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To all my brothers and sisters in the St. Clare Fraternity,
May God fill you with His peace, His love, His joy and His grace!

Although Autumn doesn't officially arrive until September 23rd, for most of us with the passing of Labor Day we consider Summer to be over. I pray that for all of you Summer has been a happy, healthy and holy time, a time for refreshment and rejuvenation. This is the first time that our Fraternity has had no regular meetings during the months of June, July and August (with the exception of our get together for the St. Clare Celebration). Personally, I hope we never have to do that again. I have missed those meetings, as I am sure most of you have as well. I look forward to being with all of you again on September 26th.

Our annual celebration honoring our patroness, St. Clare, was, as usual, a great success. We had approximately 49 secular Franciscans in attendance representing 9 different Fraternities. Our guest speaker, Fr. Anthony Aarons from San Pedro Retreat Center was marvelous. He gave two inspiring talks on St. Clare's letters to Bl. Agnes, and what they reveal about St. Clare and about our Franciscan way of life. He also gave a beautiful homily during our mid-day Eucharistic Celebration. There was great fellowship, and we all enjoy a magnificent meal. The day was well worth my trip back from Flowery Branch, Georgia. Hopefully next year we will have an even better turnout.

It is too bad that we don't have more opportunities to get together with our fellow Secular Franciscans from other fraternities and from other regions. Wouldn't be wonderful if each Fraternity in our area sponsored one event to which we all might be invited. Apart from that, let us consider some opportunities that are already on the horizon: Transitus – Oct. 3rd, the Franciscan Retreat – Nov. 20-22, our Regional Conference – dates not yet available, the National Conference which will be held in San Pedro this year, and our XIX Quinquennial Congress which will be held in June 30 – July 4, 2016 in St. Louis, MO.

Today is the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. We often consider the suffering and anguish that Jesus endured because of our sins. Do we consider sufficiently the suffering and deep sorrow we also caused Our Blessed Mother. What do we do to make amends to her to whom we owe so much? Let us never forget that devotion to Our Blessed Mother is an essential part of our Franciscan spirituality.

Your brother and servant in Christ,
Bill Roché, OFS, Minister, St. Clare Fraternity

If you have an announcement, an article, a suggestion, a picture, a poem, etc. that you would like to have included in our Clarion, please send it for consideration to the Editor before the 10th of each month.



The Clarion Newsletter of St. Clare Fraternity, OFS

Meeting every 4th Sunday @ 12:30 PM

St. William's Ministry Center
Naples, Florida

September 15th Issue #136

Franciscan Saints & Feasts

Sept. 15 – Oct. 25th

Upcoming Birthdays

September 18th – Joe Bradshaw

Anniversary of Profession

September 23rd – Rosalie Graveline

September 10th – Ed Duff, Bob Pekar & Bill Roché

September 17th – Carol Bart

September 21st – Jiga Piasecki

Franciscan Saints & Feasts we celebrate during this period-

September 15th – Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows

September 17th – Stigmata of Our Holy Father Francis

September 23rd – Finding of the Body of St. Clare of Assisi

September 26th – Elzear of Sabran & Bl. Delphina, 3rd Order

October 4th – Our Holy Father, St. Francis of Assisi

October 6th – Mary Frances of the 5 wounds, Virgin, 3^r Order

October 7th – Our Lady of the Rosary

October 22nd – St. John Paul II, Pope

Reminders

Sun., Sept. 26th – Our Council and Fraternity Meetings

Sat., Oct. 3rd – Celebration of Transitus (time & place??)

Sun., Oct. 4th – Feast of St. Francis – outreach in parishes

A prayer by Thomas Merton in his Asian Journal

Oh God, we are one with You. You have made us one with You. You have taught us that if we are open to one another, You dwell in us. Help us to preserve this openness and to fight for it with all our hearts. Help us to realize that there can be no understanding where there is mutual rejection. Oh God, in accepting one another wholeheartedly, fully, completely, we accept You, and we thank You, and we adore You, and we love You with our whole being, because our being is in Your being, our spirit is rooted in Your spirit. Fill us then with love, and let us be bound together with love as we go our diverse ways, united in this one spirit which makes You present in the world, and which makes

You witness to the ultimate reality that is love. Love has overcome. Love is victorious. Amen.



