

*The Poor Sisters
of
Saint Clare:*

An Anthology

Foreword:

The Order of Poor Sisters of St. Clare is adorned with a rich heritage left by eight-hundred years of holy women who have lived Clare's Gospel charism. Some of their stories have been told in extant biographical writings, while others remain preserved in monastery archives. Scholars suspect that still others have been lost to history.

The names of hundreds of Clares from monasteries throughout the world have been preserved in the annals of Franciscan History. *Martyrologium Franciscanum* lists the names of 486 Clares. Hueber's *Martyrologium* lists 588 outstanding Clares. Ausserer's *Martyrologium* contains a number exceeding 700, as has Beschin and Palazzolo's volume. Most citations give only a name and date. This collection includes only those with additional resources.

Pope Francis wrote in his document *Gaudete et Exsultate*: "Jesus explained with great simplicity what it means to be holy. Living simply, putting God first, trusting in him and not earthly wealth or power, being humble, mourning with and consoling others, being merciful and forgiving, working for justice and seeking peace with all." And, holiness "is not about swooning in mystic rapture," he wrote, "but it is about recognizing and serving the Lord in the hungry, the stranger, the naked, the poor and the sick." With this clarification in mind, writings on the Clares in this collection have been limited to the story of their call to follow Christ more closely, and how they lived the Gospel in the spirit of St. Clare of Assisi.

The resources listed here will allow the interested reader to search out other areas of interest in these women's lives, such as family background, miracles, extraordinary phenomena, extreme penances, writings and accomplishments. An asterisk marks the particular resource used in each written account.

Where a reliable English translation was not readily accessible, proper names remain in their original language. Because of changes in observance throughout the centuries, initials used to distinguish the branches of our Order are omitted, except where there was some degree of certainty.

Saints, Martyrs and Blesseds have a brief biography. Venerables, Servants of God, Writers and Notable Poor Clares are merely listed with resources.

This collection bears witness to the continuing impact of our holy Mother Saint Clare's charism on our Franciscan Order, our Church and our world throughout eight centuries. And these pages hold a dream. What if we could gather together 800 years of writings on, and by, Poor Clares?

"I have done what was mine to do, may God teach you what is yours." (St. Francis)

Sister Mary Francis Hone, OSC
Pentecost 2019

Reference:

**On the Call to Holiness in Today's World. Gaudete et Exsultate.* Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2018.

The entries are classified as following:

I—Saints.

II—Martyrs

III—Blessed

IV—Venerable

V—Servants of God

VI—Notable Poor Clares

VII—Poor Clare Writers

Branches of the Order included in this Anthology

O.S.C. ... Order of St. Clare. Title given by Pope Urban IV, to those following the Rule he promulgated, known as the *Urbanist Rule of St. Clare*. These initials continue to be used by those who returned to the First Rule of St. Clare in 1950.

P.C.C.... Poor Clare Colettines. These Poor Clares live the *First Rule of St. Clare* according to the particular charism of St. Colette of Corbie who initiated a reform of the Order in France in the 15th century.

O.S.C. Cap.... Poor Clare Capuchins. Mother Maria Laurenza Luongo led a reform of the Order in the 16th century. At first they used the Constitutions of St. Colette supplemented with statutes from the Capuchin Friars' Constitutions. In 1927 particular Constitutions were drawn up for these Capuchin Poor Clares who are within the jurisdiction of the Capuchin Friars.

P.C.P.A.... Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration, or Sacramentine Poor Clares, or, Poor Clares of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Founded in 1854 in Troyes, France, by Bonaventure Heurlaut, O.F.M. Cap. and Mother Marie Claire Bouillevaux. At first they were Third Order Regular Cloistered Nuns called Franciscan Nuns of the Most Blessed Sacrament. In 1912 they were incorporated into the Order of St. Clare taking the *Urbanist Rule of St. Clare*.

O.S.C. Divine Providence ... Poor Clares of the Divine Providence. Led by Madre Teresa del Sagrado Corazón, Poor Clares in Barcelona, Spain, were requested by the Bishop to teach catechism to poor girls. They were officially recognized as Poor Clares in 1878.

Table of Abbreviations

The following list provides the abbreviations for the sources cited in this bibliography.

AFH *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*. Collegio S. Bonaventura, Colle S. Antonio, 00046 Grottaferrata, Roma.

AIA.... *Archivo Ibero-Americano*. Col. Card. Cisternos, O.F.M. Madrid, 1914 -1936; 1941.

Annales.... Annales Minorum. Ed. Luke Wadding. Quarrachi, 1931- 1948. [49 volumes]

BF.... *Bibliographia Franciscana. Collectanea Franciscana. Sectio Bibliographia*, Instituto Storico dei Fr. Minori Cappuccini, Roma. [This reference is included because it contains notices of reviews of many books, and descriptions of their contents.]

BBF.... *Bibliografia de Bibliografias Franciscanas*.

BLH.... *Bibliografia de la literatura hispánica*. 11 vols. ed. José Simón Días. Madrid 1960-1976.

CronEspan ... Cronicas Franciscanas de España. Ed. Jacobo de Castro, O.F.M. Madrid: Editorial Cisneros, 1977. [Note: There are hundreds of Clares in these volumes.]

De Clary..... *Lives of Saints and Blessed of the Three Orders of Saint Francis*. Leon di Clary. Taunton: Franciscan Convent, 1885.

Devas *Franciscan Essays*. Dominic Devas, O.F.M. London: Herder, 1924.

Escritoras Escritoras Clarisas Españolas. An Anthology. Maria Victoria Triviño, O.S.C. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1992.

Fiege.... Marianus Fiege, O.S.F.Cap. *The Princess of Poverty*. Evansville: Poor Clare Nuns, 1900. The Newman Press, 1991.

Fortini... Arnaldo Fortini, *St. Francis of Assisi*. New York: Crossroads, 1981.

Habig....*Franciscan Book of Saints*, Marian Habig, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959; revised edition 1979.

Hist. Abrégée Histoire Abrégée de L'Orders Sainte Claire d'Assise. 2 vols. Edition des Monastères des Clarisses Colettines a Lyon et a Tournai. Lyon: Desclée de Bower, 1906.

Iriarte....*Franciscan History: The Three Orders of St. Francis of Assisi*. Damien Iriarte, O.F.M. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1982.

J. a San Antonio....*Bibliotheca Universa Franciscana, sive Alumnorum Trium Ordinum S.P.N. Francisci*, 3 vols., 1732.

Lainati Chiara Augustusta Lainati, O.S.C., ed. *Temì Spirituali dagli Scritti del Secondo Ordine Francescano*. Assisi: Maria Degli Angeli, 1970.

Lynch *A Poor Man's Legacy: An Anthology of Franciscan Poverty*.
Ed. Cyprian J. Lynch, O.F.M., St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1988.

Marianus....*Libro delle Dignità et Excellentie del Ordine della Seraphica Madre delle povere donne Sancta Chiara da Assisi*. Marianus da Firenze. Introduzione, note e indici del P. Giovanni Boccali, O.F.M. Edizione "Studi Francescani" Firenze: S. Maria degli Angeli, 1986.

MartFran Martyrologium Franciscanum. Compiled by P. Ignatio Beschin and P. Juliano Palazzolo, O.F.M. Vicetiae: Tipografia Commerciale Editrice, 1939.

Men....Hueber, F. Menologium seu brevis et compendiosa illuminatio. sanctorum, Beatorum.. Munich, 1698.

Misc. Fran..... Miscellanea Francescana.

Moorman, John.... *History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517*. Oxford, 1968.

P. Antonio...*Giardino Serafico*. Pietro Antonio di Venezia, 1710. [Italian translation of *Hortus Seraphici*]

SerMartAusserer, Peter Paul, O.S.F. *Seraphisches Martyrologium enthaltend Kurze Lebensfichen Söhne und Töchter des Hl. Franciscus Seraphicus*. Salzburg, 1889.

I *Poor Clare Saints*

Index

<i>Saints- 10</i>	<i>Page</i>
S. Agnes of Assisi	11
S. Agnes of Prague	14
S. Camilla Batista Varani	17
S. Catherine Vigri of Bologna	21
S. Clare of Assisi	26
S. Colette of Corbie	33
S. Eustochia Calafato	39
S. Kinga of Poland	42
S. Philippa Mareri	44
S. Veronia Giuliani	46



*Saint Agnes of Assisi,
1197 - 1253. Assisi, Italy.*

*Born Catherine, the younger
sister of St. Clare of Assisi.*

Feast Day: November 19.

Hearing the Call

Catherine and Clare di Favoroni di Offreduccio of Assisi, Italy, were blood sisters bound by both natural and deeply spiritual affinities. When Clare secretly left her family home to follow the “little Poor Man” Francis, it would seem this special closeness would be shattered, since Catherine, obviously, did not feel called to join her. It must have been a difficult choice at the time. She was only about fourteen. To tear herself apart from her family must have seemed unthinkable for a young girl; but how could she bear being parted from her dearest sister?

Clare also loved her sister, and prayed that Catherine would receive the grace to leave everything for the love of Christ. Perhaps it was Holy Week that brought that needed grace. Just sixteen days after Clare left, Catherine made her way to St. Angelo di Panzo hermitage to join her. Any uncertainty about her decision to give her love to Jesus Christ totally would soon be tested. As soon as her presence was missed at home, her Uncle Monaldo set out in a rage intent on bringing her back to her

senses. She was repeatedly struck, dragged by her hair, and kicked, while Clare prayed desperately for her little sister. Suddenly, Catherine's body became so heavy all the men could not lift her. So, Agnes remained with Clare; they were together again.

Living the Charism

St. Francis praised God for the courage and faith with which Catherine had offered her life, like the Innocent Lamb of God. He cut her hair, received her into the Brotherhood, and changed her name to "Agnes." He had great confidence in her holiness and ability, for not long after they were settled at San Damiano, he sent Agnes as Abbess to Montecelli to bring the spirit of Clare to a new group of sisters there, and again, shortly after, to Venice and Mantua as well.

