

Clare's Rule

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"Regla van Clara"

Clara van Assisi, Geschriften, leven, documenten (Haarlem, 1984)

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Introduction

Clare wrote a Rule for the Order of the Poor Sisters in the last few years of her life. This is how she puts it, as she begins: "The form of life of the Order of the Poor Sisters, as laid down by the blessed Francis, is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, living in obedience, without property, and in chastity."¹

Both the Rule of Francis of 1223 and the form of life written by Clare are confirmed by the pope. The Rule of Francis is approved for the entire Order of Friars Minor (lesser brothers). The form of life written by Clare is approved for the convent of San Damiano. There is no indication anywhere that the pope meant this to be, or that Clare considered this to be, a curtailment of what she had asked for. The form of life does however contain evidence that Clare also had other convents in mind.²

The form of life written by Clare occupies a central place in the early beginnings of the Poor Ladies, or Poor Sisters, or by whatever other name they may have been called. A good deal preceded the Rule written by Clare; and after its papal approval the history of the Rule continued. The Rule written by Clare is but one aspect, thoughbeit a very important one, of the history of the Order of St. Clare, as it is called in 1263.

The Form of Life Written by Francis

Francis wrote a brief form of life for the Poor Ladies of San Damiano sometime after Clare and a few other ladies had established themselves there. For Clare this form of life always remained the basis of her own life and of the life of the Poor Ladies who were there and were to come in the future. This original form of life has not survived intact, but we do know an important part of it from the Rule of Clare. Clare refers to it in her Testament.³ Francis praises the Poor Ladies in that particular form of life for having chosen to live according to the perfection of the holy Gospel.

The second important point is that Francis promises that he and his successors will always take care of the Poor Ladies just as he would of his

brothers. In the eyes of Francis and Clare, the Friars Minor and the Poor Ladies were so closely bonded that in fact they formed one order, bonded in a life according to the model of the Gospel and in the obedience of Clare and her sisters to Francis and his successors.⁴

The Poverty Privilege (1215–16 and 1228)

The Fourth Lateran Council legislated in 1215 that new religious groups were to adopt the Rule of an already existing and approved order. A new Rule was not permitted.⁵ This encouraged Clare to ask Pope Innocent III permission for the community to live without possessions. In this way she wished to safeguard the life according to the example of Francis and according to the form of life written by him.

Innocent III, who had already approved the first Rule of Francis in 1209–10, granted this unique and unheard-of privilege sometime between the conclusion of this Council in 1215 and his death on 16 July 1216. This rarest of privileges ever granted held that the Poor Ladies of San Damiano were allowed to live without communal property (possessions) and that no one could compel them to accept possessions. The pope was so impressed by Clare's exceptional request that he himself worked out the draft of this text. This privilege of San Damiano was confirmed by Pope Gregory IX (formerly Cardinal Hugolino) in 1228.⁶

The Exemption of the Poor Ladies (1218)

At the time when Hugolino had become papal legate in March 1217 for Lombardy and Tuscany and also apparently had received jurisdiction from the pope over Umbria, more particularly over the valley of Spoleto, there existed in those regions several convents of poor enclosed nuns. Hugolino wrote to the pope about many virgins and other ladies who had fled the world and were residing in those places, possessing nothing other than those places in order to devote themselves to prayer.

Honorius III made reference to that observation in Hugolino's letter, in a Bull dated 27 August 1218, addressed to Hugolino. In it, the pope laid down that these new convents were to be exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishops and were placed directly under the jurisdiction of the pope. This meant that Cardinal Hugolino, as the plenipotentiary of the pope, became responsible for these convents. He became the ruler and, as it were, the general superior of these convents.