Group Picture from St. Clare Celebration

Dying to Live – Richard Rohr – Meditation on 5/20/15

Francis was at once very traditional and entirely new in the ways of holiness, and he is still such a standing paradox. He stood barefoot on the earth and yet touched the heavens. He was grounded in the Church and yet moved instinctively toward the Cosmos. He lived happily inside the visible and yet both suffered and rejoiced in what others thought was invisible. Again and again, he was totally at home in two worlds at the same time, and thus he made them into one world

Francis, like all saints, delighted in both his Absolute Littleness and his Absolute Connection in the very same moment, knowing they depended on one another. Francis and Clare, his friend and follower, died into the life that they loved instead of living in fear of any death that could end their life. They were both so very eager to love, and they somehow knew that dying to the old and unneeded was an essential part of living this love at any depth. Most of us do not seem to know that – and we resist the change.

Jesus himself, Paul (Jesus' iconoclastic interpreter), and both Francis and Clare made room for the new by a full willingness to let go of the old. This is quite a rare pattern in the history of formal religion, which is too often a love affair with small and comfortable traditions. Each of these game-changing people had the courage and the clarity to sort out what was perennial wisdom from what was unreal, passing, merely cultural, or even destructive, which is exactly how Jesus describes the way "a disciple of the kingdom" behaves. He says that such disciples are "householders who bring out from their household things both old and new" (Matthew 13:52). John the Baptist describes Jesus as a "winnowing fan" within religion itself – that separates the grain from the chaff (Matthew 3:12) instead of presuming that religion is all "grain" and the outsiders are all "chaff".

Adapted from *Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi*, pp. xvii-xix

Prayer

Living God, stand by me. Hold me up. Be my strength when I am tired, my inspiration when I am bored, my life when I am listless. Living God, I cannot always meet the standard expected of me, cannot always be the personality I am known for. Abba when I fail, Abba when I stumble, I will rest in your presence.

- **Edwina Gately**



Fr. Anthony Aarons

The Eucharist As Washing Each Other's Feet – Ronald Rolheiser

This is everywhere evident in the Gospels, though John's Gospel puts it most clearly. Where the other gospels have Jesus speaking the words of institution at the last supper, John has Jesus washing the disciples' feet. But, for John, this gesture replaces the words of institution. It specifies what the Eucharist is in fact meant to do, namely, to lead us out of church and into the humble service of others.

The Eucharist is a call to move from worship to service, to take the nourishment, the embrace, the kiss, we have just received from God and the community and translate it immediately and directly into loving service of others. To take the Eucharist seriously is to begin to wash the feet of others, especially the feet of the poor. The Eucharist is both an invitation, which invites us, and a grace, which empowers us to service. And what it invites us to do is to replace distrust with hospitality, pride with humility, and self-interest with self-effacement so as to reverse the world's order of things – wherein the rich get served by the poor and where the first priority is always to keep one's pride intact and one's self-interest protected.

The Eucharist invites us to step down from pride, away from self-interest, to turn the mantle of privilege into the apron of service, so as to help reverse the world's order of things wherein pride, status, and self-interest are forever front and center.

The Wounded Healer – Henri Nouwen's *Bread for the Journey*

Nobody escapes being wounded. We all are wounded people, whether physically, emotionally, mentally, or spirituality. The main question is not "How can we hide our wounds?" so we don't have to be embarrassed, but "How can we put our woundedness in the service of others?" When our wounds cease to be a source of shame, and become a source of healing, we have become wounded healers. Jesus is God's wounded healer; through his wounds we are healed....As followers of Jesus we can also allow our wounds to bring healing to others.