After arriving at Montecelli, (1228-1230) Agnes Imparted Clare's spirit to the new members as only she could, and fought along with Clare for the privilege of poverty. But the separation imposed by obedience to Francis, was exceedingly painful for Agnes. She wrote to Clare: "Know my mother", writes Agnes, "that my spirit is in the greatest tribulation and immense sadness, and I am extremely distressed and saddened, and am almost unable to speak, because I am physically parted from you and from my other sisters, with whom I believed I would live and die in this world. . . . O most sweet mother and my lady, what shall I do, what shall I say, now that I can no longer hope to see my sisters again?"

Much remains unknown about Agnes, except that she mirrored her sister Clare in fidelity to the teaching and spirit of the Poverello. Many monasteries claim to have been founded by Agnes.

At the news of Clare's approaching death, Agnes started the journey back to Assisi, arriving at San Damiano in time to assist Clare in her last agony. But, it was Clare who tried to comfort her sister: "It is the will of God that I go, dearest sister,

but stop weeping because you will come to the Lord very soon
but stop weeping because you will come to the Lord very soon
after me, and he will give you a great consolation before I depart
from you.” (CL 43) According to Mariano of Florence, St. Clare’s
veil, still preserved at Firenze-Castello, would have been given
by Clare to the sisters who accompanied Agnes at this time.

A few days after Clare’s funeral, Agnes, too, as Clare had
foretold, was called to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. The peo-
ple of Assisi had great devotion to her, and thronged to her fu-
neral, so many, in fact, that the ladder bearing the mourners col-
lapsed, yet all were unharmed. This was attributed to Agnes’ in-
tercession. There followed numerous interventions by Agnes,
and these continued throughout the 14th century until her cult
was ratified by the Church.

Resources:

Corcoran, Dean, O.F.M. Cap. *In Her Sister’s Shadow. The Life of Ag-
nes of Assisi.* New Jersey: St. Anthony’s Guild, 1958. Pamphlet.

Fiege, 114-115; Fortini, 316-325; 349-53.

Garzonio, Clare Lucy. *Without Turning Back. Life of St. Agnes of As-
sisi.* Libreria Editrice Fiorentina, 1991.

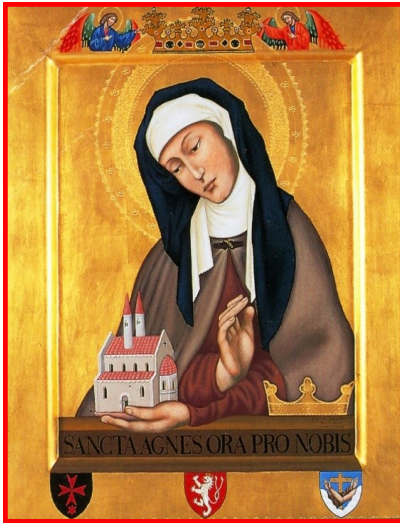
Gennaro, Clara. “Clare, Agnes and the First Sisters: from the ‘Pauperes
Dominae’ of San Damiano to the Poor Clares.” *Greyfriars Re-
view* 9 (1995): 259-76.

* Lainati, Chiara Augustusta, O.S.C. “The Most Prudent Virgin Our Sis-
ter” [A biography of St. Agnes of Assisi +1253] *The Cord* 35
(1985): 275-83.

Little Known Franciscans: St. Agnes of Assisi. *Round Table of Francis-
can Research* 22 (1957): 109-17.

Lynch, 69 - 71.

www.marianhouseoftheholyspiritpcc.org/the-three-crowns/ [The story
of Agnes’ vision of three crowns.]



Saint Agnes of Prague (Bohemia) 1205-1282.

*Patron of Poland,
Salt Mineers*

Feast Day: March 2

Hearing the Call

Agnes, daughter of the King of Bohemia, inherited the wealth and power of her royal family, yet she became attracted to the preaching and poor life of the Friars Minor in Prague. After hearing them speak about the Lady Clare, Agnes asked the friars about the kind of life she and her sisters lived at their little monastery of St. Damian. When Agnes learned that Clare had given away all her fine clothes and possessions, and chose to follow Christ in poverty and humility, she knew she had found her vocation: "This is what I desire and ardently long for with all my heart." Agnes gave up her high status and all the great wealth she had lavished on the care of the poor, so that she could be clothed in the poor common garments of a follower of Clare of Assisi.

Living the Charism

Agnes' brother Wenceslaus built a large monastery for the sister he adored, and other ladies joined her there. With her whole heart Agnes concentrated on the observance of Clare's way of poverty. She desired to own nothing of this world and person in the true spirit of Francis and Clare, and contented

herself with the poorest of clothing. When the Holy See tried to make her accept some material goods for their community, Agnes firmly disapproved, adding that she preferred to die in misery rather than distance herself a single step from the poverty of Christ who made himself poor for us. She corresponded with the Lady Clare in order to learn how to live, in Prague, the poverty of the Poor Ladies at San Damiano.

When donations were sent to her she would use some to embellish churches, another part was reserved for the sisters, and the third portion was given to widows, orphans, lepers, and other poor. But when these large gifts were no longer sent to her, food and clothing could be obtained only with difficulty. At one of these times, when they endured real destitution, Agnes became ill. The sisters tried to comfort her, but she raised her hands to the sky and smiled, saying: "Praise the Lord, because we live in poverty."

Agnes had never wanted to be the Abbess, choosing always to obey and serve others in imitation of Jesus. She would openly tell humiliating things about herself, and considered others holier than herself. She washed pots and pans with delight, and cleaned the dirtiest parts of the monastery, making herself the servant of all. Besides having charge of cooking for the whole community, she would also fix special food for sick sisters, and sent some to the friars who were weak.

Agnes manifested a motherly love for her sisters, comforting them in sickness, sometimes curing them with the sign of the cross, and was at the bed of those who were dying. Agnes reached out to all the sisters, mending their garments, attending to the needs of each one, merciful and generous to all, but frugal and austere with herself. When food was sent to her for her personal use, she would give it to the weak sisters. Even when she had to reprove a sister she did so with great love and wisdom, encouraging them, and asking their pardon, always careful not to make a sister unhappy.

Ag-

nes modeled for her sisters a real concern for the lives

of every person. When anyone was depressed, in pain, or suffering through any misfortune, they could always come to Agnes who would have words of comfort for them. Her hands were covered with sores because of the strong soap and bleach she used to wash the clothes of lepers and the poor in the town. At night she mended their thin rags so they would have something to cover them the next day.

The day came when Agnes knew death was approaching. She smiled with joy and addressed her sisters: "My dearest daughters, guard your love of God and of neighbor with all your strength; imitate the humility and poverty which were Christ's and which he taught you. Always show yourselves obedient to the Church of Rome, following the example of our Father Francis and of the holy virgin Clare, who gave us our Rule of life. We know with certainty, that as our merciful Lord never abandoned Francis or Clare, his sweet clemency will not abandon any of us if we zealously follow their example. " Having served her Spouse for 40 years, she was united with on March 6, 1282.

Resources:

Armstrong, Regis C., O.F.M. Cap. *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents*.

New City Press, 1996. [St. Clare's letters to St. Agnes of Prague]
Cremaschi, O.S.C. S. Agnes di Boemia. *Vita Minorum* 33 (1991): 163-75.

*DeClary, I, 239-248; Fiege, 124-34, 211; Forti, 342-52; Habig, 156-8.

John Paul II's Book of Saints. Ed. Matthew Bunson. Huntington, ID: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1999, p. 13.

Lynch, 133 - 136; Moorman, 210.

O'Brien, Celsus, O.F.M. *Agnes of Prague*. Limerick, Ireland: Franciscan Friary, 1989. [Booklet.]

Pit'ha, Peter. The Canonization of the Czech's Agnes. Trans. Sergius Wroblewski. *The Cord* 43 (1993): 23-8.

Soukupova, Helena. *The Convent of St. Agnes of Bohemia*. Prague: National Gallery, 1993.

*The Most Ancient Legend of Blessed Agnes of Prague. Written by an anonymous Franciscan Friar of Prague, ca. 1328. *Forma Sororum* (Jan.-Feb. 1982), translated from Latin by J. K. Vyskocil.



*Saint Camilla Battista
Varani, 1458 - 1527.
Camerino / Marche, Ita-
ly.*

Feast Day: May 30

Hearing the Call

Camilla Varani was the daughter of Prince Julius Ceasar Varani, and as such, raised as a privileged child, with a high level of education. As a young child she was drawn to meditate upon the sufferings of Christ. But apart from that, her life was taken up with dancing, music, balls, and whatever else attracted her.

She was greatly influenced by the Friars of the Observance and often heard them preach their simple Gospel way of life. Then one day, the grace of vocation came to her. She fought against it for a year, mainly because of her family. But the love of Christ pursued her, and she surrendered. She resolved to give herself completely to Christ and had her heart set on entering Poor Clares at Urbino.

Her father was furious, and the battle with him went on for two and a half years more before he finally relented only because he feared the vengeance of God. Camilla was victorious.

1481 she entered the Urbanist Poor Clares at Urbino. Camilla was received later in 1481, taking the name Battista.

Living the Charism

From here on her immersion in the sufferings of Christ, particularly those of his Sacred Heart, became more continual, lasting to her dying day. She was a woman who endured many weaknesses and illnesses. In the Middle Ages especially, women often turned to the sufferings of Jesus because there was much suffering in their own lives. They could empathize with one who suffered, and in Jesus, found someone with whom they could identify. Her novitiate was prolonged so that she was not professed until 1483.

Soon after Battista felt called to live the Primitive Rule of St. Clare and went to Camerino with a few sisters to start a monastery with this observance. It was at this time that St. Clare appeared to her to reassure her in her undertaking to live in holy poverty. In the ensuing years she experienced the dark night of abandonment. In the terrible temptations she endured her constant prayer was: "O God, come to my assistance; O lord, make haste to help me."

In 1487 she felt drawn to write. In 1490 her confessor asked her to write her life. Many other spiritual writings and letters followed in which she counseled her sisters on living religious life fervently. "Live so as to be able to say, the Lord was continually before my eyes, and His Divine presence was the object of the meditation of my heart."

Battista was known to have lived a holy life, but we know only what she told us in her autobiography, in the writings on her spiritual life, and letters of council to others. There are beautiful prayers to be found in her letters. We learn most about her because of the fact that she always wrote in the third person as if she was writing about someone else, and this freed her to write more. She was a mystic who enjoyed many extraordinary graces, but suffered much. She prayed, "Lord the only way I can be as-

sured of your love for me, is that you grant me the grace of a sincere heart, that I may love those who hate me, that I may

speak well of those who speak ill of me, that I may praise those who persecute and unjustly calumniate me. Few arrive at that true perfection which consists in loving their enemies." She was also very human and continued to enjoy music and dancing and all that delights a happy person.

