study has helped the aesthetic imagination about Clare migrate away from the lilies and stereotyped monstrosity in the same way that Francis has moved beyond the bird bath of popular culture. William Cook has tracked down early images of Francis and Clare, published as *Images of St. Francis in Painting, Stone, and Glass from the Earliest Images to ca. 1320: A Catalogue* (Florence: Leo Olschki Editore, 2000) distributed through Franciscan Press, Quincy IL.) Robert Melnick and Joseph Wood produced *Clare of Assisi: Love's Reflection in the Window* (Libertyville IL: Marytown, 1995), a stunning coffee table book of recent photographs and prose poems illustrating Clare's Assisi. Jeryldene Wood's *Women, Art, and Spirituality: The Poor Clares of Early Modern Italy* presents a visual and historical perspective of the spirituality of the Poor Clares (Cambridge: University Press, 1996). Discussion of Clare was featured in Hallmark's video spin-off of Donald Spoto's *Francis of Assisi: The Reluctant Saint* (2003).

There are other new sights and new sounds. Robert Hutmacher adapted thirteenth-century melodies and chants from musical settings of psalms, antiphons, and hymn texts about Clare (*O Let the Faithful People Sing* (St. Bonaventure NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1993). Karen Lee wrote and produced a dramatic portrait of Clare, and Arturo Sbicca's 1993 video, *Clare of Assisi*, presents a contemplative portrait of Clare. Cathy Tisel Nelson's compact disc *What You Hold*, contains her songs based on the words of Francis and Clare. Briege O'Hare OSC's *Taste the Hidden Sweetness: Songs of the Mystical Life* contains songs adapted from the Letters of Clare to Agnes.

GIA Publications released an attractive guide, focused around Clare, for small faith communities accompanied by a CD which includes music, prayer, Scripture, reflection, time for sharing and allows for a "going forth in action" (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2003). It is the work of Rosemary Bleuher, Denise LaGiglia, Gil Ostdiek OFM, Robert Piercy and Stephen Petruna. Madeline Pecora Nugent wrote *Clare and her Sisters: Lovers of the Poor Christ*, a fictionalized biography intended to appeal to younger readers (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 2003). Guido Visconti and Bimba Landmann produced a stunning book, *Clare and Francis*, illustrated with luminous contemporary icons (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003). Ed Fisher, cartoonist

for Minnesota's *Rochester Post-Bulletin* even came up with a Francis and Clare coloring book, and Evelyn Sherry, children's librarian, has nearly completed a children's book on Clare.

The catalogues of St. Anthony Messenger Press are popping with materials in Franciscan spirituality, including an updated version of Murray Bodo's *Clare: A Light in the Garden* (1992); *A Retreat with Francis and Clare of Assisi*; and *Following our Pilgrim Hearts* by Murray Bodo and Susan Saint Sing (1996) available as either a book or an audiobook. They offer two videos: *Francis and Clare of Assisi: an Account of their Extraordinary Lives* (Oriente Occidente Productions) and *St. Clare and the Poor Clares* (Oriente Occidente Productions) which features the life of Clare as well as a presentation of Poor Clare life today.

Questions about Clare persist. Each year at the annual International Congress on Medieval Studies held at Western Michigan University, papers on Clare are presented, not only within the sessions sponsored by the Franciscan Institute and the Franciscan Federation, but also in sessions organized by other groups. *An Unencumbered Heart: A Tribute to Clare of Assisi*, a 2004 issue of the Franciscan Institute's Spirit and Life series includes recent Medieval Congress papers revised as essays by Jean-François Godet-Calogeras, Lezlie Knox, Jacques Dalarun, Pacelli Millane OSC, and Eileen Flanagan.

All of this not only promises yet more scholarship on Clare, but it has also sparked interest in other early Franciscan women, such as Kathleen Garay and Madeleine Jeay's *The Life of Saint Douceline, a Beguine of Provence, Translated from the Occitan with Introduction, Notes and Interpretive Essay* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2001). Sean L. Field, *The Writings of Agnes of Harcourt, the Life of Isabelle of France and Letter on Louis IX and Longchamp* (Notre Dame IN: The University of Notre Dame Press, 2003) provides the translation of the life of another significant woman in the Clare tradition, Isabelle of France, sister of King Louis IX (Saint Louis) who left the court in 1260 to found the royal abbey in Longchamp. Agnes's is the first life of a woman written by a contemporary woman in the French language.