How did these convents come into existence? We do not know. Nevertheless, it is evident that we are dealing with a new movement of women intent upon a radical living of poverty. They are contemporaries of

Clare. San Damiano is part of this poverty movement, though it holds a special place in it through its bond with Francis and his order.⁷

Clare and the Enclosed Poor Ladies

After the flight from her parental home and her admission into the fraternity of Francis, Clare stayed for a brief time in the convent of the Benedictines near Bastia, San Paolo delle Abbadesse. Afterwards, accompanied by Francis and Sister Philippa, she went to the convent of Sant'Angelo di Panzo, situated on the slopes of Monte Subasio, near the Carceri, about three kilometers southeast of Assisi. That is where Agnes joined her sister Clare, and from there they went to San Damiano about the end of April or the beginning of May in either 1211 or 1212.

When San Damiano was being established, Francis and Clare envisaged a convent like the convents of the enclosed Poor Ladies which Pope Honorius III speaks of in his Bull of 1218. Recent research has shown that the convent of Sant'Angelo di Panzo was most probably not a convent of the Benedictines, as we originally thought, but simply a residence of enclosed "poor ladies." This new life-style was adopted in San Damiano with particular emphasis on the enclosure and poverty. The enclosure was not imposed upon them from higher up, nor did they adopt it from the old orders, but the enclosure is part of this new lifestyle which Clare makes her own. Moreover, her bond between Francis and his brothers is considered of essential importance in San Damiano.⁸

The Form of Life Written by Hugolino (1218-20)

After Hugolino had asked for the exemption in 1218, the next logical step for him was the writing of a form of life for "all the poor nuns (*moniales*) living in enclosure." He gives them according to the directive of the Fourth Lateran Council the Rule of Benedict, but also adds to it a "form of life." For this reason the Rule of Hugolino is given the name "Constitutions," that is, Constitutions of the Rule of St. Benedict. He follows the spirituality of the Cistercians, which had been strongly emphasized by the Fourth Lateran Council. This form of life contains legislation about the enclosure, fasting and prayer. But nothing is said about possessions and the relationship with the Friars Minor. It is not a Rule specifically for San Damiano, but for quite a number of other convents of poor nuns (*moniales*).⁹

Clare and the Poor Ladies of San Damiano apparently accepted this form of life. Clare continued to base herself on the form of life given by Francis as well as on the privilege of poverty. The Rule of Hugolino left her sufficient room for that.

There was a difference of opinion between Clare and Hugolino

regarding the possessions which could offer these convents some sort of security. Hugolino was of the opinion that such possessions were necessary for the enclosed nuns. Clare rejected this for San Damiano.

We know from the testimonies of the canonization process of Clare that Hugolino, and later on also Rainaldo, his successor as cardinal protector, did their best to persuade Clare to accept such possessions, but that she steadfastly refused.¹⁰ It seems that Hugolino respected this conviction of Clare. This becomes obvious when as pope he renewed the privilege of poverty for the convent of San Damiano in 1228. Hugolino's high esteem for Clare is also evident from the letters he wrote her. It is known that Hugolino personally granted possessions to several convents. There were only a few convents which followed the example of Clare. The privilege of poverty was granted to a few convents only, namely, to the convent of Monticelli near Florence in 1230, where Agnes, Clare's sister, was abbess, and to the convent of Monteluca in Perugia in 1229. However, afterwards possessions were given by the pope to this convent of Perugia.¹¹ In 1239 Pope Gregory IX again promulgated his Rule of 1219. He says in the preface: "We give you as Rule, the Rule of St. Benedict."

The Rule of Innocent IV (1247)

In 1245 Innocent IV confirmed the form of life given by Hugolino. He repealed this upon the request of a number of Sisters. In 1247 he gave a proper Rule to "the abbesses of the enclosed nuns (*moniales*) of the Order of San Damiano." Mitigations regarding property and fasting existing in a number of convents became fixed in this Rule. Possessions were permitted. But on 6 June 1250, this pope declared that no sister could be obliged to follow this Rule.¹²

There is mention in this Rule of an "order." How many convents belonged to this? Rainaldo named twenty-four convents of this order in 1228. It was around that time that this order extended itself outside of Italy – in Spain, France, Germany, Bohemia and Flanders. The order was rapidly developing, partly as a result of new foundations but also partly because of existing convents changing over to this new order.

