

THE TRANSITUS OF ST. CLARE OF ASSISI

The ultimate focus of all Christian contemplation is always Jesus. Clare shows us that we can only know the meaning of our lives as human beings when we look at the life of Jesus.

Gaze Upon the Lord (Clare of Assisi)

Gaze upon the Lord;
Gaze upon his face;
Gaze upon the one
Who holds you in his embrace.
Gaze upon his love
Gaze upon his coming poor from heav'n above.
Look upon your Lord;
Look upon his way.
Look upon his heart,
Which opens to each day.
Though he was despised,
The lowest of all men,
Look upon his sacred cross which brings life again.
If you open to life's pain,
Then with him you shall reign
And allow your heart to weep,
Then with him you'll rejoice.
Open to his cross,
The wounds of each day's love,

Then you'll know the splendour of his kingdom above.
Gaze upon his life;
Gaze upon his love;
Gaze upon his coming poor from heav'n above.

Leader: We adore you,

All: **most holy Lord Jesus Christ,
here and in all your churches
throughout the world,
and we bless you
because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Leader: O God come to our aid.

All: O Lord make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

**as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

Ant. 1: The realm of heaven is promised and given by the Lord Jesus

**only to the poor: for those who love temporal things lose the fruit
of love.**

PSALM 126 [127]

If the Lord does not build the house, *
in vain do its builders labour;
if the Lord does not watch over the city, *
in vain does the watchman keep vigil.

**In vain is your earlier rising, *
your going later to rest,
you who toil for the bread you eat: *
when he pours gifts on his beloved while they slumber.**

Truly sons are a gift from the Lord, *
a blessing, the fruit of the womb.
Indeed the sons of youth *
are like arrows in the hand of a warrior.

**O the happiness of the man *
who has filled his quiver with these arrows!
He will have no cause for shame *
when he disputes with his foes in the gateways.**

Leader: Brothers and sisters, we come together tonight to celebrate the
Transitus

of Saint Clare, when she was taken up into the glory of God.

Let us bless our God, living and true.

All: **To him be honour and glory forever.**

Narrator: For forty years Clare had followed the path of highest poverty:

now after her prolonged illness, she was soon to be born into eternal life.

As the strength of her body had succumbed to the austerity of penance in her earlier years, illness now took hold of her in later years so that, as she had been enriched with the merits of good deeds when well, she might now be enriched with the merits of suffering when sick. How truly the words of St. Paul apply to Clare in the last phase of her life.

Leader:

1st Reader: Phil. 3:10-14

“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Narrator:

As the days of Clare’s life on earth were drawing to a close the Roman Curia came to Perugia; and, hearing that Clare was becoming worse, the Lord of Ostia, Cardinal Rainaldo, hastened to visit her. He had been a father to her by reason of his office, a protector by his solicitude and an ever-devoted friend in sincere affection. He gave her the Sacrament of the Lord’s Body, to which she had always shown great devotion, and then encouraged the sisters with kindly words.

Clare begged him to be always mindful of her and the other sisters in the name of Christ. Above all, she asked him to have the Privilege of Poverty confirmed for her by the Lord Pope and the Cardinal.

Clare now longed and desired with all her heart “to be freed from the body of this death” and to see reigning in heaven Christ, the Poor One, whom as a poor virgin, she had followed with all her heart on earth. Worn out physically by her long illness, a new inner strength now took hold of Clare as she awaited the final call from her Lord. Pope, Innocent IV, hearing of Clare’s increasing sickness visited here at San Damiano. Clare asked him for the remission of her sins. He pardoned her in God’s name – uttering “I wish to God that I was as innocent as

you.”

Clare “Praise the Lord, my daughters, because heaven and earth cannot repay the great blessing Christ has given me this day. For I have received the Most High himself and have also seen his Vicar.”

Narrator: Now around Clare’s bed stood the daughters she was soon to leave orphans. Their hearts were pierced with the sword of sorrow and unmindful of sleep or food, their only solace was to weep day and night. Clare’s last agony continued for several days, during which time the faith and devotion of the people became more intense. Though so weak her self, God gave Clare such fortitude that she strengthened, in the service of Christ, all who came to her. Thus when Brother Rainaldo, encouraged her to be patient in her sufferings, she replied:

Clare: “Dearest Brother, ever since I have known the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, no penance has been too hard, no illness too severe.”

Narrator: As the Lord was near and stood as it were, already at the door, she asked that the Gospel of John be read to her, as it had been for Francis.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel according to John 13:1-15
“Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter who said to him: “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus answered: “You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand. Peter said to him: “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered: “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him: “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”

Jesus said to him: “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean though not all of you.” For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said: “Not all of you are clean.” After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe and had returned to the table, he said to them: “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to

you.”

Narrator: Finally Clare turned to her sisters and commended to them the poverty of the Lord and recalled in praise the goodness of God. She then blessed all who were devoted to her, both brothers and sisters, and invoked on all the ladies of the poor monasteries, present and to come, the richest blessings:

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

**as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Pause for quiet prayer & reflection on Psalm

Ant. 1: The realm of heaven is promised and given by the Lord Jesus only to the poor: for those who love temporal things lose the fruit of love.

Ant. 2: O blessed poverty, who bestows eternal riches on those who love and embrace her.