Since her eighth centenary, Clare has burst from her designated role within the cloister and is studied by a broader world of lay scholars. James Cowan's book, *Francis: A Saint's Way*, argues that because Francis and Clare are larger than their religious structures they embody a spirituality that meets the need of today's spiritual seekers, persons often disillusioned with organized religion (Ligouri MO: Ligouri/Triumph, 2001). Gerald Straub's *Sun and Moon Over Assisi: A Personal Encounter with Francis and Clare* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2000) illustrates how Francis and Clare animated his own spiritual quest.

The way of Clare suggests some norms for living in today's world. Her relational model has been appropriated by leadership mentors of quality man-

agement. Clare's *Form of Life* indicates how she provided a time and place to gather the concerns and needs of her community and how she valued the contributions of the least of the group. In the face of violence, Clare was not concerned about her safety, but only mindful of the welfare of the sisters in the monastery for whom she was responsible and whom she loved. In a world of constant change, Clare personifies perseverance and stability. The story of Clare's conversion in 1212 begins with Francis, Leo, Angelo and Rufino. More than forty years later at Clare's deathbed, Leo, Angelo, and Rufino still accompany her. After nearly sixty years, women and men who knew Clare as a child and young woman testify to her sanctity.

The pope and other ecclesial figures with whom she had so many differences came to bury and honor her. In the midst of a world of enormous transformations and shifts of power, Clare held fast to her convictions and to her faith, obviously drawing strength from a source larger than the human powers of her church or society. Her writings indicate that Clare's prayer life was anchored in the words of scripture and fidelity to the liturgical life of the church.

What to Make of All This Flurry?

Perhaps the most enduring testimony within Franciscan studies to the renewed sensibility for Clare of Assisi comes with the publication of the three volumes of *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*. It was a project ten years in production, undertaken to present for the English-speaking world a chronology of new translations and essential primary sources within the first one-hundred-fifty years after Francis's death. *Francis of Assisi: History, Hagiography and Hermeneutics in the Early Documents*, edited by Jay M. Hammond as the first full-length anthology of critical essays stemming from the publication of the *Early Documents*, includes an essay by Ingrid Peterson, "Clare of Assisi: Hidden Behind which Image of Francis?" (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2004: 39-63).

The preface to *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, volume one, *The Saint* begins:

Appropriately Clare of Assisi, undoubtedly Francis's most faithful disciple, may have inspired this endeavor. At a celebration honoring the publication of *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents*, conversation eventually turned to the need for a new edition of *St. Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources*.

The tables are turned when this long-awaited work, *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, rests in the shadow of the work on Clare. The imposing scholarship of these three volumes on the primary sources for the study of Francis

Lady Jacoba's Meal of Remembrance

Joanne Schatzlein, OSF

Introduction

The inspiration for this ritual prayer comes from two sources. The first is a "Franciscan Seder" I composed years ago. The second source emerged from an invitation to incorporate the role of Lady Jacoba during a Holy Week session on "Franciscan Community Life" given at the Common Franciscan Novitiate in Joliet, Illinois, in 2003 and 2004. The topic for discussion was a concept of Parker Palmer inviting us to "stay at the table." It seemed an excellent

opportunity to merge these two sources into "Lady Jacoba's Meal of Remembrance."

The term Seder is not used to respect the Jewish High Feast. But the names of the Passover symbols are used freely after consultation with and encouragement from Jewish friends.

The ritual of Passover and its symbols foreshadow many of our Franciscan traditions. As we recall Francis's final moments during the Transitus, we share the stories of the past and reflect on the ways we as Franciscans keep the charism alive today. Images of praising God for the gifts of our earth, of the bitter/sweet, of making the bricks and rebuilding, of the Incarnation and Paschal

events, not to mention the simple Franciscan joy of sharing wine and a good meal, all contribute to make this ritual an appropriate celebration both during Holy Week and in anticipation of the Feasts of Francis and Clare.



and the interest in Clare during the past ten years are abundant evidence that Francis and Clare are not casualties of modern times, but have become increasingly relevant to the needs of the contemporary world.

