



Following the ways of Francis, Clare lived an austere life of prayer and fasting. She expected her sisters to do the same. As tough and hard as Clare was on herself, she was also that tender and sensitive to her sisters. She wrote a "Rule" for the community to follow and presented it to the Holy Father for approval. She prayed that "Sister Death" would not take her until the Rule was approved. The Lord had a sense of humor. He knew who he was dealing with. If He were to call her home without the Rule being accepted, she would insist that she should come back to earth to get the final approval. So he waited for her while she waited for the Pope. Finally the approval came. Now Clare could "Go Home." She died two days later, on August 11, 1253 at the age of fifty-nine. By the time Clare died, one hundred and fifty communities of Poor Clare sisters existed in several European countries.

Saint Clare was buried at San Damiano Church. She was canonized a saint of the Church in 1256 by Pope Alexander IV. In 1260, the people of Assisi built a larger monastery for Clare's sisters and her body was transferred to the basilica of Santa Chiara in the town of Assisi. Her body lies today in the Basilica. Saint Clare is what we know as an "incorruptible", that is, her body has not corrupted over the years. Her body clothed in the simple garments of her Order, can be seen at the Basilica of Saint Clare of Assisi.

*(excerpted from: www.stteresachurch.org)

******Clare accepted all things and people as a gift from God. She did daily work with everyone else. She was attentive to each sister's well-being. One day Clare suspected that a sister was suffering from depression. Clare gave her extra tenderness and care, and the nun was restored to health and peace of heart.

Saint Clare is often depicted in art carrying a monstrance or pyx, the small vessel in which the communion host is carried. This commemorates the time when she warded off the soldiers of Frederick II at the gates of her monastery by displaying the Blessed Sacrament and kneeling in prayer.

**(excerpted from: srsclare.com)

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Saint Clare of Assisi

Feast Day: August 12 (Latin Calendar)



***"He, Christ is the splendor of eternal glory,
the brightness of eternal light,
and the mirror without cloud."***

Saint Clare of Assisi

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*Saint Clare was born in the town of Assisi, in the Umbrian region of Italy, in 1193. Chiara or Clare meaning clear-radiant light was born of nobility and grew up with the privileges of wealth. Francis was born twelve years earlier. We cannot tell the story of Clare without including Francis. He was her greatest inspiration, her mentor, her model.

The only thing that Clare and Francis had in common at this time was that they were both from Assisi. There was a great distinction in those days placed on who were of nobility and those who were rich. They were not always the same people. Clare's family was noble, Francis' family was rich. The nobility always looked down upon the rich as being beneath them, while the rich knew they could very often buy and sell the nobility.

Clare had two sisters, Agnes and Beatrice. Her mother was Ortulana and her father Faverone Offreduccio. There is not much known about Clare's childhood and teenage years. We do know that Clare was a good and spiritual young girl, even before she gave her life over to Jesus through Francis.

The first accounts we have of Clare are when she was eighteen years old. At that time, young women carried a high price in the marriage market. They were not bought or sold, but a marriage partner was arranged based upon the "attributes" of the girl and the "wealth" of the boy's family. Clare had a mind of her own. Clare did not know why, but she was determined not to marry. The Lord had touched her heart from childhood. He was to be her spouse. Clare's father had died so the uncles assumed the role of father and together with Clare's mother tried to interest her in various young men. Clare kept asking about Francis. This infuriated her family. They became angry at the mere mention of his name. After all, he had disgraced his family, stolen from his father to give to beggars and lepers. What outraged them even more was that other noble men were leaving their homes and possessions, putting on the coarse tunic and following Francis. Clare found Francis fascinating. What he had done and was

preaching was so contrary to anything she had heard before.

One day, Clare walked on a road she knew Francis would be taking. She wanted to meet him to talk with him. They talked. Francis saw in Clare a special quality Jesus would use some day. Francis spoke in a spiritual language that Clare could not understand, but yet she felt an unexplained excitement within her. Over the next several months, Clare frequently met with Francis, listening in awe at the love he had for Jesus. She knew in her heart that she too was being called to live the Gospel and asked Francis to help her achieve her goal.

When Clare confided to her parents that she was thinking about joining Saint Francis in his life of poverty, her parents refused to grant her permission. Clare and Saint Francis obtained permission from the local Bishop, however, and on Palm Sunday, 1212, Clare was received by Francis. Her hair was cut, a coarse robe and cord were given to her to wear and a woolen cloth was placed upon her head. She was consecrated into the Second Order of Franciscans and placed under the protection of the Benedictine Sisters of Saint Paul until Francis could set up a convent for her. Eventually, Francis turned over the grounds of San Damiano over to Clare. This was the church where the Lord spoke to Francis from the cross to "go out and repair My Church." Clare knew how important this Church was to Francis and the tremendous sacrifice it would be for him to give it away to her.

San Damiano had been a parish church in the valley below Assisi, but now became the home of the Poor Clare sisters, as they would become known. Clare attracted many young women to follow the ways of Jesus in a simple life of poverty and prayer. Her best friend Pacifica, her sister Agnes and even her mother, Ortulana, joined the convent. When the Order of Poor Clares was formed, Francis suggested that Clare be the Superior. It took her three years to accept this responsibility and privilege. She lived at San Damino until her death.