Battista died a victim of the Black Plague at the age of 69, on the Feast of Corpus Christi, May 31, 1527. Her tongue, which had always blessed the Lord and taught others to bless Him, was preserved fresh, moist, and red in a reliquary, even today.

Writings:

Considerazioni devote sopra la Passione di N.S. Gesù Cristo.

Lauda: "Quando serà che possa contemplare...."

I Ricordi di Gesù.

Trattato della purità del cuore.

Novena alla Vergine.

Preghiera alla Vergine.

Dichiarazione sulla Regola delle Clarisse.

I dolori mentali di Gesù nella sua Passione.

Due preghiere a Dio.

Vita spirituale.

Transito del b. Pietro da Mogliano.

Memoria del monaco olivetano spagnolo.

Istruzioni al discepolo ad una religiosa.

Visioni di S. Caterina da Bologna.

Lettera alla Suora vicaria.

Lettera a Muzio Colonna.

Lettera (Latin) a Giovanni da Fano.

Lettera al medico Battista Pucci.

Considerazioni sulla Passione.

Preghiera eucaristica.

Distici latini.

Sonetto alla Vergine.

Publications on the writings:

- S. Batista da Varano. *Istruzioni al discepolo*. Ed. M. Reschiglian. Preface M. Bartoli. SISMEL, Edizione del Galluzzo, Florence 2017.
- . *The Seven Sorrows of Christ*. Trans. Joseph Berrigan. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Peregrina Publishing Co., 1986.
- . *My Spiritual Autobiography*. Trans. Joseph Berrigan. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Peregrina Publishing Co., 1986.

Resources

- * Abate, Giuseppi. *The Lives of S. Veronica Giuliani, Capuchin Nun, and of the Blessed Battista Varani of the Order of S. Clare*. London, 1874.
- Fiege, 212.
- Gessner, Kurt, O.F.M.Cap. "Little Known Franciscans. B. Baptista Varani". *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 20 (1955): 69-73.
- Habig, 392; Lynch, 273 - 276; Moorman, 558.
- O'Brien, Celsus, O.F.M. *The Story of the Poor Clares*. Limerick: Franciscan Friary, 1992: 28-31.
- Pit'ha, Peter. "The Canonization of the Czech's Agnes." Trans. Sergius Wroblewski. *The Cord* 43 (1993): 23-8.
- Soukupova, Helena. *The Convent of St. Agnes of Bohemia*. Prague: National Gallery, 1993.
- Thoman, Bret, O.F.S. *From Worldly Princess to the Foot of the Cross. The Life and Writings of Saint Camilla Battista Varano, O.S.C*, Phoenix, AZ: Tan Publishing, 2012.
- Two Canonized in ceremonies in St. Peter's Basilica; Letter from the Holy Father, March 2, 1982, for the seventh centenary of her death. *L'Osservatore Romano* 46, November 13, 1989: 12.
- Vyskocil, J. K. *The Legend of Blessed Agnes of Bohemia & the Four Letters of St. Clare*. Translated by Vitus Buresh. Cleveland: Micro Photo Division, Bell & Howell Co., 1963.



*Saint Catharine Vigri of
Bologna, 1413 -1463. Fer-
rara/ Messina, Italy.*

Patron of Artists.

Feast Day: March 9.

Hearing the Call

Catherine's call to be a Poor Clare was influenced by a young woman named Lucy, a virtuous woman who attracted young ladies by her example of holy living. Catherine was attracted towards these women who divided their time between prayer and works of charity within their homes, and decided to become one of them.

Her father was furious that she refused to marry. Catherine endured five years of abuse as well as inner conflict because of the path she had chosen, but accepted it as a way of imitating Jesus. The little community was attracted to the poor and austere life of the sisters who followed Saint Clare of Assisi and the evangelical Franciscan spirit. They requested the Rule of St. Clare from the Provincial of the Friars Minor, and were clothed in the habit as Poor Clares.

Living the Charism

Catherine humbly accepted the duty of baker in the new monastery even though the heat of the oven was affecting her eyesight. She later accepted the Office of Novice Directress though she felt unqualified for the position. She taught the novices about the ladder of humility and virtue, and to seek God's good pleasure in all things. Subsequently, she was made Portress, which she found difficult because of many interruptions throughout the day. When the sisters proposed her for abbess, she suggested someone else would be better. But before long the people of Bologna and Ferrara wanted the daughters of St. Clare in their city, also, and the provincial requested Catherine to be the Abbess at Ferrara. In distress Catherine complained that she was not fit to have the care of the poultry yard, much less of the Spouses of the King of Heaven. Sadly, she left the sisters she loved and was welcomed at Ferrara as a second St. Clare. Her presence brought peace to the town.

Once establishing the observance of the Holy Rule, Catherine spared no toil or trouble to organize the material aspects of the monastery, telling her sisters: "If you have some need I may not perceive, or that you do not have the courage to tell me, you may go to any sister you like best and they can come to me to obtain it. Come to me anytime, and if I am asleep, I wish you to wake me." She performed every imaginable service and gave every consolation to the sick. When vocations multiplied and she was obliged to enlarge the monastery, she, herself, labored intensely so as not to leave any problems to those to come after her.

Her life was a continual prayer and act of love toward her Spouse. If any intention was recommended to her she would pray immediately. Catherine spent hours in prayer during the night as well. She did her external work in silence so she could continue in communion with God. Although it seemed to her sisters that she was always employed in some business or other, and disturbed by one person or another, she would respond to their concern that prayer was her life no matter what she was doing. "If I let myself be carried away by sensible sweetness in

prayer I would often be unable to attend to my occupations." She was also an artist, and found time to express her prayer in painting beautiful images. Catherine had an innate horror of idleness, often reminding her sisters how short and how precious time is.

Catherine was an expert musician and singer. Office in choir was her delight; nothing could distract her from her absorption in the Divine Praises. At the first signal for the Office she left whatever she was doing to prepare her heart to praise the Divine Majesty. She performed every Community exercise, and told the sisters that a sister who was punctual in choir, at work, in the refectory, in the dormitory, during her whole life, will receive an exceeding great reward, and will be set among the confessors and martyrs." And, "O, if we could understand how good it is for the soul to be punctual at the Divine Office, we would take good care not to plead such slight reasons for disregarding it." Where infractions occurred, she would quietly approach a sister, bending over her shoulder, and with a delicate charity point out the incident.

In her humility, Catherine considered herself unworthy to live with the spouses of Jesus Christ. She sought out the lowest occupations. Because she had been born to nobility, she would make efforts to hide her virtues and abilities and play the part of an ignorant person, pretending sometime to make a mistake so even the youngest could correct her. In regard to her dress, she chose cast offs. Later as Abbess she would tell her sisters: "My daughters, when you are tempted to arrange your veils and your habits nicely, give them a twist instead. It's a practice of mine."

Catherine stressed the pattern of Christ's obedience as specific to the Franciscan charism. As a simple religious she would not do the least thing without permission, and often said "she who obeys will always be joyful and at peace." One day when she heard some sisters complaining that the absolute poverty they professed was contrary to all prudence, she was deeply grieved, and spoke to them, at length, of Divine Providence and the Seraphic Poverty of St. Francis.

Catherine led a wholly crucified life, yet warned her sisters against imprudence in a life of penance. She did her best to instill holy unity, peace and charity among her sisters. On one occasion she said: "No tongue can express the peace which an innocent soul enjoys; one that puts a good construction on everything, and that judges no one. . . The judgment which belongs to Him, it leaves to Him, and forbids itself all examination into the conduct of others.

When her time came to be admitted to the Wedding Feast of eternity, her last wish was that they keep peace and charity among them. And she asked them to care for her blind mother, Blessed Benvenuta Mamellini, who had followed her to the monastery. It was on her deathbed that she gave her treatise on the *Seven Spiritual Arrows*, which had not yet been seen, to her confessor. She asked for her "violeta" a small stringed instrument on which she played and sang.

The Abbess of Bologna was a charismatic leader who had lived a holy and laborious life. Her lack of care for her own health had taken its toll. With the soul and drive of an artist, Catherine had spent all her energies toward perfecting the image of God, of Beauty, first in her own heart and then in the hearts of those entrusted to her care. "Those who enter religious life, she advises, should desire no miracle other than perseverance in that life." Pope Clement IX canonized her.

The Blessing of St. Catherine

Jesus, Mary, Francis, Clare and Our Lord be pleased to have mercy upon you, to bless and illuminate you, to protect and grant you peace.

Writings:

Rosarium metricum de Mysteriis Passionis Christi Domini, et de vita B.

Mariae Virginis.

Libellum de Septem Armis Necessariis subeunti certamen spirituale.

Libellum de revelationibus.

Opuscula varia ligato, ac soluto Sermone.

Resources:

- Admirable Life of the Holy Virgin S. Catherine of Bologna. London: Scola Press, *English Recusant Literature Series*, n. 274, 1975. 81-192. [Contains "The Seven Arrows" also.]
- Bush, Kate E., P.H.D. "A Voice to Tell": Listening to Catherine Vigri's Sermon on the Animals. *Franciscan Connections: The Cord — A Spiritual Review*, Vol 68—Issue 1, 2018.:27-30.
- *Hayes, Noreen. The Lives of Saint Catherine and Saint Clare in Translation: 1621-1635. A study presented at the NEH Seminar Report, 1989. [Typescript]
- Maura, O.S.F. "Artist of Divinity." *The Cord* 5 (1955): 38-44.
- Moorman, 557; Lynch, 247 - 250.
- Nuney, Lucius M., O.F.M. "Descriptio Breviarii S. Catherine Bononiensis." *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 4 (1911): 732-47. [The Breviary of St. Catherine, said to have been transcribed and illuminated with various figures of Christ and the B. Virgin Mary, by the saint.]
- Saint Catherine of Bologna. *Franciscan Book of Saints*, 337.
- **The Saint: A Short Life of St. Catherine of Bologna*, O.S.C. Revised by Guido Giugni. Bologna, 1984. Monastero del Corpus Domini, Via Tagliapietre, 23, CPA. P. 40123 Bologna. [Pamphlet.]