The Rule of Clare (9 August 1253)

The Rule of Innocent IV was unacceptable to Clare, especially because it allowed possessions. Furthermore, the pope himself removed the binding nature of that Rule shortly after. This was probably the reason why Clare then wrote a form of life herself.

But we are not sure exactly why and when she started. It could have been an old plan for which the occasion had now arisen. We do know from the

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process of canonization that Clare valued this greatly and longed in the last years of her life to have her Rule approved by the pope himself.¹³ It is the completion, the crown, of her life, entirely in conformity with the form of life given by Francis and the privilege of poverty.

In her written Rule Clare made use of the texts of Hugolino and Innocent, but does not mention them. She does mention exclusively the form of life given by Francis. Likewise the papal approval makes mention of the form of life given by Francis to San Damiano as the basis of the Rule written by Clare. The Rule of Clare received approval on 16 September 1252, from the cardinal protector Rainaldo on the authority of the pope. Upon Clare's request, the Rule was furthermore given approval in the usual solemn style by Pope Innocent IV himself. This happened in haste on 9 August 1253, on account of Clare's impending death. The next day a Brother delivered the papal Bull to her – one day before her death. It is written that on her deathbed Clare took this papal Bull with the approved Rule into her hands with great joy and kissed it repeatedly.¹⁴

Clare wrote her Rule for the Order of the Poor Sisters. The cardinal and the pope approved the Rule for the convent of San Damiano. This sounds somewhat strange to us, as if the cardinal and the pope had granted Clare less than what she had requested. The explanation can be found in the relationship of San Damiano to the other convents. Most of the convents were not prepared to accept the Rule of Clare, especially because of its prohibition of possessions. Moreover, the convents were autonomous and did not fall under the authority of Clare. She wrote her Rule for San Damiano and for other convents which wished to join it.¹⁵ Because the Rule written by Clare was binding only on San Damiano and a few other convents which wished to join it, it is not surprising that after the death of Clare the history of the Rule continued.

The Rule of Isabella of Longchamps (1263)

Shortly after the death of Clare, when Isabella, daughter of King Louis VIII and sister of St. King Louis IX, founded a convent at Longchamps near Paris in 1254–55, she wrote a new Rule with the help of Bonaventure and four other Friars Minor, all teachers of theology, making use of the existing Rules, including the one of Clare. The sisters were officially named "Sisters Minor" (*sorores minores*, or lesser sisters). This Rule was approved in 1263 for the convent of Longchamps. Several convents in France and Italy joined ranks. Apparently Isabella and Bonaventure did not consider accepting the Rule of Clare, especially on account of the question of possessions. Those were allowed in the Rule of Isabella.¹⁶

The Rule of Urban IV (1263)

Pope Urban IV gave a Rule to all the convents of the Order of St. Clare (*ordo Sanctae Clarae*) ten years after her death. He brought unity to the diversity of names and Rules or forms of life. Possessions were permitted to the convents. That corresponded to the actual situation in most of the convents. The care of the sisters was entrusted to the cardinal protector who had to appoint suitable men as visitators. The reason for this lay partly in the problems which existed at the time between the Friars Minor and the sisters. The minister general and the minister provincial were little inclined to take on the care of the sisters. However, the care of the Poor Clare Urbanists (Urban Poor Clares?) was entrusted in 1297 to the ministers general and provincial of the Friars Minor. They were exhorted to persuade the convents to embrace the Rule of Urban if they had not yet accepted it.¹⁷

Clare is highly praised in this Rule, but not much of her Rule had remained, namely, a life without possessions and close ties with the Friars Minor – the main points of her life. Clare would certainly not have accepted this Rule. But she was dead and was being venerated as a great saint. To put it mildly, it seems strange that the order is now officially known as the Order of St. Clare, and that under this banner a Rule is prescribed that had little to do with Clare.