PSALM 121 [122]

I rejoiced when I heard them say: *
'Let us go to God's house.'
And now our feet are standing *
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

**Jerusalem is built as a city *
strongly compact.
It is there that the tribes go up, *
the tribes of the Lord.**

For Israel's law it is, *

there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgement *
of the house of David.

For the peace of Jerusalem pray: *
'Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls, *
in your palaces, peace!'

For love of my brethren and friends *
I say: 'Peace upon you!'
For love of the house of the Lord *
I will ask for your good.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Pause for quiet prayer & reflection on Psalm

**Ant. 2: O blessed poverty, who bestows eternal riches on those who love
and embrace her.**

**Ant. 3: Place your mind before the mirror of eternity! Place your soul in
the brilliance of glory!**

Canticle: Eph 1:3-10

Blessed be the God and Father *
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ *
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

He chose us in him *
before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy *

and blameless before him.

He destined us in love *
to be his sons through Jesus Christ,
according to the purpose of his will, †
to the praise of his glorious grace *
which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

**In him we have redemption through his blood, *
the forgiveness of our trespasses,
according to the riches of his grace *
which he lavished upon us.**

He has made known to us †
in all wisdom and insight *
the mystery of his will,
according to his purpose *
which he set forth in Christ.

**His purpose he set forth in Christ, *
as a plan for the fullness of time,
to unite all things in him, *
things in heaven and things on earth.**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

**as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Pause for quiet prayer & reflection on Psalm

Ant. 3: Place your mind before the mirror of eternity! Place your soul in the brilliance of glory!

Clare: “I bless you, now while living and after my death, as much as I can and more than I can, with all the blessings which the Father of mercies has bestowed and continues to bestow upon his spiritual sons and daughters both in heaven and on earth. Always bear love to me, to your own souls and to all your sisters. Be careful always to observe what you have promised the Lord. The Lord be with you always; and may you be with him always and in every place.”

Narrator: Clare then spoke softly to herself:

Clare: “Go forth without fear, for you will have a good escort for your journey. Go forth, for he who created you has sanctified you. He has protected you always as a mother does her child and has loved you with a tender love.”
“Blessed be you, my Lord, who have created me.”

Narrator: Turning to one of her sisters, Clare asked:

Clare: “Do you see the King of Glory, whom I see?”

Leader: Clare thus went forth from her earthly life to the life of heaven, and exchanged the poverty of this life for the glory of eternal life. She was the first of the Poor Ladies and led many souls through penance to life. May her intercession also lead us, her sisters and brothers, to the kingdom of the blessed.

A moment of respectful silence is observed.

Magnificat Ant.: The blessed Virgin Clare denied herself and took up her cross, following the Lord, the spouse of virgins.

Lourdes Magnificat (sung)

1. My soul now glorify
the Lord who is my Saviour

**R/ Rejoice, for who am I
that God has shown me favour**

2. The world shall call me blest
and ponder on my story

**R/ In me is manifest
God's greatness and his glory**

3. For those who are his friends,
And keep his laws as holy,

**R/ His mercy never ends
and He exalts the lowly.**

4. But by his power the great,
The proud, the self-conceited,

**R/ The Kings who sit in state
are humbled and defeated.**

5. He feeds the starving poor,
He guards his holy nation,

**R/ Fulfilling what he swore
long since in revelation.**

6. Then glorify with me,
The Lord who is my Saviour,

**R/ One Holy Trinity,
for ever and for ever.**

**Magnificat Ant.: The blessed Virgin Clare denied herself and took up her cross,
following the Lord, the spouse of virgins.**

INTERCESSIONS

Leader: Let us pray to the Father of all mercies, from whom comes all that is good, all that is perfect, and humbly say to him:

R Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: You alone are holy and supremely good – multiply in your Church saints who will love you and lead others to your love.

R \ Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: You gave us blessed Clare as our mother and model – grant that we may follow in her footsteps, serving you in poverty and humility.

R Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: You are our way, our hope and our life; give to the Seraphic Order a vigorous evangelical life – so that following St. Clare's example, we may be faithful children of the Church.

R Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: You are the source of true wisdom; inflame our hearts with your love – so that mindful of your words we may always seek the better part.

R Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: You look to your loved ones to bring forth fruit in patience; grant us the gifts of the Holy Spirit – that working with him we may bring peace and joy to our brothers and sisters.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Our Father

Leader: Recommitment to our way of life
We, sisters and brothers of the Franciscan family give thanks to God for the example and inspiration of St. Clare. Today, as we honour her passing into eternal life we recommit ourselves to follow the same radical dream shared by Clare and Francis. We place our trust in Clare's intercession and the intercession of all Franciscan saints.

BLESSING

(Taken from Clare's second letter to Agnes of Prague)

What you hold, may you always hold,
What you do, may you always do and never abandon.
But with swift pace, light step, unswerving feet,
so that even your steps stir up no dust,
may you go forward, securely, joyfully and swiftly,
on the path to prudent happiness,
not believing anything, not agreeing with anything
that would dissuade you from this resolution
or that would place a stumbling block for you on the way,
so that you may offer your vows to the Most High
in the pursuit of that perfection
to which the Spirit of the Lord has called you.

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.