*Saint Clare of Assisi,
1194-1253, Assisi, Ita-
ly.*

*Foundress of the Order of
Poor Sisters. (Poor Clare
Nuns)*

***Patron:** Television,
Mariners*

***Feast Day:** August 11*

Hearing the Call

Clare belonged to the noble family of Favorone of Offreduccio. Her mother's faith, prayerful devotion, and charity to the poor surely planted the seeds that bore fruit in the life of her daughter Clare. Even as a young girl, Clare nourished this spirit of prayer and compassion for the needy, sending her portions of food to the poor of the city. Suitors sought her hand in marriage, but she would endeavor to convert them into faithful followers of Christ. Before long, to continue her life of devotion in her father's comfortable home was not enough.

Listening to Francis Bernardone preach the Gospel in the city square fed her own desire to live the poverty and humility of Jesus more fully. She went on to meet with Francis who instructed her, tested her desire, and discerned in her an even deeper call of the Holy Spirit to live the transcendent dimensions of the Gospel: espousal union with Christ. Bishop Guido approved her vocation and made the necessary arrangements for her to live it. On Palm Sunday Clare left the life she had known,

her inheritance, her home, her family, and secretly joined Francis and his brothers. Before long, Francis brought Clare and the others who had joined her to the little monastery of Saint Damian.

Living the Charism

Each person's vocation is a unique inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Clare's reading of the Gospel would not be the same as Francis'. She responded through her personality, her social environment, and femininity. Women are sanctified through loving, caring and nurturing. Christ's admonition to love one another fell on fertile soil in Clare's heart. This would be the focus of the Form of Life she wrote for her Poor Sisters. "Strive to preserve, above all things, that bond of unity which is the bond of perfect love." (St. Clare) Love is that deep oneness with God, with each other, and with all of creation, which defines our whole meaning and our whole on this earth as human beings, and our endless life in God. This is why Holy Poverty was so vital to Francis and Clare. They knew that poverty frees us from anything that would hinder our transformation into Christ.

Perhaps above all else, the sisters saw her as a woman who became prayer. They saw her lying prostrate ground, praying; they saw her lips moving in prayer throughout the day. And God was in her mouth when she came from prayer, for her words both taught and comforted them. It was as if she had come from heaven, they thought, and they were right. During the night she entered more deeply into God until she called her sisters to prayer at the midnight Office of Matins. If they did not respond, she called them personally. Even when she was ill, she did not omit her customary prayers. One Good Friday, and most of the night, Clare was totally caught up in contemplation of Jesus. During each of the two attacks on Assisi she was courageous, facing the enemy with her Christ and her prayer, and even offering herself as a hostage for her sisters protection. Through her prayer Christ protected their convent and their city.

Testimonies from those who knew Clare offer evidence of the person she was. Like how she never wanted to be an Abbess, but rather a humble servant of the sisters. When she asked the sisters to do something she was never overbearing, and took upon herself the tasks that were most degrading and distasteful to them. Although raised as a noble lady, she washed the feet of the sisters returning from errands, and took care of all the needs of the sick sisters. Clare also wove corporals when she was confined to bed, and made little boxes lined with for each one. She was always happy, and never seemed disturbed by anything. She was humble and always tried to make herself seem less in the eyes of others.

Clare treated everyone with kindness and compassion, but was severe with herself. If she saw a sister with a habit more threadbare than hers, she gave the sister the warmer clothing and took the thin one for herself. Her meager clothing was coarse and rough on her skin. She never excused her body, and fasted and abstained much too much, until Francis curtailed her practices. But she did like a little wine on Sundays. She slept on twigs herself, but at night she made the rounds of the dormitory, to make sure the sisters were covered from the cold.

Clare was always occupied with God, in the way she lived and in the way she spoke. It had been in hearing the Lady Clare speak of the love of Christ for us in his passion and death that Sister Philippa had determined to join Clare. Some days before Clare died, she asked Sister Amata: "Did you see the King of Glory as I did?" Images of persons and things dearest to us are manifested as we approach our last days. For Clare, the love of her heart, engraved in her spirit, was the Crucified Christ, the "King of Glory", a title inscribed on thirteenth century icons of the suffering Christ.

When Clare's death was approaching, she called her sisters together and entrusted her treasure of Holy Poverty to them, instructing them to faithful observance of their Form of Life

which she longed to have approved by the Holy See. Shortly, a brother came with a papal bull; Clare reverently took it, pressed the seal to her lips, and kissed it many times.

On the following day, Clare lie dying. She prayed: "Go forth calmly in peace, for you will have a good escort, because he who created you has sent you the Holy Spirit, and has guarded you as a mother does the child who loves her." Sister Anastasia asked her to whom she was speaking. Clare answered: "I am speaking to my soul." She spoke about the Trinity, but her voice was so soft the sisters were not able to hear her. And then she added: "O Lord, may you who created me, be blessed." This dying "thank you" for the gift of life is the utmost sign of deepest humility. and gratitude. No more need be said of Clare's holiness.

Clare left the sisters with her blessing: "May the Lord bless you and keep you; May he look upon you with the eyes of his mercy and give you peace; May he pour forth his graces upon you, abundantly, and in heaven, may he place you among his saints."

Sources:

The Versified Legend.

The Legend of Saint Clare of Assisi.

The Acts of the Process of Canonization of Saint Clare.

Writings:

The Rule of Saint Clare.

The Testament of Saint Clare.

The Four Letters to Agnes of Prague.

The Blessing of Saint Clare.

A Letter to Ermentrude of Bruges

Publications on the Writings:

- * *The Lady: Clare of Assisi, Early Documents*. Revised Edition and Translation by Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap. NY: New City Press, 2006.

.Omaechevarria, Ignatio, O.F.M. *Escritos de Santa Clara y Documentos Complementarios*. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1982. 16 -19.

Resources on St. Clare are extensive. The following is an abbreviated listing.

Aschmann, Mary Francis, P.C.C. "Clare: Mirror of Humanism." *The Cord* 44 (1994): 196-204.

Beha, Marie, O.S.C. "Mirror, Mirror, On the Wall." *The Cord* 51(2001): 176-83.

____. "Clare's Charism." *The Cord* 46 (1996): 181-92.

____. Clare's Prayer: Office of the Passion." *The Cord* 50 (2000): 166-74.

____. "The Vocation of Clare of Assisi." *The Cord* 45 (1995): 7-15.

Bodo, Murray, O.F.M. *Clare: A Light in the Garden*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1979. Revised and expanded edition: Franciscan Press, 1992.

Carney, Margaret, O.S.F. "Clare and the Franciscan Missionary Charism." *Franciscan Digest* 5 (1995): 39-55.

Downing, Frances Teresa, O.S.C. *This Living Mirror: Reflections on Clare of Assisi*. New York: Orbis Books, 1995.

Farnum, Mabel Adelaide. *St. Clare, Patroness of Television*. New York: Society of St. Paul, 1958; Wisconsin: Franciscan Publishers, 1961.

Fiege, Marianus, O.F.M. *The Princess of Poverty*. Evansville, IN: Monastery of Saint Clare, 1909; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989; The Newman Press, 1991.

Fortini, Arnaldo. "St. Clare, Lady of Light." *Saint Francis of Assisi*. New York: Crossroads, 1981. Pp. 327-66.

Giles, Mary E. "Creativity and Feminism: Clare and Teresa of Avila." *Clare of Assisi: A Medieval and Modern Woman*. Clare centenary Series, Vol. 8. St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1996.

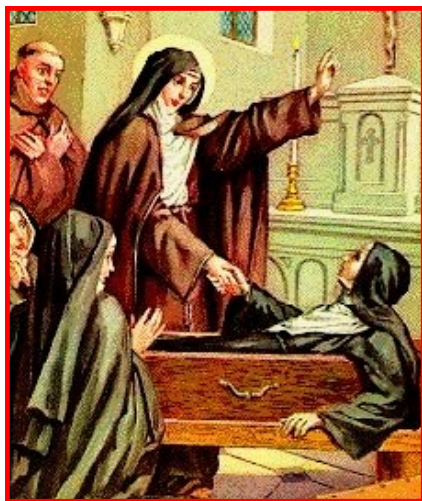
Godet-Calogeras, Jean-François. *Out of the Shadows: Clare and Franciscan Women*. Chicago, Illinois: Haversack, 1994.

---. *Clare of Assisi: A Woman's Life*. Chicago, Il: Haversack, 1992.

Habig, Marion A., O.F.M. *The Franciscan Book of Saints*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959; 1979. 596-600.

- Hart, Fidelis, O.S.C. "Following in the Footprints of the Poor Christ: Clare's Spirituality." *Medieval Religious Women: Peaceweavers*. Ed. Lillian Thoman Shank, and John A. Nichols. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987.
- Hone, Mary Francis, O.S.C. "Woman Most Powerful." *The Cord* 33 (1983): 206-14.
- _____. "The Refining of the Light: The Way of Purgation in Saint Clare of Assisi." *The Cord* 36 (1986): 3-15.
- Hutchinson, Gloria. *Six Ways to Pray from Six Great Saints*. Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1982. [Contains a chapter on Clare and Liturgical prayer.]
- Karecki, Madge, O.S.F. "Clare, an Enabling Leader." *The Cord* 38 (1987): 195-201.
- Knox, Leslie. "Clare of Assisi and Learning." *The Cord* 46 (1996): 171-79.
- Marie Aimée du Christ. "The Charism of St. Clare: A Prophecy for Women of Every Age." Trans. by Charles Serignat, O.F.M. Cap. *Greyfriars Review* 1 (1987): 77-91.
- Mary Clare, P.C.C. "The Finding of the Body of Saint Clare." *The Cord* 35 (1985): 247-53.
- Mary St. Paul, P.C.C. *Clothed With Gladness*. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2000.
- Miller, Ramona, O.S.F. *In the Footsteps of Saint Clare: A Pilgrim's Guide*. New York: The Franciscan Institute, 1993.
- Peterson, Ingrid, O.S.F. *Clare of Assisi: A Biographical History*. Quincy, Ill: Franciscan Press, 1993.
- Schneider, Christine Therese, S.S.J.-T.O.S.F. *Chiara Suffering Woman*. 1993. [Registered with Library of Congress for reproduction for the use of Blind or Physically Handicapped Individuals.]
- Thom, Francis Ann, O.S.C. "Clare of Assisi: New Leader of Women." *Peaceweavers: Medieval Women*. Ed. John A. Nichols and Lillian Thomas Shank. Cistercian Studies Series. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987.
- Thoman, Bret. *St Clare of Assisi: A Light from the Cloister*. Charlotte, van South Carolina, Tan Books, 2017.
- Van Asseldonk, Optatus, O.F.M.Cap. "The Holy Spirit in the Writings and Life of St. Clare." Trans. Charles Serignat, O.F.M.Cap. *Greyfriars Review* 1 (1987): 93-104.