What difference does this burst of enthusiasm and interest in Clare studies make? It indicates a new consciousness of the role of Clare in articulating and understanding the Franciscan tradition. Within the Franciscan family, Clare has moved beyond the property lines of the Second Order and is claimed as an essential heritage figure by the First and Third Orders as well the laity. Study of Clare is included in formation programs, course work, retreats, and programs on Franciscan spirituality. Teachers turn to both Francis and Clare to trace the roots of the Franciscan heritage.

The Franciscan publications of the English-speaking world in India, Africa, the Pacific rim, and The Philippines are also exploding with new interest and insight into Clare's place in the Franciscan tradition and in the work of spiritual formation. Anyone familiar with Clare studies will recognize many omissions in this brief account of some of the recent attention to Clare. The inability to mention every work in itself resolves the question of Clare's return to the enclosure following her 800th birthday party. "Yes, Clare, your candles burn brighter than before the celebration."

Author's note: I want to express sincere thanks to Dr. Lezlie Knox, of Marquette University, for her careful reading of this piece, and for her suggestions with respect to the most recent research. Her expertise certainly enriched the finished product.

When the blessed Francis saw . . . that although we were physically weak and frail, we did not shirk deprivation, poverty, hard work, trial, or the shame or contempt of the world — rather, we considered them as great delights, . . . he greatly rejoiced in the Lord. And moved by compassion for us, he bound himself, both through himself and through his Order, to always have the same loving care and solicitude for us as for his own brothers.

(Testament of Clare, 27-29)

Setting of the Table

The room is prepared for a truly festive occasion. The table is set with the best silver, dishes, Jacoba's special linen and flowers. A separate table may be prepared for the beginning ritual. The ritual and meal include symbolic foods used for the Passover Feast and times of remembering. (All stand)

Opening Song: WE PRAISE YOU

We praise You, O Lord, for all your works are wonderful.
We praise You, O Lord, forever is Your love.

You fill our jars with flour and our jugs with oil;
You nourish us throughout all time.
We come to break and share your Bread of Life
And offer thanks and praise. *We praise You . . .*

We praise You God, for You have called us each by name;
You breathed in us your holy life.
You guide us and protect us all our days,
And gently lead us home. *We praise You . . .*

© The Dameans, from the album: *Remember Your Love*.
Composer of verses unknown.

Opening Prayer

JACOBA: This evening, O Spirit of God, fill our hearts with the warmth of your love. In this evening of sharing at the table may we remember who You are, O God – and who we are as children, daughters and lovers – who we are as brothers and sisters united as one in the community of God's people, in the unity of the Church, and in this Franciscan family.

All glory be to you Creator God, through your Son, Jesus Christ,
with the Spirit who brings life and blessing forever and ever.

ALL: Amen.

Lighting the Festival Candle (All remain standing)

The festival candle is lit by the eldest in the house with the following blessing being said simultaneously:

JACOBA: May the festival light we now kindle inspire us to use our powers to love and not to hate, to create and not to destroy, to spread joy and not sorrow,

to serve You, O God of freedom. May our home be consecrated, O God, by the light of Your Countenance, shining upon us in this blessing and bring us peace.

ALL: All Praise be Yours, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has brought us life, sustained us and enabled us to reach this season of joy. May the brightness of this light inspire us and bring spiritual joy and promise to all of us. Amen. (Be seated.)

Explanation of Symbols

Lady Jacoba lifts and explains each symbol.

KARPAS: A green sweet vegetable that reminds us of springtime and the goodness of Mother Earth, who provides food which nourishes us.¹

MAROR: Bitter herbs that remind us of all that seems bitter to us as it did to Francis when facing the leper.

HAROSET: Chopped apples, cinnamon, and nuts which remind us of the mortar used by our ancestors in Egypt and by Francis in rebuilding the "house fallen into ruin."

SALT WATER: Symbol of tears . . . tears of bitterness and tears of joy.

