



Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity, SFO

Hampton Roads, Virginia

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Minister

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Ed Gerhard SFO

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The feast of St. Clare will soon be here and what a beautiful model we have in her! As a young, wealthy and attractive girl she could have led a life of ease and luxury. Certainly her family wanted this for her. However, she turned her back on all luxury to follow Francis in a very simple and giving lifestyle. In essence, Clare followed the example of Mary in turning her life over to God in blind trust. She could not have known, when against her parents' wishes she left her home, what God had in store for her. She felt his call in her heart and she followed his summons. What a spiritual limb she climbed out on. Leaving her mother and father to go and live as part of order consisting of men! Yet Clare relied on her faith that God was directing her and would always be there for her. She could not have known at that time that God would have her found an Order of women religious that would grow and flourish and that she herself would become a great saint. She simply, lovingly and faithfully followed the whisperings and urgings of the Spirit.

It is interesting that Clare's feast comes so close to the Marian feast of the Assumption. As an example of faith and trust no one can come close to our Blessed Lady. Again, in Mary, we have a young girl who gives herself over completely to God and in her deep faith tells him she will do whatever he asks no matter the consequences. Her faith never falters even after she experiences hardships as the results of saying "yes" to the Spirit.

Meditating on these two faith-filled women can help with discernment in our own lives. How many times do we search for the fortitude to say "yes" to God in spite of our misgivings and fears? Our lack of courage can lead us to hide from God and begin to negotiate with him. It is too hard we tell Him, He asks too much. We are not strong enough. He should make this demand on someone else, and on and on. Our misgivings lead us to arrogance where we know better what is good for us ; where God does not "understand" our needs and our hearts.

In the twin examples of Clare and Mary we find help in our weaknesses and our humanity. These two great ladies are always there for us, to guide us to Christ with their gentleness and their wisdom. How blest we are to have them!

Pax bonum,

Chris Wells, Minister

August Meeting:

Our August meeting will be held on **Sunday, August 17** at St. Michael's Place.

- 12:00 Candidates meet
- 1:30 Whole group meets
Opening prayers
- 1:45 Saint report
- 2:00 Reflection from Sister Agnes and ongoing formation

Homework for ongoing Formation:

Read Chapter 6 in The Franciscan Journey and answer the questions.

- 3:00 Break
- 3:15 Business meeting
- 3:45 Liturgy of the Hours Evening Prayer
Closing Prayers
- 4:00 Fellowship

Saint Report:

Annie Pepper is presenting the August saint report.

Feast of St. Clare:

The Feast of St. Clare of Assisi is August 11. The Poor Clares will have the following services in honor of St. Clare at their Bethlehem Monastery in Barhamsville:

Aug. 2-10 - Novena in honor of St. Clare after the 8:30 am Mass

Aug. 11 - Solemnity of St. Clare. Mass at 8:30 am and 6:30 pm. At each Mass the traditional blessed breads will be distributed.

St. Clare and the Blessed Bread:

CHAPTER XXXIII

From the Little Flowers of St. Francis

*HOW ST CLARE, BY ORDER OF THE POPE,
BLESSED THE BREAD WHICH WAS ON THE TA-*

BLE, AND HOW ON EACH LOAF APPEARED THE SIGN OF THE HOLY CROSS

St Clare, a most devout servant of the Cross of Christ, and one of the sweetest flowers of St Francis, was so holy, that not only the Bishops and Cardinals but the Pope himself wished to see and hear her, and went often to visit her in person. One day, amongst others, the holy Father went to her convent to hear her speak of things celestial; and having long reasoned together, St Clare ordered the table to be laid and bread to be placed upon it, in order that the holy Father might bless it. Their spiritual conclave being at an end, St Clare, kneeling down with great reverence, begged him to bless the bread which had been placed on the table. To whom the holy Father answered: "Most faithful sister, I will that thou bless this bread by the sign of the cross to which thou hast devoted thyself." St Clare said: "Most holy Father, excuse me. I should indeed be worthy of reproof if I, a miserable woman, should presume to give such a blessing in the presence of the Vicar of Christ." Then the Pope answered: "In order that such an act be not looked upon as presumptuous, but that it may bear on it the marks of obedience, I command thee, in the name of holy obedience, to make on this bread the sign of the cross, and to bless it in the name of God." At this St Clare, like a true daughter of obedience, blessed the loaves most devoutly, making over them the sign of the holy cross; and, wonderful to relate, on all those loaves appeared a cross, most clearly marked; and some of them were eaten, but the rest were put aside, in order to testify of the miracle. And the holy Father, having seen the miracle, thanked God; and taking some of the bread, went away, leaving his blessing with Sister Clare. At that time Sister Ortolana, mother of St Clare, and Sister Agnes, her sister, were living together in the convent with St Clare, both most virtuous women, full of the Holy Spirit, likewise many other nuns; to whom St Francis sent a great number of sick persons, who were all healed by their prayers and by the sign of the most holy cross.