This Rule of Urban was followed by most of the convents of the Urban Poor Clares until the second half of the eighteenth century or this century. The Rule of Hugolino and Innocent, and in several convents the Rule of Clare, were also initially preserved. The convent of Assisi requested and obtained on 31 December 1266, a confirmation of the Rule of Clare. But on 26 May 1288, the pope gave them possessions, and they too, at least on the practical level, became Urbanists.¹⁸

The Rule of Clare was accepted in the renewal movements. Pope Pius II confirmed the Rule of Clare for the Colletine Poor Clares in 1458, together with special Constitutions. And when under the influence of the Capuchin reform movement the Capuchiness Poor Clares came upon the scene, they too largely adopted the Rule of Clare, together with Constitutions which have a close affinity with the Constitutions of the Capuchins. The Rule of Clare was also chosen in other movements of renewal.

Discovery of the Official Text of the Rule (1893)

The official text, namely, the papal Bull itself, together with the approved Rule, was discovered in Assisi in 1893 under unusual circumstances. The Poor Clares of Lyons were searching for the original text around 1890. There were several texts in circulation, but they differed from each other, probably because of copiers making mistakes. They wished to compare

these with the original text itself. Assisi seemed the most likely place to search for that text. And so in the beginning of 1893, Maria Angela, the abbess of Lyons, asked Maria Rossi, the abbess of Assisi, to look for the text in her convent.

The text was discovered in a sealed ebony box. The little box was opened in early October in the presence of a number of prelates who happened to be in Assisi for the feast of Francis. It appeared to contain the original text. We do not know how long the text had been there.¹⁹ The discovery of the original Rule of Clare was given great publicity. The bishop of Assisi wrote a letter to all the convents of the Poor Clares throughout the world and promised them a photo of the Rule. The abbess of Lyons was the first to receive one in May, 1894.²⁰

The search for and the discovery of the Rule of Clare took place at a time when interest in Francis and Clare and in their writings was increasing. Paul Sabatier published his *Life of St. Francis* in 1894, which has a chapter on Clare. It went through forty-two editions and was translated into several languages, including Dutch. It is probable that a number of Urbanist convents accepted the Rule of Clare toward the end of the last century and in our own.

That the Urbanists accepted the Rule of St. Clare is proved by the fact that it holds pride of place in the Constitutions for the nuns (*moniales*) of the Order of St. Clare. It was published by Rome in 1930 and definitively finalized in 1940.

A further proof that the Rule of St. Clare was accepted toward the end of the last century is that in the recent Constitutions of 1974, which have not yet been fully approved, the Poor Clares (formerly Urbanists) and the Colletines observe the same Constitutions.²¹ The Capuchinesses still have their own Constitutions.

The Poor Clares in Holland, who followed the Rule of Urban, adopted the Rule of Clare in 1954. The Constitutions of 1930-40 led up to this. The use of this text, especially by mistresses of novices, posed the question if it were not better to follow the Rule of Clare, upon which the Constitutions were based. The changeover to the Rule of Clare meant that the possessions, e.g. property outside the convent walls, were sold and that the dowery (the *dos* - the money which the choir sisters brought with them upon entry) was abolished. They put an end to the distinction between the choir sisters and lay sisters. They also decided to discontinue begging and to earn their living through labor. Around that time in Holland the availability of the pension was a welcome supplement.

The time-honored question about community life without possessions now takes on another more contemporary form. This new form is generally considered as necessary to provide for old age and other purposes. Naturally this raises other questions, namely, about the fidelity

to the life-style and the Rule of Clare in our time. It is important that one pay constant attention to this, both in the separate communities and in a collective context.

In Holland there are four communities of Poor Clares (formerly Urbanists), three communities of Colletines, and two communities of Capuchinesses. They all follow the Rule of Clare. In Flanders there are twenty-one communities of Colletines. The three convents of Capuchinesses in Flanders follow the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. Called Capuchinesses, their official name is Sisters of Penitence of the Third Order Regular.

In Belgium there is only one convent of Poor Clares who are not Colletines. This is the convent at Malonne in Wallonia, which was founded from St. Omer in France on account of Combe's religious legislation in 1903. The convent of Malonne has always followed the Rule of Clare and participates federally with the seven Colletine convents in Wallonia.

