

Companions IN PRAYER



Sisters of St. Clare
Saginaw, MI

Summer 2014

In the closing weeks of summer on August 11, we Poor Clares take time to remember our founder, St. Clare of Assisi. In addition to remembering St. Clare, this year we also celebrate two of our sisters' jubilees or anniversaries. Sister Bernardone is celebrating 75 years and Sister Laurene 65 years of following the call of St. Clare. In this newsletter, we thought you might be interested in knowing more about our early beginnings 800 years ago!

Who Are the Poor Clares?

It is impossible to describe the Poor Clares without first discussing St. Francis, a towering figure in our Catholic tradition who began his ministry in 13th century Italy. Dismayed by his experience of war, he left the wealth of his family and went to work among the lepers in his hometown of Assisi. As he worked among the sick and poor, he discovered in himself a new peace and joy, a feeling he described as a new "sweetness of body and soul." Others followed him and also discovered this new soul peace.

St. Clare lived in Assisi at the same time that St. Francis was preaching and working among the poor. She also came from a wealthy family, but found that working with the poor gave her joy that her wealth could not provide. She fled her family and sought refuge with St. Francis, who received her into his group and helped her to found the "Order of Poor Clares." This new community of women dedicated themselves to praying with and for people with needs. The women welcomed those in need and helped them with both physical and emotional healing.

Both St. Clare and St. Francis moved beyond what we might think of today as "good works." When they cared for the poor and needy, they felt as though they were drawn into the body of Christ. It was this feeling of being part of the body of Christ that was the source of their experiencing "a sweetness of body and soul."

As Poor Clares, we experience that "sweetness of body and soul" when we reach out to others in need. We choose to live fairly isolated and simple lives, and minister to others mostly by being their *Companions in Prayer*. We receive over 800 prayer requests a month. We feel blessed to journey with them in their prayers through both joy and sadness.



The history of St. Clare and St. Francis still guides and inspires us today. We believe that peace in the world, God's peace, begins with each of us, and that we all yearn for that same "sweetness of body and soul" that graced St. Clare and St. Francis in their work. I'm sure that you also experience that same sweet grace when you reach out to others in need.

Coming Soon

Soon you will receive our fall brochure that highlights our Christmas cards. Please keep our cards in mind when you are ordering your greeting cards this season. We have four designs for the holiday season: the Madonna, Glory to God in the Highest, Joy to the World, and It Came Upon a Midnight Clear. To see the cards visit our newly designed website at: <http://srsclare.com> see our Gift Store. As with all our cards, we seek to express the wonder and awe of the season with original designs, elegant calligraphy, and deeply spiritual messages.

We appreciate your donations and your orders for our cards and gifts. They help support our mission as *Companions in Prayer*.

Please visit our website (<http://srsclare.com/about-us/media>) to enjoy the video we did on Sister Bernardone's life of 95 years. We titled it: "Sister Bernie, Simply Herself."

(We are interested in your thoughts. Let us know at: <http://srsclare.com/about-us/companions-in-prayer-newsletter>)

Sr. Laura and Sisters