

Monastery of St. Clare

Summer 2021

May almighty God bless you. May God look upon you with mercy and give you peace.

Blessing of St. Clare

My Dear Friends,

Ah! The “lazy” days of summer are upon us! And COVID restrictions are loosening so it feels freer than it’s been in a long time, doesn’t it? Our Mother St. Clare has some good words that can have special meaning for us at this time:

What you hold, may you always hold
What you do, may you always do
and never abandon
But with swift pace, light step and
unswerving feet,
So that even your steps stir up no dust,
Go forward, the Spirit of
God has called you.

As we joyfully begin reconnecting with friends and family and resuming a “new normal” life, we are to remember to do it with: “*swift*” pace, *light* step and *unswerving* feet” – in other words, in earnest but gently! The Spirit of God has called **YOU** – yes, even you! Even me! Each of us is being called to go forward from what has been difficult, to the new road ahead where we will find the present and future God has in mind for us.

Have you ever found yourself while doing one thing thinking about another? A challenge we all face is to live in the present moment, without angst about the next task, next day or next whatever - or without rethinking or regretting something that’s already happened. If we can declutter our mind and focus on the now, that’s where we will find God at work in us. Then we can more easily go forward where the Spirit of God is calling us, earnestly, but gently!

We have some sad news to share. In the past few months, our Sisters from Memphis and our Sisters in Guatemala have experienced some significant losses. Fr. David Knight, who had been chaplain at our Memphis monastery for 38 years, went home to Heaven last month, while at our monastery in Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Ironically, the founding Bishop of the Poor Clare foundation there, Archbishop Victor Hugo Martinez, also died around the same time.

Also, our Sisters in Great Falls, MT, (which we helped to found in 1999—our Sr. Maryalice is

one of the founding members), experienced their first death in May. Sr. Catherine Cook died unexpectedly. Sr. Sharon and I went to the funeral to offer the support of our presence and love. Please pray for Sr. Catherine, Fr. Knight and Bishop Martinez and those who are left behind and miss them.

We also have some very exciting news to share with you! Sr. Susanna made First Profession of Vows on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart. She has completed her postulancy and two year novitiate and we rejoice that God has called her to the Poor Clare life in this monastery. You will read her reflection on her experience of preparing for and making Profession of Vows elsewhere in this newsletter. Please say a prayer for her and give thanks to God with us for her vocation as a Travelers Rest Poor Clare!

On another front, we have taken the first step in opening up our chapel for public worship. As of June 14 we are inviting those who have been vaccinated to join us for weekday Eucharist on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9:00 a.m. We are very excited to welcome back members of our faith community; we have missed you very much these past 15 months.

We have spent considerable time praying and discussing how to do this in a way that is safe for everyone, taking into consideration CDC guidelines, the needs of our Sisters and local circumstances. Due to recent CDC guidelines and trends, we feel now is the appropriate time to take this first step.

With you, we are trying to walk gently and earnestly as we leave the restrictions and isolation of COVID to loosen up and free us, without fear, but confident in God’s presence. Let’s especially pray for our sisters and brothers who are in countries where COVID is rampant, and vaccines are scarce! Our prayers are with you; we are all in this together—and God’s in the driver’s seat!

With love, an ever grateful heart and earnest prayers for your hearts’ deepest desires,

Sr. Nancy



Sr. Nancy receiving Sr. Susanna’s vows as Sr. Kathy assists.



Sitting: Srs. Kathy, Susanna, Nancy and Marguerite. Standing: Claudia, Rucia, Carolyn, guests from Cincinnati monastery (Luisa, Anna Marie and Pia), Sharon, Annemarie, Mary, Kathy Ann. Maryann, Bernadette, and our Friars, Bob, Patrick and David.

Return Service Requested



Love Jesus totally who gave himself totally for your sake. —Saint Clare
 El Ama totalmente a Jesús, quien se entregó totalmente por tu bien.
 —Santa Clara

New Life, In Vows

For several decades, I *had* a profession, an occupation with all of its attendant qualifications and expertise. I left all that behind when I entered this monastery and began a new life, “hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3).

Now, as a Poor Clare nun, God has given me the grace to *make* profession, to give myself completely to Him and to His Church. On June 11th, the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I professed simple vows, promising to live in poverty, chastity, obedience, and enclosure according to the Rule of St. Clare. These vows are called “simple” because they are for a fixed period of time, as defined by Canon Law and other regulations issued by the Holy See. I will remain in simple vows for a number of years, until – God willing! – I make solemn vows, which will be for life.



Let this be
 our portion
 to desire
 God alone.
 Rule of St. Clare



Upon hearing that I’d made simple profession, a friend asked, “do you feel any different?” My answer was, and is, “Yes!” It is a tremendous grace to make such a promise and vow to God, and to do so during Mass, kneeling next to the altar, and placing my hands in those of our abbess, Sr. Nancy. She, Sr. Kathy, Sr. Mary, and I then signed my profession document, which remained on the altar for the rest of the Mass. Profession is an act of consecration, of freely and completely giving one’s self to God. This is why it always takes place during Mass; in offering ourselves to God, Poor Clares follow the example of Christ, who made the supreme self-offering. How could one not be changed by this consecration?

As our dear Sr. Marie told me before she died, the life of a Poor Clare is a continual act of consecration. Sr. Marie offered her vows to God every day of her life, and I am now doing as she did and making my vows to God each morning, entrusting myself, “with my whole heart,” to Him and to this beautiful community, “in the service of God and the Church.” I ask for your prayers that I may fulfill my consecration, and I assure you of my prayers for you and for those whom you love. As St. Clare advised St. Agnes of Prague, let us “rejoice in the good things the Lord works in [us]... through His grace” (2Lag)!

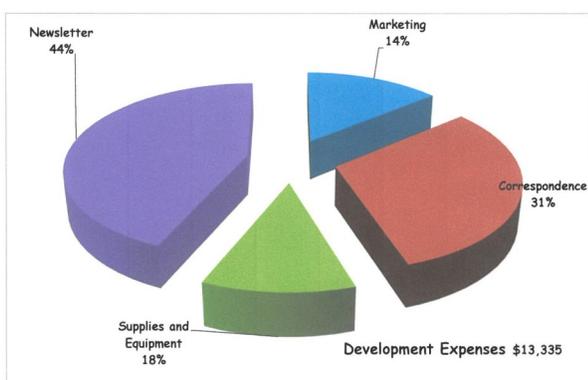
Sr. Susanna

Development Ministry Report

2020 Year End Financial Summary

As we share our financial report for 2020, we are in awe of God’s fidelity and your generosity during this past year. We were not able to celebrate any public liturgies including our 65th anniversary in South Carolina, but your ongoing support showed us the depth of your care and love.

Your cards, letters, emails, and prayer requests have been a source of hope and joy for us. Thank you for remembering us in your prayers.



The graph with our income shows our monthly gifts have been like previous years. Your response to our appeals made it possible to build our Tiny House and our fall appeal helped to replace our dated phone system as well as make repairs on some of our HVAC units.

Our development expenses reflect a greater need in 2020 for written correspondence. We are grateful for each of you our Partners in Grace.

Sr. Mary Connor, OSC and all your Poor Clare Sisters