Content of the Rule of Clare

The form of life written by Clare is a true and complete Rule. It is based on the brief form of life written by Francis for San Damiano as well as on the experiences over a period of time in the convent of San Damiano and in several other convents which also followed this form of life.

The example and the words of Francis were decisive for Clare. Added to these are the special regulations for enclosed nuns (*moniales*). These are largely borrowed from the Rules of Hugolino and Innocent, and from the enclosed life as experienced from the beginning in San Damiano and other convents. Clare applied these regulations, e.g. regarding the enclosure, in a personal and flexible way.

When one places the Rule of Clare side by side with that of Francis for his Brothers, one can see how Clare came to write her Rule. She followed the Rule of Francis as far as possible. Yet Clare's Rule is not a copy of Francis's Rule. Clare is interested in his spirit and she absorbs this in a personal way. Nevertheless, certain words of Francis, e.g. about the Gospel as the basis of their life, about brotherly and sisterly relations, about the close bond with the Friars Minor, about the relationship between superiors and subjects and about poverty, are so precious to her that she took them over as literally as possible.

Clare begins by saying that the form of life of the Poor Sisters has been laid down by Francis himself. She refers to the form of life given to them by Francis shortly after they began to live in San Damiano, in either 1211 or 1212.

Just as Francis was convinced that his *Earlier Rule of 1221* and his *Approved Rule of 1223* are in essence the same Rule as the one he submitted

to the pope in 1209–10 and which was approved by him, so also was Clare convinced that her Rule of 1253 was in essence the same as the brief form of life given to them by Francis forty years previously. Both Cardinal Rainaldo and Pope Innocent explicitly confirm this in their approval of the Rule of Clare. In fact, they state that it is not really a new Rule but only an elaboration of the form of life given by Francis already before 1215.

Structure of the Rule Written by Clare

The division of the Rule into twelve chapters does not come from Clare nor does it exist in the papal Bull. Likewise the headings of these chapters are not original but were added later. Therefore, we need not pay much attention to them as we outline the structure of the Rule. It is sufficient to follow the structure of the Rule itself.

Clare follows in great lines the Rule of the Friars Minor.²² This is the *Approved Rule of 1223*, the so-called *Regula bullata*, abbreviated as *RegB*. For this reason, in this overview relative to each section of Clare's Rule, we mention in parentheses the corresponding section in the Rule of 1223. Clare does not follow that text word for word but adapts it to the situation in San Damiano, adding at times entire passages of her own. Insofar as these additions concern the enclosure, they are, again in her usual free manner, borrowed from the Rules of Hugolino and Innocent IV.

Structure of the Rule of St. Clare

1. Introduction: Fundamental principles of the form of life: I 1–5 (*RegB* I 1–3)
2. Admission of new candidates: II 1–25 (*RegB* II 1–17)
3. Liturgical prayer and fasting
 - (a) The Divine Office: III 1–7 (*RegB* III 1–4)
 - (b) Fasting: III 8–11 (*RegB* III 5–9)
 - (c) Confession and Communion: III 12–15
4. Government of the convent
 - (a) Election of the abbess: IV 1–8 (*RegB* VIII 1–4)
 - (b) Office of the abbess: IV 9–14 (*RegB* X 1–6)
 - (c) Chapter: IV 15–21 (*RegB* VIII 5)
 - (d) Other offices: IV 22–24
5. Silence and separation
 - (a) Silence: V 1–4
 - (b) Speaking with outsiders: V 5–9
 - (c) Nature of the grille: V 10–14
6. Personal reflection and exhortation from Clare
 - (a) Reflection on her vocation and the role of Francis in it: VI 1–9