MATZO: Unleavened bread sometimes called the "Bread of Affliction" because it is simple, poor food without yeast and, like the bread of the poor, difficult to digest.

CRUCIFIX: Our San Damiano Crucifix reminds us of the mysteries of this Holy Week, depicting not only our own weaknesses which are transformed through Jesus' life and death on earth, but also recalling the three great mysteries of our faith: the Cross, Resurrection and Ascension.

EGG: Traditional Easter symbol of new life . . . Resurrected Life.

WINE: Symbolizes joy and is the biblical drink which cheers our hearts. This evening it reminds us of the blood of Jesus poured out for us, and that we are people of faith.

The Washing of the Hands

This is a ritual of purity that symbolically prepares an individual for entering a sacred place, for beginning a liturgical celebration, or for partaking of food. This evening it also reminds us of Jesus' call for us to be servants to each

other, as Jacoba was to Francis, washing and preparing his body for death. It also reminds us of the desire Francis and Clare had for us to be ministers of love and compassion.

The Blessing of the First Cup – The Cup of God's Call and Blessing

The first cup of wine is poured.

JACOBA: *(Lifts the first cup)*

All Praise be Yours, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe and Creator of the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You who have chosen us and sanctified us with your Commandments. In love you have given us these solemn days of joy and this festival of unleavened bread. You have chosen us for service and have made us sharers in the blessing of Your holy festivals.

ALL: *(Lifting up the glass of wine)*

Praise to You, Lord our God, for you have preserved us and sustained us, bringing us to the joy of this season. We remember what Jesus said at the Last Supper: "From now on, I tell you, I shall not drink wine until the Kingdom of God comes."

All drink the wine.

The Blessing of the Karpas

JACOBA: *(Lifts up the sweet Karpas)*

All Praise be Yours, O Lord our God, for you have gifted us with the fruits of this earth, which nourish us and give us life. May we never forget the gift that food is.

Lady Jacoba invites all to take a piece of Karpas.

ALL: *(Lifting up the Karpas)*

Praise to You, Lord our God. We thank you for your generosity to us. We remember our brothers and sisters who are not able to share in these gifts on this holiest of nights.

All eat the Karpas.

The Blessing of the Matzo

JACOBA: *(Lifting up the Matzo)*

All Praise be Yours, O Lord our God, the God of the people Israel who hungered in the desert of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. May we be freed from all that binds us and keeps us from nourishing others both now and in the future.

ALL: Amen. *(The Matzo is broken, shared and eaten by all at the table.)*

The Second Cup of Wine: The Cup of Memory

The second cup of wine is poured and consumed during the sharing which follows.

This is the time we remember our stories. It is a time during which we recall the history of our Christian and Franciscan ancestors and their struggle for freedom. This is the time when that which has been bitter to us in the past, becomes sweet in the redeeming power of our Lord Jesus Christ who gives His entire life for our freedom. Let us now recall some of the bitter times we have lived through.

Sharing of Maror Dipped in Salt Water

All take the bitter herbs, dip them in salt water, and eat them in memory of the bitter times of our lives.

Sharing of the Haroset *(Read silently)*

The Haroset is a mixture which is sweet. The bitter/sweet imagery of Francis reminds us that when we embrace that which is bitter, we experience a sweetness that is overwhelming. On this night we recall times of "sweetness" and ways in which we are called to rebuild the "House" as Francis did, as our ancestors did in Egypt, and as those in our Congregations or Fraternities, families and friends who have gone before us did as an example for us.

The Mingling of the Maror, Haroset and Matzo *(Read silently)*

In recalling that which is bitter and sharing that which is sweet, we recognize that it is the poor who are God's revelation for us. To symbolize this let us now combine the bitter and sweet, placing it between the Matzo, praising God for our Franciscan call to be poor and simple, always mindful of our challenge to live with and among the poor as Jesus did.

The Third Cup of Wine: The Cup of Redemption

The third cup of wine is poured and served with the meal.

The Meal

The candle blessed in the ritual is brought to the table. A simple meal of chicken, rice, an apple salad and vegetable is served, with almond cookies for dessert. The circular shape of the cookie can be seen as a symbol of eternal life. The egg and other symbolic foods can become part of the meal.