*Saint Coletta (Boylet) of
Corbie, Abbess, + 1447.
Ghent, Belgium / Poligny,
France.*

*Reformer of Poor Clares and
Friars in France.*

Feast: February 7

Hearing the Call

Nicolette Boellet was the only child born to aged and devout middle class parents. Her devotion to the Passion of Christ was instilled in her by a loving mother who nicknamed her Colette. Her mother also gave her the example of thoughtfulness of the poor, so that she, too, gave her sweets and favorite foods to the needy. At age eight, her devoted father built her a small oratory. When she was nine she became attracted to the ideals of Sts. Francis and Clare about which she had read and seen lived by the local Friars.

As a young woman, Colette became an eloquent speaker, and often spoke of Jesus' love to her friends, and to the townspeople. Like St. Francis had, she begged people to love God. For this, she was boycotted by the clergy, but beloved by the poor, the lepers, and the abandoned women of the House of Refuge, as she walked gently among them, bringing peace and joy. She was weak and fearful, yet courageous and strong; beautiful, yet humble and self-effacing.

Colette rebelled against her father's demands that she

make a vow of virginity. She earned her living doing needlework and fine laces - the ordinary work of the common women in the area. Still awaiting God's will, Colette joined the Beguines, women who lived alone but gathered to care for the poor. But soon she realized she wanted a regular religious life. She tried a Benedictines community but their relaxed way of life was not for her. Saints Francis and Clare continued to draw her. The Poor Clare Urbanists of Pont-Sainte-Maxence accepted her as a servant. Here, too, she could not abide the lax observance, and left. The Third Order Secular Franciscans was proposed to her, so she became a Tertiary.

Then, Fr. Jéhan, her spiritual guide, suggested she become a Recluse, sealed into a room, dependent upon the charity of others. Colette's response was, "When may I begin? I am ready." But she had to obtain the permission of Abbot Raoul de Raye, who adamantly refused her. Colette returned to him again and again, until one day he said yes, and even offered his help. On September 17, 1402, the door of her small dwelling was sealed; Colette believed this was her final vocation.

In 1405, Fr. Henri de la Baume, a Franciscan concerned about reform within the Order, was traveling to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage of prayer for the revival of the Primitive Observance. A holy woman along the way directed him to speak with a recluse named Colette in Corbie. When he arrived, Colette instinctively knew the purpose of his visit. She knelt before the tabernacle and dedicated herself to Franciscan reform. The stones and door to her little dwelling for four years, were removed. She requested dispensation from her solemn vow, and set out for Niece to lay her requests before Pope Benedict XIII: 1. To become a Poor Clare; 2. For authorization to reform the Orders St. Francis founded.

Living the Charism

Pope Benedict XIII, the second Pope at that time, dispensed Colette from the year of probation as a novice, put the black veil on her head, and gave her a copy of the Rule of St.

marry. Not sure of God's will was for her, she was advised to

Clare. Then he placed her in the protection of Fr. Henri. Colette began her life as a Poor Clare, fearful and exhausted. She was an Abbess without a monastery, a community, nor a single follower. But soon others joined her, and Colette, as founder and reformer, labored long and with endless zeal to renew the Franciscan Order.

Her sisters remembered her as their dear and gentle mother, as patient and kind, always careful of the needs of others. She had great sympathy with anyone who was suffering and tried to relieve them however she could, with great compassion for anyone who was unhappy. Like St. Francis, she protected and cared for all animals, especially the small ones. She made friends with the little birds that came to her window, alighted on her hand, and sang. In one convent she reared a little Lamb that followed her around.

Colette was a humble woman, gentle and mild in her exercise of authority. For many years she refused to be called Mother, even though she was the Abbess General of all reformed convents and directress of several hundreds of Friars and Clares. From time to time she would delegate her office to others so that she could experience being an ordinary nun following the common Rule, washing dishes in the kitchen. In decision making, she was careful to consult the youngest novice.

Sister Colette embraced Holy Poverty, never keeping anything for herself. Whatever was given to her she would hand over to the community, or a sister in need of it. She loved books, yet gave them away. She always wanted others properly attended to, but was content with the smallest portions for herself. She personally saw to it that the sisters' clothing was cut out properly, but for herself, any old habit was good enough. Her clothing was poor and without a lining. If her sisters sewed one in, she would tear it out. On her death bed, her habit was seen to consist of one hundred pieces. Her bed was of straw with a cover over it. She

fasted every day, never eating meat. Ever open and liberal where her sisters were concerned, careful and motherly with them, but harsh with herself.

Her devotion to Christ is characterized by devotion to the passion, the cross, and the Eucharist. Colette was exceptionally devout in praying the Liturgy of the Hours, and long litanies as well. Her clear voice would resound above the other sisters. However, she frequently absented herself because of the intense physical pains she suffered. Colette was constantly ill and suffered in every part of her body. She went wherever she was needed even if she could hardly walk. But along with all the hardships an overflowing joy radiated from her.

She suffered much from her eyes and did allow them a little care, only because she wanted to continue to see the image of God on earth in the faces of human beings, to contemplate the Blessed Sacrament, and to read the Liturgy of the Hours. These were her pleasures, the blessings she was not so quick to renounce.

It was Colette's personal decision that each monastery have a small oratory or hut, and that is where she usually could be found, although this was not an option for the sisters. She loved to attend Mass privately there, possibly a mark of her love of a reclusive life. She slept little, spending the night in prayer for all her children throughout the world. One evening one of the nuns succeeded in overhearing her at prayer in her tiny cell saying over and over all night long: "Lord, who art Thou and who am I?"

Sister Colette knew when her death was approaching, and wanted to be placed in the earth without any cloth covering her body. She left many friends who loved her dearly. To all she left an example of a holy life.

Note: For the history of her reforms, or an account of her miracles and extraordinary gifts, see the resources below. The following is a partial list of all the resources available on St. Colette.

Writings:

Sentiments sur la Sainte Règle.

Petites Ordinances.

Constitutions. Approved in 1434. Original at Besançon.

Intentions. Copies at Gand, Besançon, Poligny and other monasteries.

A letter sent to Ghent completing the "Intentions".

Dévote Exhortation. [An old ms. remains in the Monastery of Ghent. A copy transcribed in 1770 is preserved at the Bibliotheque municipale de Besançon.]

Derniers avis de Ste. Colette á ses filles. Copy at Besançon.

Letters to the religious of Ghent.

" " a friend in Ghent, Marie Boquiel.

" " her confessor, Pierre de Vaux.

" " many people of Ghent.

" " many benefactors (original at Ghent).

" " Mahaut de Savoie (original at Poligny).

Letter which St. Colette wrote to Vevay "sur le trépas du frère Henri de la Baulme" dated from Besançon, 26 February.

Letter written to "Meres de ce sien couvent du Puy."

Supplication de la Bienheureuse Mère Colette au Roi Charles, pour la commune de Corbie. [A request by Mother Colette to King Charles on behalf of the community at Corbie.]

Letter addressed to "Soeur Angés de Vaux, abbesse d'Hesdin." [This is a more recent copy of a letter written to the convt of Arras.]

Letter to "Soeur Louise Bassende." [To a religious in the convent of Auxonne.]

2 letters addressed to the religious of Corbie.

Publications on the writings:

Declarations and Ordinances made upon the Rule of our Holy Mother St. Clare, 1622." Ed. D. M. Rogers. London: Scolar press, English Recussant Literature Series, 226, 1977.

First Rule of Saint Clare and the Constitutions of Colette. Chicago: Angel Guardian press, 1924.

Sentiments of St. Colette of Corbie: the Original Text of Her Constitutions. Trans. Mary Francis Aschmann, P.C.C., Roswell, NM: Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, 1970.

Testament of Saint Colette. Trans. Mary Francis Aschmann, P.C.C. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1987.

Resources:

- Ashmann, Mary Francis,, P.C.C. *Walled-in Light: Saint Colette*. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1959.
- De Clary, I: 320-3.
- Felicity, Sister, P.C.C. *Barefoot Journey*. Illus. Rosemary Haughton. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961.
- Habig, 95: Lynch, 241-244.
- John Paul II's Book of Saints*. Ed. Matthew Bunson. Huntington, ID: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1999, p. 24.
- Lopez, Elizabeth. Colette of Corbie (1381-1447) *Learning and Holiness*. St. Bonaventure University, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2011.
- *Perrin, Elizabeth Saint-Marie, *St. Colette and Her Re form*. Trans. Conor Maguire. London & Edinburg: Sands & Co., 1924.
- Marie-Elizabeth. "Colette of Corbie." Trans. Sergius Wroblewski, OFM, *Greyfriars Review* 4 (1990): 101-6.
- O'Brien, Celsus, O.F.M. *The Story of the Poor Clares*. Limerick: Franciscan Friary, 1992: 22-4.
- Osservatore Romano* 34, 1988., pg. 14.
- Shimberg, Albert Paul. *Tall in Paradise: The Story of Saint Coletta*. Francestown, N.H.: Marshall Jones, 1947.



*Saint Eustochia
Esmeralda Calafato, 1434-1485 Messina,
Sicily [Catania] Italy.*

A Patron of Messina

Feast: January 19

Hearing the Call

Countess Mathilda of Calafato, a Secular Franciscan dedicated to works of charity and devotion, was told by a stranger that her child must be born in a stable. There in the village of Annunziata in Messina, the child she and her husband, Count Bernard, had long awaited, was born.