- (b) Exhortation to remain faithful to poverty: VI 10-15
- 7. Manual labor
 - (a) Manner of working: VII 1-2 (*RegB* V 1-2)
 - (b) Distribution of tasks: VII 3
 - (c) Alms and benefactors: VII 4-5
- 8. Poverty and care of the sisters
 - (a) Exhortation and praise of poverty: VIII 1-6 (*RegB* VI 1-6)
 - (b) Care of the sisters: VIII 7-11 (*RegB* IV 2, and VI 8)
 - (c) Care of the sick: VIII 12-18 (*RegB* VI 9)
 - (d) Contacts with outsiders: VIII 19-21
- 9. Sisters who sin
 - (a) Care for them: IX 1-6 (*RegB* VII 1-3)
 - (b) Their own reaction: IX 7-11
- 10. Sisters who serve outside the convent
 - (a) Their conduct: IX 12-17 (*RegB* III 10-11 and XI 3)
 - (b) Care of them when they misbehave: IX 18-19
- 11. Relationship (rapport) between abbess and her sisters: X 1-5 (*RegB* X 1-6)
- 12. Exhortation regarding their way of life: X 6-13 (*RegB* X 7-12)
- 13. Enclosure and exceptions
 - (a) Portress and the door: XI 1-8
 - (b) Bishop and his retinue: XI 8-12
 - (c) Visitor and his visitation: XII 1-4
 - (d) Brothers at the service of the sisters and especially the ministry of the chaplain: XII 5-10
 - (e) Others who perform services: XII 11
- 14. Conclusion: Loyalty to the church and life-style: XII 12-13 (*RegB* XII 3-4)

Notes

1. The process of canonization states that Clare very much wished to have the Rule of the order approved by the pope (*CP* III 32). Urban IV speaks in his introduction to the Rule of 1263 of the "regula sive forma vivendi."
2. Clare writes in her Rule (as Francis does in his) about clothing "according to the needs of each person and place, and seasons and cold climates" (*CL* II 11). She is probably thinking of the convent in Prague.
3. *RegCl* VI 3-4, and *TestCl* 10.
4. *RegCl* I 4-5, and *TestCl* 14.
5. Fourth Lateran Council (1215), Constitution 13 (*Ne nimia . . . monasteriis praesidere*): "In order to prevent an excessive diversity of orders in the church of God from causing serious confusion, we prohibit with force from now on the founding of an order. But if someone shall wish to seek conversion in the life of an order, he shall take one of the approved orders. Likewise if someone wishes to renew an already established convent of an order, he shall adopt the Rule and the attitude of one of the approved orders.