Prayer for Spiritual Assistants:

The Region has composed a prayer for all Spiritual Assistants. Please keep our own Sister Agnes in your prayers as you pray this prayer.

That they may be joyful and generous witnesses of the evangelical spirit of St. Francis and that they may exercise with fraternal affection and responsibility their spiritual

and pastoral service to the Secular Franciscan Order and Franciscan Youth and Young Adults.

Regional Retreat Change:

The Region has decided to move the annual Regional Retreat to the spring. This fall they are hosting a Chapter of Mats in October but have not found a place for it yet. The next Regional Retreat will be held in the Spring of 2015.

Prayer Request:

Please keep Ed Gerhard in your prayers as he travels to Uganda and Kenya to visit the Franciscan Sisters working over there. Ed leaves August 11.

Thank You:

Thank you to Denny Thiel who has volunteered to be the keeper of the fraternity address list. If your address, phone number or email has changed please let Denny or Chris know.

Amazon Project:

Please remember your change for the Amazon Relief and the Heifer International Project. Thank you, Carol Murphy for heading this up.

Peninsula Pet Pantry:

The Peninsula Pet Pantry is a nonprofit organization providing temporary pet food, supplies, and veterinarian care to owners who are facing financial difficulties. Many of these pet owners are elderly or disabled and their pet is an emotional support to them. If you are interested in donating or volunteering, contact Carol Folsom <carolfolsom@cox.net >

Cleaning Up The Park:

Now that the weather is warm the park at the corner of Ironbound and News Rd. will be used more and more. If you signed up to help clean up our section you will need to begin your inspection. Remember, our name is posted in that section so we want to make sure it looks great!

St. Olaf Food Pantry:

Thank you for your generosity in bringing food and paper products to the meetings for St. Olaf. The team at the parish is most grateful for our generosity and have been able to help the summer feeding program because of our donations. Please remember to bring an item or a paper product to our next meeting. Thank you again!

From His Hands Ministry:

Thank you to all who signed up to help with this ministry and thank you to Cindy Holland for helping us. If you would like to donate to the pantry at the Pineapple Inn please bring your donation to the August meeting and Cindy will deliver it to the Pineapple.

August Happy Birthdays:

- 1 Ed Gerhard
- 5 Rose Marie Brennan
- 30 Terry Carlino

Prayer List:

- Joan Buehler, SFO
- Frances Warren, SFO
- Ed Gerhard, SFO safe travels to Africa
- Greta Braswell and family
- Michael Wilson
- Youth Ministry at St. Jerome
- Our Anniversarians
- Ukrainian Brothers and Sisters
- World peace especially in the Middle East
- Victims and families of Malaysian flight MH 17
- Victims and families of Air Algerie flight 5017
- Migrant children
- Families at the Pineapple Inn
- Families in St. Olaf Pantry Ministry

Our Fraternity

Our Franciscan Family

Those who have no one to pray for them

The unspoken intentions of our hearts

Deceased

Marlin Massey - husband of Barbara Massey, SFO

Walter Tucker - father of Bea Sanford

Jack Wells - brother of Leo Wells, SFO

Wyn McPhee - fiancé of Annie Pepper, SFO

August Dates To Remember:

- 1 Alphonsus Ligouri
- 2 Our Lady of the Angels of Portiuncula
- 6 Transfiguration of Our Lord
- 8 St. Dominic
- 11 St. Clare of Assisi
- 14 Maximilian Kolbe
- 15 Feast of the Assumption of Mary (Holy Day of Obligation)
- 19 Louis, Bishop
- 22 Queenship of Mary
- 25 Louis IX Patron of the III Order

Prayer to Saint Clare of Assisi

*O glorious Saint Clare! God has given you
the power of
working miracles continually, and the fa-
vor of answering
prayers of those who invoke your assistance
in
misfortune, anxiety and distress; we be-
sech you,
obtain for us from Jesus, through Mary, His
Blessed
Mother, what we beg of you so fervently and
hopefully,
if it be for the greater honor of God and for
the good
of our souls. Amen.*