As a child Esmeralda was drawn to prayer and kindness toward the poor, like her mother, and this increased the more she grew able to see the image of Christ in them. Her father arranged two marriages for her when she was 11 years old, but both suitors died suddenly. Esmeralda desired to have only Jesus for her Spouse. After a determined struggle, at 12 years of age, and after the death of her father, she succeeded in making her way to the Urbanist Poor Clares in Messina.

Living the Charism

In 1446, Esmeralda received the holy habit, taking the name, Eustochia, and as her patrons, St. Francis, St. Paul, St. Jerome and Blessed Jacapone da Todi. As a novice, she distinguished herself by a love of poverty, a spirit contemplation of the

Passion of Christ chose for herself all that was most inconvenient, chastised her body, fasted in bread and water often.

In 1456, Eustochia received papal authority to start a monastery of the First Rule of St. Clare, funded by her family. Her sister and niece went with her, but they had to endure untold persecution from their former community, and desertion by those who first followed her. After the roof collapsed, they moved to Montevergine, where many others joined them to become a flourishing community. In 1460 she became 30 years old and was named Abbess by the Provincial. She remained in this office for the rest of her life, with Sister Jacoba alternating terms with her. She sustained many trials and troubles but through prayer and patience came through them all.

Eustochia's particular characteristic was the contemplation of the Life of Jesus. Using a book on the holy Land, she would visit in spirit the various places, contemplating the mysteries of Christ's life and passion, and of his dear Mother. Sister Jacoba Pollocino, her biographer, tells us that her Chapter meetings would last two or three hours, as she would explain the words of Jesus to the community. She told her sisters: "Recall constantly to your spirit, and savor the words—sweet as honey—that my most sweet Lord addresses to us in the sacred scripture." Eustochia celebrated the Liturgy of the Hours with great devotion, and reverent posture, for it framed her life in the Word of God.

Eustochia would be lost in adoration of the Body of Christ for many hour, both day and night. She desired to be totally transformed into Christ her Bridegroom, filling herself with God in prayer, only to pour herself out on her sisters in a thousand ingenuous acts of charity., and nursing them during the plague. She would empty the food cupboard for the poor, and when nothing was left for the sisters she would pray, and all necessities were provided in abundance.

Saint Eustochia received an invisible stigmata, the crown of thorns, and endured terrible pain in her hands and feet, as if

to crown her love of her suffering Christ. It is said that the wound in her side was visible.

Eustochia died on January 20, at the age of 54, and was buried in the Church of the monastery. Tradition has it that one day some sisters at prayer heard a knocking coming from the tomb. When it was opened her body was found to be as fresh as in life, and is venerated today in the Convent of Montevergine, still incorrupt after five centuries.

Writings:

Il Libro della Passione.

Resources:

De Clary, I: 320-3.

Fiege, 211; Habig, 107.

John Paul II's Book of Saints. Ed. Matthew Bunson. Huntington, I D:

Our Sunday Visitor. Publishing Division, 1999, p. 24.

Holy Anorexia, 140-5.

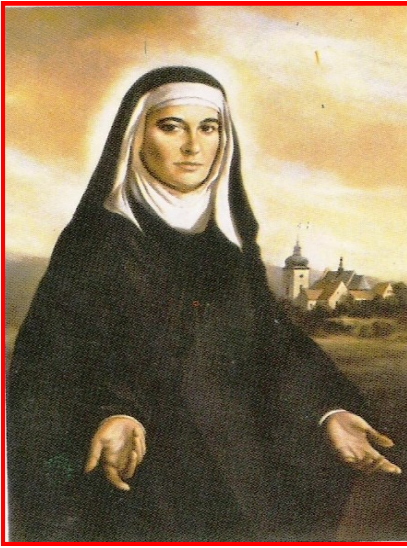
MartFran, Jan. 20 [Note: Her mother Eustochia Colonna-Calafati became a Tertiary and is listed in Martyrology on Oct 17.]

Moorman, 557.

* "Like St. Eustochia, be united to Jesus and all seek to walk together."

Osservatore Romano (English Edition) no. 34, August 22, 1988, p. 14.)

Saint Eustochia Smeralda Calafato. Monastero Clarisse Montevergine, Via 24 Maggio, 161-98122 Messina (Italy). Available in English, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese.



*Saint Kinga, Kunda,
(Cunegunda, Zingua), of
Poland, 1224-1292, Ger-
many | Crakow, Poland.*

**Patron of Poland, Lithua-
nia, Salt Miners**

Feast: July 23/24

Hearing the Call

Kinga was the daughter of King Bela IV of Hungary with the title of Duchess. Even in her youth she was known for her devotion to prayer, and her concern and charity for the poor. She assisted in the governing her people and was loved by them, visiting the poor and helping lepers. She reluctantly married Duke Boleslaus V, but convinced him to make a vow of chastity. Upon the death of her husband she sold all her material wealth and gave the money to the poor, gave up the kingdom she inherited, and became a Poor Clare.

Living Clare's Charism

Kinga entered one of the monasteries her family built. As Abbess, she did not want anyone to refer to her past role as Grand Duchess of Poland. She lived as a penitent, spending her life in contemplation, and always devoted to the poor and to the sick. She was an extraordinary personality in the history of Poland, given the title "Mother of the Polish Nation."

Kinga Died on July 24th and was canonized by Pope John Paul II on June 16, 1999.

Resources

BF, 952, n. 4524 (1958-63); 1038, n. 7545-7 (1964-73); 667, n. 8412-3 (1974-80); 646, n.8087-90 (1981-85).

Bruson, Elia, O.F.M., Cunegund, the Poor Clare, Proclaimed a Saint.

Communion and Communications , No. 29, July 1999, p. 112-114.

Fiege, 137, 211; Habig, 543.

Marianus, 166; *MartFran*, July 24.

SerMart, January 10.

Szwarga, Kazimierz. "Dzieje relikwii bl. Kingi." *Księga pamiatkowa jubileuszu Seminarium Duchownego w Tarnowie (1821-1971)*. Tarnów: Kuria Diecezjalna, 1971. 245-60.

Textus latinus Missae in honorem Sanctae Cunegundis virginis. *Communion and Communications*, No. 30, December 1999, p. 54-58.

* www.CatholicSaints.org.



*Saint Philippa
(Filippa) Marelli,
1220 -1236. Borgo S.
Pietro/Rieti, Italy.*

*First Poor Clare to be beat-
ified.*

Feast: February 16

Hearing the Call

Philippa was the daughter of Don Pietro, Lord of Mare-
ria, and Donna Imperatrice, wealthy and high born. She was a
studious and precocious child, with a mature character. When
Saint Francis sometimes stayed at the home of Don Pietro, his
presence and speech instilled in her a longing to belong only to
Jesus Christ. Her family was indignant when she refused the
marriage her father intended; her brother, Thomas, the worst of
all. To escape their ridicule she stayed in her room. Finally, she
cut off her hair, dressed in shabby clothes and secretly went to
live with some women solitaires in the hills. When Thomas saw
her courage he went to her and asked forgiveness. He offered her
a church he owned and repaired the adjacent monastery. Soon it
held a small community.

Living Clare's Charism

Philippa remembered St. Francis and fixed her mind on
the kind of life he had prescribed for Clare. Like another Saint
Clare, she surpassed the others in her humility, charity and

work in the house, and spared herself no labor to lighten the burdens of her sisters. She was a true mother, consoling them in their sufferings and leading them along the way to union with God. She especially cherished holy poverty, teaching her sisters not to be anxious for tomorrow, but to trust in the goodness of their heavenly Father. She was ever solicitous for those in sin and would coax them back to God. She could move the hardest hearts.

Philippa knew when her death was near. Although in intense pain she thought only of her daughters. She spoke tenderly to them, exhorting them to grow in virtue, and above all, to keep peace among themselves, using the words of St. Paul: "May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

Her cult was approved by Innocent IV from the moment of her death. Blessed Philippa was the first Poor Clare to be publicly honored.

Resources:

Annales Minorum, Vol. II, p. 472-75.

BF, 673 (1974-1980); 655 (1981-85).

De Clary, I: 257-60.

Fiege, 117; Habig



*Saint Veronica Giuliani,
C.S.C. Cap., Abbess, 1660-
1727. Città di Castello,
Italy.*

Feast: July 10

Hearing the Call

Ursula was the youngest of seven daughters born into the wealthy Giuliani family of Mercatello, Italy. She was a cheerful and quiet child. When still a young girl she gave herself to prayer and meditation, and would be easily moved to tears by the Passion of Christ. By age fourteen she knew she wanted to be a Spouse of Christ. Her father made it clear that he would give her anything she wanted, but she must not be a nun. For three years he tried every conceivable way of turning her from her resolution. Finally, he told her he consented, yet repeatedly sent a young man to bring her flowers and speak with her, still contriving to change her mind.

Meanwhile, two of her sisters entered the Urbanist Poor Clares at Mercatello. Later on a third would join them, which caused Ursula terrible anguish. Again, her father told her he had made arrangements for her to visit two convents. Secretly, he told her sisters to speak to her of marriage. That was enough for Ursula. She told him that if he persisted in this way he would never see her again. Ursula went on to say to him: "Life is like the wind. If I become a nun, you will be spared the final agony

of your having refused me." She minced no words, so that he was converted, and led a Christian life from that moment.

Because of Ursula's great devotion to Saints Francis and Clare, she chose the poor Monastery of Capuchin Poor Clares at Città di Castello. But when she applied, there was no vacancy. She implored her uncle to ask the Bishop to intervene for her. The news soon followed that the sisters would accept her. Ursula was in a state of jubilation! "I am Yours! I am Yours!"

Living the Charism

Three months after entrance she was clothed in the habit and given the name of Veronica, she who comforted Christ in his Passion, which pleased her greatly. Like her Holy Mother, St. Clare, she desired to conform to the Poor Crucified in all things (Leg. IX, 14), beginning with obedience. She was punctual at all exercises, willingly did all the work asked of her, and more, observed silence, was gentle in conversation, devoted to prayer and mortification, and humble and pleasant towards all.

Following her novitiate she took her turn at the various charges: kitchen, infirmary, linen room, turn, pantry, sacristy. She performed all functions with calmness, exactness and diligence, and considered herself the servant of all. Then she was appointed Novice Mistress.