The Fourth Cup of Wine: The Cup of the Final Coming

The fourth cup of wine is poured and shared as we again reflect on the San Damiano Crucifix in anticipation of the death of Jesus, yet looking forward to the Resurrection.

Closing Psalm Prayer

Psalm 9 (from *The Geste of the Great King:
The Office of the Passion of Francis of Assisi* ²)

Sing a new song to the Lord,
the worker of wondrous deeds,
God's right hand and holy arm
sacrificed the beloved Son.

The Lord made salvation known,
revealed justice to the nations.
On that day the Lord sent mercy
and song in the night.
This is the day the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord;
the Lord is God, and has shone upon us.

Let the heavens rejoice and earth exult,
let the sea and all that is in it roar,
let the fields and everything in them sing for joy.

Bring to the Lord, families of nations,
bring to the Lord glory and honor,
bring to the Lord the glory due his name.

Kingdoms of the earth sing to God,
chant psalms to the Lord.
Chant psalms to the One who ascended to the East
above the heaven of heavens.

Behold, God speaks with a voice of power;
give glory to God, who governs Israel,
whose splendor and power is on high.

God, wonderful in the saints, the very God of Israel,
will give the people power and might.
Blessed be God!

ALL: Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Closing Blessing

JACOBA: (IN THE WORDS OF FRANCIS)

"All powerful, all holy, most high, supreme God: all good, supreme good, totally good, You who alone are good, may we give You all praise, all glory, all thanks, all honor, all blessing, and all good. So be it! So be it! Amen." (PrsH 11)

ALL: Amen.

JACOBA: (IN THE WORDS OF CLARE)

"What you hold, may you always hold. What you do, may you always do and never abandon. But with swift pace, light step and unswerving feet, so that even your steps stir up no dust, go forward securely, joyfully and swiftly, on the path of prudent happiness . . ." (2LAg: 11-13)

ALL: Amen.

TOGETHER: (A PARAPHRASE OF THE WORDS GIVEN TO BROTHER LEO)

God bless us and keep us. May God smile on us, and be merciful to us; May God turn toward us and give us Peace. May our gracious God bless us. (BIL)

ALL: Amen.

Closing Song: God You Are Good by Cathy Tisel Nelson

The music can be found on *What You Hold*, a CD produced by Cathy Tisel Nelson in 1996.

Notes

Franciscan Clipart is available through www.ciofs.org/clipart.htm. It is the work of Fr. P. Philippus, OFM, Cap, and is freely shared. I use a color picture, labeled dephc058 from his home page. It depicts Francis and Clare at a meal, with a woman (I think of her as Lady Jacoba) in the lower right hand corner.

General information about the Passover Meal was taken from Rabbi Leon Klenicki, editor, *The Passover Celebration: A Haggadah for the Seder* (Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1980).

Laurent Gallant, OFM and André Cirino, OFM, "Psalm 9," *The Geste of the Great King: Office of the Passion of Francis of Assisi* (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2001), 97-99.

The music and CD of *What You Hold* may be purchased directly from the composer, Cathy Tisel Nelson, 4512 Stratford Lane NW, Rochester, MN 55901.

Lady Jacoba's Almond Cookie Recipe

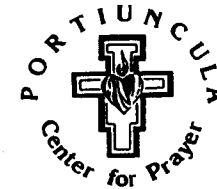
1 cup butter or margarine, softened	2 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 1/2 cups white sugar	1 teaspoon soda
2 eggs	1/2 teaspoon salt
1-2 teaspoons almond flavoring	1 cup chopped almonds
2 3/4 cups unsifted flour	whitesugar

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs and almond flavoring. Stir in flour, cream of tartar, soda, salt and chopped almonds. Shape dough into balls, using rounded teaspoon of dough for each. Roll balls of dough in white sugar. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake 8-10 minutes or until edges are set. Do not overbake.

Note: With self-rising flour, omit cream of tartar, soda and salt.

Makes about 44 cookies.

NB: This recipe is an adapted version of the Snickerdoodle Cookie Recipe.