- Moreover, we prohibit anyone from assuming a position as monk in several convents and also that one abbot exercise leadership over several convents" (*Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, [Freiburg, 1962], p. 218).
6. *TestCl* 12; *CP* III 14 and 32, XII 6.
 7. See H. Roggen, "Clare, the 'new woman.' How new was Clare in her times?" An article in *FL* 66 (1983):6, 242-49. This movement already existed sometime before Clare began in San Damiano. She would have had some knowledge of it.
 8. J. Leclerq, "Il monachesimo femminile del secolo XII e XIII," in *Movimento religioso femminile e francescanesimo nel secolo XIII* (Assisi, 1980), pp. 63ff., points out the important distinction between the older, already existing kinds of convents of women (Benedictines, Cistercianesses) and the up-and-coming convents of that time of poor women living an enclosed life. R. Guarnieri writes in the same book (pp. 15ff) about Sant'Angelo di Panzo as belonging to this new style of convents for women. She points out that this influenced Clare. Likewise M. Sensi mentions Sant'Angelo di Panzo in another publication as a convent of poor women living in enclosure ("Incarcerate e penitenti a Foligno nella prima metà del Trecento," in *I Frati penitenti di San Francesco nella società del XII e XIII* (Rome, 1977), p. 305, with footnote 41. In footnote 10 it is not called a convent (*monasterium*) but a church (*ecclesia*). The poor women usually lived enclosed near a church. Clare did the same. This is the origin of the name "the enclosed poor women of the Order of San Damiano (*pauperes inclusae ordinis sancti Damiani*)."
 9. The text of this Rule of Hugolino is in Omaechevarria I., *Escritos de Santa Clara y Documentos contemporaneos*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 314, Madrid.
 10. *CP* I 13, II 22, III 14.
 11. See L. Oligier, "De origine regularum ordinis sanctae Clarae," *AFH*, 5 (1912):181-209 and 413-47. This particular study on the history of the Rule of St. Clare still remains the best available. About the convents of Florence and Perugia, see pp. 414-15. Agnes, in a letter to her sister Clare while she was abbess of the convent of Florence, alludes to the privilege of poverty which the pope had permitted her.
 12. See L. Oligier, "De origine," p. 427. The text of this Rule is in Omaechevarria, *Escritos*.
 13. *CP* I 14, III 32.
 14. Grau, E. and Hardick, L., *Leben und Schriften der hl. Klara von Assisi*, 3d ed (Werl-Wesr, 1960) p. 20 and p. 22. The pope, who was passing through Assisi, visited Clare on two occasions. The second time was between 1 August and 8 August 1253. It was then that Clare urged him to approve her Rule.
 15. See Oligier, "De origine," p. 416.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 436.
 17. *Ibid.*, p. 439, and Z. Lazzeri, "Documenta controversia inter Fratres Minores et Clarissas spectantia (1262-97)," *AFH*, 3 (1910):664-79, and 4 (1911): 74-94.
 18. See Oligier, "De origine," p. 435.
 19. See *Seraphicae legislationis textus originales* (Quaracchi ad Claras Aquas, 1897), pp. 2-3, 14. Fassbinder, M. "Untersuchungen über die Quelle zum Leben der hl. Clara von Assisi," *Franziskanische Studien* 23 (1936):296-335, especially page 302, where she writes that the Rule of Clare was discovered in her tomb. Also Grau, in *Leben und Schriften*, p. 21, mentions the tomb as the place of the discovery. They do not present any evidence. The text does not get a mention in *Seraphicae legislationis textus originales*, which was written four years after the discovery of the Rule. Likewise Oligier does not mention it. Clare's tomb was opened in 1850. There is no mention in the reports about a sealed box and Clare's Rule. It seems improbable that the Rule had lain in the tomb. When the inventory of all the documents which were being kept in the archives of the convent of Assisi was published (by P. Robinson in *AFH*, 1 [1908]:417), it is stated therein that the Rule had been placed for several centuries in a damp place and had been

- neglected. The parchment, 55 x 69 cm in size, was thus damaged but is still legible. To the left above the text the pope wrote in his own hand: "Ad instar fiat S." This means: "And so it happened." "S" is the first letter of his name Sinibaldus. Just below it the pope added: "Ex causis manifestis michi et protectori monasterii fiat ad instar." This means: "And so it happened for reasons known to me and to the protector of the convent." The protector is Cardinal Rainaldo. The reasons are the exceptional circumstances of this approval of the pope to Clare on her deathbed. Hence the haste. The words of the pope are an instruction to the papal curia to expedite this Bull as speedily as possible. That is indeed what took place. The next day the approved Rule was taken from the papal residence in Assisi by a friar to Clare. An unknown hand wrote on the back of the parchment: "Hanc beata Clara tetigit et obsecrata est pro devotione pluribus et pluribus vicibus." This means: "Blessed Clare touched this Bull and kissed it repeatedly with devotion." This fact is also mentioned by Sister Philippa in the process of canonization (CP, III 32). See Grau, *Schriften*, pp. 24-25.
20. See *Seraphicae legislationis textus originales*, 3.
 21. See *Regula et constitutiones generales pro monialibus ordinis Sanctae Clarae* (Rome, 1930). These Constitutions were, as was the custom, experimental. The official edition came in 1941. The Dutch translation was published in 1949: *Rules and General Constitutions for the Sisters of the Order of St. Clare* (Weert, 1949). The names "First Rule" (of Clare) and "Second Rule" (of Urban IV) date from the fourteenth century. See Olinger, "De origine regularum," *AFFH*, 5 (1912):435.
 22. See E. Grau, "Die Regel der hl. Klara (1253) in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der Regel der Minderbruder (1223)," *FSien*, 35 (1953):211ff. Grau juxtaposes the two texts of the Rules in columns.