Sister Veronica considered those young Spouses of Christ as her daughters and acted as a loving mother towards them. At the same time, she instilled in them the spirit of the Rule, and of mortification. She tried to be a model for her novices, always cheerful and welcoming towards them, even to joining them in their recreation of hunting grasshoppers. She would humble herself before them, asking pardon for her faults. She taught them to consecrate all the actions of the day to God, and thereby maintain a perpetual act of love. When she met a novice busily at her work she would ask her: Sister, what are you doing? The expected reply was: "I am loving God." Veronica held this posi-

tion for twenty-two years.

Then, much to her dread, the community elected her Abbess. They also expected her to continue as Novice Mistress at the same time, which she did for eleven more years, until her death. In the fervor of her devotion to Mary, Veronica wanted the sisters to consider the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Abbess of the monastery. Veronica comported herself humbly, as the servant of the sisters, and her love assured them they could always have recourse to her, certain of being listened to in any distress, at any hour.

She was particularly concerned to maintain community life and restore it to the Primitive Observance of St. Clare. She began by instilling in her sisters a love of Holy Poverty, so dear to Sts. Francis and Clare, which she modeled for them by her life. She allowed herself no preferences in her cell, food or clothing. She washed dishes with her sisters, and always choose the repulsive jobs for herself.

At the same time, there was to be no scarcity of provisions, nor of anything allowed by the Rule. Because of the cramped space in the convent, she added a new dormitory wing. She had an abundant supply of water diverted to the monastery and connected to every area of the house, so the sisters no longer had to carry water from a well. And like St. Clare, she provided that the sick sisters were taken care of, often by herself.

Veronica fulfilled her responsibilities diligently, besides bearing with her own physical illnesses, interior struggles, and temptations, and the painful rejection she endured by some. Added to these were the penances she imposed upon herself, in the spirit of St. Francis who spared himself in nothing in order to be transformed into Christ.

Then, Veronica was given the Stigmata of the wounds of Christ. At first, the crown of thorns, then gradually, the others, causing unbearable pain. Doctors tried to ease her torments but only increased her suffering. She offered all for the evangelization of the world. In the spirit of St. Clare her love went beyond

the enclosure by her intense desire to travel the globe to preach to all those in prisons and hospitals that they might know God. Despite sleepless nights of suffering she was always cheerful and serene. She managed to write her complete spiritual autobiography, books on the spiritual life, and letters to those seeking her guidance. Veronica understood what Saint Clare had learned, that nothing is too hard for one who loves.

The day came when Veronica knew she was going to her Spouse soon. She asked pardon of all the sisters, and confessed her lack of every virtue. As she lay confined to bed, her last agony lasted for thirty days. Her sufferings became violent at times, but there were also moments of supreme joy, like when she received her Spouse in the Eucharist. At the end, she held out her crucifix for the sisters to kiss her beloved crucified, telling them: "Never lose sight of the infinite love He has shown us."

On Friday, July 9th, 1727, she bowed her head and breathed a final sigh. When her body was examined her heart was found to have the instruments of the passion of Christ engraved upon it.

Note: Accounts of her wounds, her intimate writings, and miracles are found in the following writings and resources:

Published Writings:

Sola con Dio solo. Rome: Città Nuova, 1992. [Considered to be the most original mystical Dictionary]

Il Diario. Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 1989.

Diario di S. Veronica Giuliani: Volume VII, Indici analitici Generali. Ed. Lazaro Iriarte, O.F.M. Cap. Città di Castello: Monastero delle Cappuccine, 1991.

Diario: Indici analitici. Vol. 7. Ed. L. Iriarte. Assisi: Porziuncola, 1989. [A general bibliography of Veronican works.]

Esperanza e dottrina mistica. Ed. Lazaro Iriarte, O.F.M. Cap. Rome: Editrice Laurentianum, 1981. [Spanish: Madrid: B.A.C., 1991; French: Paris: S.E.R.A.C.E., 1989.]

Esperta di Dio. S. Veronica Giuliani. Città di Castello: Centro Studi, 1983.

- Il Diario*. Pref. R. Piccinelli. Siena: Edizione Cantagalli, 1989.
- Il mio Calvario*. Ed. O. Fiorucci. Città di Castello, 1960.
- The Purgatory of Love* (Il purgatorio d' Amore). Trans. Dr. Oliver Knox. Città di Castello: Centro Studi Veronichiano, 1983.
- Visioni*. Comp. M. Baldini. Ed. Nardini. Firenze: 1991.
- Il mio Calvario: Autobiografia*. Città di Castello: Monastero delle Cappuccine, 1960, 1976.
- Il Purgatorio d' amore*. Ed. A. Minciotti. Città di Castello, 1980. [Contains comparative indices for Veronica's writings. Also available in English, German, French, Spanish, and Polish]
- Letere*. Ed. M. G. Fulvi, and L. Iriarte. Assisi: Portiuncola, 1989. [With this volume the writings of the saint are complete. It contains 443 letters written to sisters, confessors and bishops.]
- Un tesoro nascosto ossia Diario di S. Veronica Giuliani*. Nuova edizione curata dal sac. Oreste Fiorucci. Five vols. Città di Castello. [These volumes contain the entire corpus of Writings.]
- Veronica (S.) Giuliani*. Fragmentum ineditum Diarii asservatum in Arch. Prov. Ven. Cap. *L'Italia Francescana* 35 (1960): 384-8.

Resources:

- Bell, Rudolph M. *Holy Anorexia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985. 54-83. [A study on Veronica's extreme fasting from food.]
- BF*, 690, n. 3615 -7 (1938-39); 333, n. 5225; 337, n. 5286-89 (1940 -46); 614, n. 2642; 615, n. 2643 (1949 -50); 860-1, n. 4118-4123 (1951 -53); 963, n. 4610 (1958-63); 677, n. 8545 (1974 -1980).
- Courbat, Monique. Veronica Giuliani: Writing and Rewriting. Trans: Edward Hagman, O.F.M. Cap. *Greyfriars Review* 13 (1999): 297-317.
- De Clary, III, 179-98.
- Dictionnaire de mystique chrétienne*. Paris: Migne, 1858: 856.
- Habig, 503.
- Hess, Cuthbert [of Brighton], O.F.M. Cap. Veronica Giuliani. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 15. New York, 1912: 363.
- Iriarte, Lazzaro, O.F.M.Cap. Ed. St. Veronica: Doctor of the Church. *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 73 (1980): 384-6.
- ____. The Franciscan Spirit of St. Veronica Giuliani. Trans. Edward Hagman, O.F.M.Cap. *Greyfriars Review* 2 (1993): 193-227.
- Life and Teachings of St. Veronica Giuliani*. Dover: Delaware, U.S.A. 2006.

- Lollini, Massimo. Obedient Writing and Tridentine Mysticism in Veronica Giuliani. Trans. Edward Hagman, O.F.M.Cap. *Greyfriars Review* 14(2000): 21-41.
- Lynch, 451-3.
- Millane, Pacelli, O.S.C. *St. Veronica Giuliani of Città di Castello: The Search for God in the Tradition of St. Clare*. A thesis presented at St. Bonaventure University, New York, 1994: 84-109.
- Picciafuoco, Umberto, O.F.M. "St. Francis in the Piety and Mystical Experience of St. Veronica Giuliani, Based On Her Diary." *Greyfriars Review* 10 (1996): 89-106.
- Renna, Thomas. St. Veronica Giuliani and the Stigmata. *The Cord* 54 (2004): 170-8.
- Salvatori, Filippo Maria, S.J. *Vita della Beata Veronica Giuliani Badessa delle Cappuccine in S. Chiara di Città di Castello*. Rome: Lazzarini, 1803. [7 Italian editions, 2 German, 3 Polish, 1 French, 2 Spanish, 2 Portuguese, 1 Greek.]
- * _____. *The Lives of S. Veronica Giuliani, Capuchin Nun, and Blessed Battista Varani of the Order of Saint Clare*. London: Washbourne, 1874.
- St. Veronica Giuliani. Extracts from the diary of St. Veronica Giuliani, Abbess of the Convent of Capuchinesses at Città di Castello. Translated from Italian by Sr. Francis, Tertiary. *The Franciscan Annals* 67 (1944-45): 80-82, 110-112, 14-143, 170-172, 203-205, 237-239, 295-297, 334-336.

II *Poor Clare Martyrs*

Index**Martyrs—326 (?)**

Poor Clare Martyrs of France	55
Poor Clare Martyrs of Germany	58
Poor Clare Martyrs of Poland	59
Poor Clare Martyrs of Rome	61
Poor Clare Martyrs of Syria	61
Poor Clare Martyrs of Spain	62
Other Poor Clare Martyrs	67

Poor Clare Martyrs of France

Marguerite de Rouen, Martyr, 1557. Rouen, France.

Two Poor Clares were martyred by the Calvinists in Rouen, France. The name of the other sister is not available.

Resources:

MartFran, September 26.

The Abbess and nuns of the Aurillac Monastery.

All died in prison, during the French Revolution in 1794.

Resources:

Oliger, Livarius, O.F.M. La caduta di S. Giovanni d'Acrida nel 1291 e una leggenda agriografica migratoria. *Miscellanea Pio Paschini* (Rome)I (1949): 327-47.

Gregoire, P. *Les religieuses de Nantes durant la persecution revolutionnaire*. Nantes, 1921.

Guérin, M. Louis. *L'Auréole de Sainte Claire*. Remondet-Aubin, 1867.

Schmitt, Clément. Les Clarisse Urbanistes et Colletines de Metz pendant la Révolution. *Memoires de l'Académie nationale de Metz*. Metz: Impr. spéciale des voix lorraines, 1921.



*Blessed Josephine Leroux,
Martyr +1794. Valenciennes,
France.*

Feast: October 21

Hearing the Call

Anne-Joseph Leroux was born on October 23, 1749. She entered the Urbanist Poor Clares at Valenciennes when she was 22 years old, receiving the name Marie -Josephine. She professed her vows in 1770 at the outbreak of the French Revolution.

Religious were driven from their convents so, Josephine returned to her home. Soon after, word was heard that the Austrians had invaded Valenciennes. Josephine tried to return to her enclosure, but the monastery had not yet been rebuilt, so she stayed with the Ursulines where her sister was a member. But the Revolutionary army retook the city and Josephine was placed under arrest as having been disloyal to her country by attempting to return to religious life.