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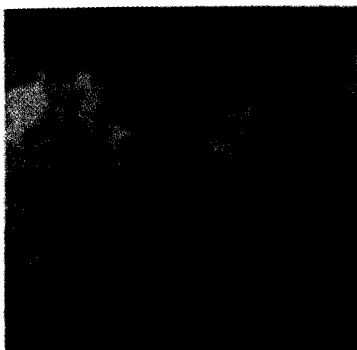
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You are invited to participate!

The Commission was established by the English-Speaking Conference of the Order of Friars Minor in March 2001. The Commission was asked to develop, coordinate, and encourage a variety of initiatives that would promote the retrieval of the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition as a vital resource for contemporary Franciscan life and pastoral ministry within the Church. Visit our Website and find out more about this exciting and rapidly expanding project at: www.CFIT-ESC-OFM.org.

Among the Commission's early initiatives was the creation of *The Franciscan Heritage Series*. Each volume in the series will explore a dominant theme in the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition. In each book (40-50 pages), the author will pay special attention to some of the unique and distinct contributions of both vernacular and academic theologians from within the Franciscan Tradition. These books will also invite the reader to explore the contemporary pastoral implications of the theme. It is hoped that formation directors, college professors, Franciscans in various types of pastoral care, preaching ministry and the like will find the volumes to be an excellent source of information and provide the sound basis for further reflection and discussion. While the volumes presuppose some training in philosophy and theology, the authors have kept references to a minimum and avoid the use of technical language if possible. Over time, it is hoped that the

Heritage Series will provide a comprehensive introduction to a broad range of important topics in the areas of theology, history, economics, the arts, and other topics. Two volumes were published in 2003 and a number of other volumes are being prepared. Volume One, written by Kenan Osborne, OFM, is entitled: *The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition, Tracing Its Origins and Identifying Its Central Components*. Volume Two, written by Ilia Delio, OSF, is entitled: *A Franciscan View of Creation, Learning to Live in a Sacramental World*. Our goal is to publish two or three volumes in each of the coming years.

Would you be interested in helping us to develop additional teaching resources that might make this material more readily accessible to a variety of audiences—persons in various stages of formation for Franciscan life, college students, partners in ministry, adult education seminars? Are you a skilled developer of resource materials? Do you have the kind of creative imagination that finds practical ways to invite others into a deeper level of conversation with and reflection on the contents of a book? If so, we would like to hear from you. Our hope is to be able to make more broadly available resources, lesson plans, that others might be easily and effectively able to use to invite a wider circle of brothers and sisters into conversation with the richness and pastoral relevance of the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition. Would you like to become a partner in the ongoing development of this project? If so, please be in touch with Edward Coughlin, OFM, who is serving as the Commission's liaison for this part of our project, at: fec@hnp.org.

We hope to hear from you.

Commission on the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition

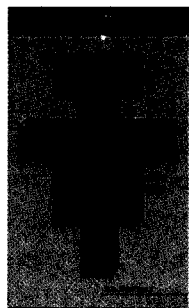
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Commission for the Retrieval of *The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition (CFIT)*



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The Franciscan Heritage Series

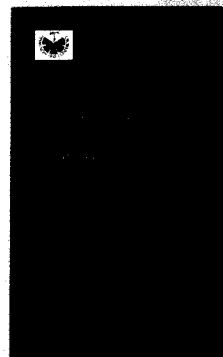


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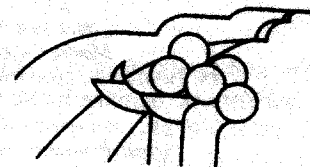
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Franciscan Federation 39th Annual Conference. Thursday, August 15-Sunday, August 18, 2004. Keynote speakers: Bill Short, OFM and Gabriele Ühlein, OSF. For information, contact the Federation Office. Phone: 202.529.2334 or Fax: 202.529.7016.

Conscious Contact Mini-Retreat – “The Peace Prayer” August 18, 2004. Wednesday, 5:00-8:00 p.m. Sr. Catherine Cahill, OSF. The Franciscan Center, 3010 N. Perry Ave., Tampa, FL 33603-5345.