Living the Charism

It is especially in events subsequent to her arrest that we can see the light of Saint Clare shining in her inner peace, and loving charity. When the band of soldiers came to arrest her, she made light of the fact, saying to them: "It was hardly necessary to make so much ado to take a weak woman captive!" She proceeded to serve her captors refreshments, then followed them to prison.

Josephine was condemned to death for her fidelity to

religious life. With serenity and resignation she accepted her sentence, and received the Eucharist as her strength for the journey to her Divine Bridegroom. She cheerfully approached the place of execution, singing hymns along the way, and expressed her good fortune at being found worthy to give her life for the Catholic Faith. "Could anyone fear to leave this place of exile when she considers the beauty of paradise?"

At the scaffold, she kissed the hand of her executioner and in a clear voice forgave everyone, then she placed her head on the block. Her blood sister, Mary Scholastic, and four other Ursulines, died a martyr's death with her on October 23, 1794. Beatified November 3, 1920.

Resources:

Guerin, Loius François. L'Aureole de Saints Claire: Histoire de la persécution Revolutionnaire souffert pat les filles de Saints Claire.... Aix: Remondet-Aubin, 1867.

*Habig 787-8; Iriarte: 468; MartFran - Oct. 23.

Poor Clare Martyrs of Germany

Dorothea Roler, Martyr +1461 , Nurnberg, Germany.

The most well known member of a community of martyrs:

Agnes Reser died 1462.

Elizabeth Gebner, died December 21, 1462.

Dorothea von Brunned, died July 28, 1463.

Clara Riederdorfer, died 1464.

Anna Wipfl, died July 28, 1464.

Adelheid and Heidel Hafner, both died September 22, 1464.

Catharina Bollet, died 1489.

Catharina Widmann, died 1490.

Barbara Rod, Abbess in Pfullingen, died 1507.

Margaret Fleischmann, and Christina Reisel, died 1510.

Resources:

SerMart, January 1.

Poor Clare Martyrs of Poland

Fifty-nine Poor Clares slain by Tartars, At Zarwichost, on February 2, 1260 (1259):

Agatha Zawichost, Agnes Jastrzebska, Bertilda di Varsavia, Caterina di Radymno, Chiara di Kracov, Cordola di Slaukowo, Cristina di Woynicz, Dislava di Lowitz, Domicilla di Warta, Brykcia di Chenyncy, Donislava di Moseiska, Donislava di Sandomir, Dorea do Przemyśl, Dorotea di Posnan, Edvige di Zatoria, Elena di Tarnow, Elizabetta di Koziwnca, Eva di Potylicz, Felicissima di Grodek, Felicita di Bochnia, Giaromilla di Varsavia, Gioconda di Wieliczka, Giovanna di Zawichost, Giuliana di Czestochowa, Godola di Skala, Marcellina di Miechow, Margherita di Jaroslaw, Margherita di Kalisz, Margarita de Sandomir, Marina di Leopoli, Martina di Oswiecim, Odislava di Warka, Oliveria di Plokozsk, Onorata di Zawichost, Onoria di Plock, Orsola di Prosowice, Ottilia di Casimiria, Ottolia di Sandecz, Paola di Sandomir, Petronilla di Ilza, Scolastica di Stradom, Sofia do Opatow, Stanislaa di Opoczno, Sventoca di Melsztyn, Vitoslava di Busko, Vislavia di Clepardia, Vislabona di Wladislaw, Visomira di Rzeszow, Viszomira di Lowitz, Wolislava di Lubino, Zlotoslava di Prosowice.

Resources:

Castigacio Scriptores 328. Lists names of all the Poor Clares martyred at this time.

Del Valle, C., O.F.M. Brillante martirologio de las Clarisas. *Misiones Franc.* 37 (1953): 355-9.



*Blessed Mary Teresa of the Child
Jesus (Mieczysława Kowalska, O.S.C.
Cap. Martyr. 1902-1941, Warsaw,
Poland*

Hearing the Call

Teresa entered the Capuchin Poor Clares at Przasnysz on January 23, 1923, partly to make reparation for her atheistic family. She made perpetual vows on July 26, 1928.

Living the Charism

Sister Teresa was a delicate and sickly person, but well disposed towards all, and most noteworthy for the strength of her dedication to God. She was ill with tuberculosis when the Germans broke into their monastery and took all thirty-six sister to the concentration camp. In Działdowo. Because of hunger, continual terror, and lack of water the sisters became ill, especially Sister Teresa who could hardly stand but sustained her sufferings with great courage. Like St. Clare, who placed herself between the invading army and her sisters, Sister Mary Teresa offered her life so that her sisters could return safely to their convent. Two weeks after she died the sisters were set free, something quite remarkable, because the Germans never released anyone from the concentration camps. The memory of her exemplary life and martyrdom continued after her death. Pope Paul II proclaimed her blessed on June 13, 1999.

Resources:

Communion and Communication, No. 30, December 1999, p. 59.
Continenti Missionari Cappuccini 5/6 (1999).

Poor Clare Martyrs of Rome

Domitilla of Perugia, Martyr , +1460 (1451). Rome, Italy.

Resources:

SerMart, February 16; *MartFran*, February 16.

Poor Clare Martyrs of Syria (Acre, Tripoli)

Seventy-Four Poor Clares were slain by the Mohammedans at Acre, in 1289.

They disfigured their faces, cutting off their noses to preserve their virginity for their Spouse. All were cruelly slaughtered.

Sixty-nine Poor Clares slain by the Mohammedans at Tripoli in 1289.

Resources:

Del Valle, C., O.F.M. Brillante martirologio de las Clarisas. *Misiones Franc.* 37 (1953): 355-9.

Habig, 1018; Marianus, 160 -3.

Poor Clare Martyrs of Spain





Blessed María Felicidad Masía Ferragud, O.S.C.Cap. Martyr.

Martyred on October 25, 1936, Valencia, Spain, during the Spanish Civil War. Beatified March 11, 2001.

Resources:

<http://newsaints.faithweb.com/martyrs>



Blessed Isabel Calduch Rovira. O.S.C.Cap.

Born on May 9, 1882 in Castellon, Spain. Martyred on April 13, 1937 at Castellón, during the Spanish Civil War. Beatified March 11, 2001 by Pope John Paul II.

<https://catholicSaints.Info>.



Blessed María Joaquina Masía Ferragud (María Veronica)

Born in 1884. Martyred on October 25, 1936 in Valencia, Spain during the Spanish Civil War. Beatified March 11, 2001.



Blessed María Vincenta Masía Ferragud, (María Jesús) O.S.C. Cap. Martyr.

Born on January 12, 1882. Martyred on October 25, 1936, Valencia, Spain during the Spanish Civil War. Beatified March 11, 2001.



Blessed Maria Milagro Ortells Gimeo, O.S.C. Cap., Martyr.

Born on November 29, 1882. Martyred November 25, 1936, at Picadero de Paterna, Spain, during the Spanish Civil War. Beatified March, 11, 2001.



Purificación Asencio Vila (Encarnación), O.S.C.Cap. Martyr.

Born on April 22, 1892., in Albal, Spain. Martyred on October 2, 1936 at Silla, Valencia, Spain during the Spanish Civil War.

Agatha Ametler, Poor Clare Martyr, +1558. Ciudadela, Minorca.

Martyred by Turkish pirates in 1558.

Concepción Guevara Zarzuela (Maria Josefa of the Blessed Sacrament) O.S.C.Cap. Martyr.

Born in 1884, at Cádiz, Spain. Martyred on November 19, 1936 in Málaga, Spain during the Spanish Civil War.

Elisa López Lobelle (Carmen of the Child Jesus) O.S.C.Cap. Martyr.

Born April 8, 1908. Martyred on September 24, 1936 at Málaga, Spain during the Spanish Civil War.

Filipa Fernández de Gamboa y Ruiz de Azúa (Asuncion of St. Anthony) Martyr.

Born in 1888 at Alava, Spain. . Martyred on August 14, 1936. during the Spanish Civil War.

SCG Francesca de S. Antonio, + 1598. Jaén, Spain. [Martyrs]

Together with Maria di S. Francesco, they were doubly sisters: both by blood and by faith .

MartFran, April 8.



*Francesca Peneli Ferreres (Trinidad)
O.S.C.Cap. Martyr.*

Born on February 22, 1886 at Albal. Martyred on October 2, 1936 in Albal, Valencia, Spain, during the Spanish Civil War.

*Inés Sota Garayoa, O.S.C. Cap (Inés of St. Paschal)
Martyr.*

Born in 1898 at Navarra, Spain. Martyred on October 2, 1936 during the Spanish Civil War.

*Josefa Belarra Otamendi (Josef of Saint Paschal.)
Martyr.*

Born 1892 at Barindano, Navarra, Spain. Martyred on October 2, 1936 during the Spanish Civil War.

*Manuela Molís López (Maria of Peace) O.S.C.Cap.
Martyr.*

Born 1857. Martyred on August 19, 1936 in Madrid, Spain during the Spanish Civil War.

*María Antonia Pascau Castán (Antonia of Saint Raphael)
O.S.C.Cap. Martyr.*

Born in 1879 at Calasanz, Spain. Martyred on October 2, 1936 at Huesca, Spain during the Spanish Civil War.

María de la Concepción Sanchez Marqués (Teresa of Jesus) O.S.C.Cap. Martyr.

Martyred at Valencia, Spain on November 25, 1936, during the Spanish Civil War.



María Concepción Vila Hernández, O.S.C. Cap. Martyr.

Born on August, 8, 1880 at Albal. Martyred on September 8, 1936, at Silla, Valencia, Spain, during the Spanish Civil War.



Vincenta Asencia Vila -(Refugio) O.S.C. Cap. Martyr.

Born on January 21, 1876 at Albal, Valencia. Martyred on October 2, 1936 in Albal, Spain, during the Spanish Civil War.

Poor Clare Martyrs: Country not known.

Agatha Marella, Virgin & Martyr.

Year or place of Martyrdom is not available.

Resources:

MartFran, May 6.

Giovanna "Piccola",

Year or place of martyrdom is not available.

Resources:

MartFran, September 26.

Anonymous Martyr, +1563, Borgogna.

The memory of a certain nun who fell into the hands of the heretics and sustained many torments in order to preserve her chastity and faith intact.

Resources: <http://newsaints.faithweb.com/martyrs>