Dreams of Earth Retreats. August 6 - August 8, 2004. Friday, 7:00 p.m.-Sunday, 2:00 p.m. Weekend Retreat which focuses on dream-tending as a form of spiritual experience. At Holy Spirit Retreat Center, Janesville, MN. Cost: \$150.00. For more information, contact Sr. Patricia Sablatura, OSF, at www.dreams-of-earth-retreats.com.

Dreams of Earth Retreats. August 9 - August 14, 2004. Monday, 7:00 p.m. through Saturday, 2:00 p.m. Week-long retreat which focuses on dream-tending as a form of spiritual experience. At Holy Spirit Retreat Center, Janesville, MN. Cost: \$395.00. For more information, contact Sr. Patricia Sablatura, OSF, at www.dreams-of-earth-retreats.com.

The Journey Into God: A Retreat Experience with Bonaventure, Francis and Clare. August 6 - August 14, 2004. Friday through Saturday. With Josef Raischl, SFO and André Cirino, OFM, at the Portiuncula Retreat Center, Frankfort, IL. For information, contact the Center at 815.464.3880.

Looking Ahead 2005

The 40 Day Franciscan Hermitage Retreat. February 12-March 24, 2005. This retreat uses the Third Order Regular Rule and M. E. Imler's *A Franciscan Solitude Experience*. See ad, p. 211, for complete information.

Abbreviations

Writings of Saint Francis

Adm	The Admonitions
BIL	A Blessing for Brother Leo
Ctc	The Canticle of the Creatures
CtExh	The Canticle of Exhortation
1Frg	Fragments of Worchester Manuscript
2Frg	Fragments of Thomas of Celano
3Frg	Fragments of Hugh of Digne
LtAnt	A Letter to Br. Anthony of Padua
1LtCl	First Letter to the Clergy (Earlier Edition)
2LtCl	Second Letter to the Clergy (Later Edition)
1LtCus	The First Letter to the Custodians
2LtCus	The Second Letter to the Custodians
1LtF	The First Letter to the Faithful
2LtF	The Second Letter to the Faithful
LtL	A Letter to Brother Leo
LtMin	A Letter to a Minister
LtOrd	A Letter to the Entire Order
LtR	A Letter to the Rulers of the People
ExhP	Exhortation of the Praise of God
PrOF	A Prayer Inspired by the Our Father
PrsG	The Praises of God
OfP	The Office of the Passion
PrCr	The Prayer before the Crucifix
ER	The Earlier Rule (<i>Regula non bullata</i>)
LR	The Later Rule (<i>Regula bullata</i>)
RH	A Rule for Hermitages
SalBVM	A Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
SalV	A Salutation of Virtues
Test	The Testament
TPJ	True and Perfect Joy

Writings of Saint Clare

1LAG	First Letter to Agnes of Prague
2LAG	Second Letter to Agnes of Prague
3LAG	Third Letter to Agnes of Prague
4LAG	Fourth Letter to Agnes of Prague
LEr	Letter to Ermentrude of Bruges
RCl	Rule of Clare
TestCl	Testament of Clare
BCl	Blessing of Clare

Franciscan Sources

1C	The Life of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano
2C	The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul
3C	The Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
LCh	The Legend for Use in the Choir
Off	The Divine Office of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer
LJS	The Life of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer
VL	The Versified Life of St. Francis by Henri d'Avranches
1-3JT	The Praises by Jacapone da Todi
DCom	The Divine Comedy by Dante Aliegheri
TL	Tree of Life by Ubertino da Casale
1MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Smaller Version
2MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Larger Version
HTrb	The History of the Seven Tribulations by Angelo of Clareno
ScEx	The Sacred Exchange between St. Francis and Lady Poverty
AP	The Anonymous of Perugia
L3C	The Legend of the Three Companions
AC	The Assisi Compilation
1-4Srm	The Sermons of Bonaventure
LMj	The Major Legend by Bonaventure
LMn	The Minor Legend by Bonaventure
BPr	The Book of Praises by Bernard of Besse
ABF	The Deeds of St. Francis and His Companions
LFl	The Little Flowers of Saint Francis
KnSF	The Knowing of Saint Francis
ChrTE	The Chronicle of Thomas of Eccleston
ChrJG	The Chronicle of Jordan of Giano