

Monastery of St. Clare

Fall 2021

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

Blessing of St. Clare

Rejoice always in the Lord! St. Clare

Dear Friends,

This has been a sobering time for everyone as we all cope with the impact of this pandemic in our lives in so many ways, reflect on events like the 20th anniversary of 9/11, and watch the news about Afghanistan and events closer to home like hurricanes and fires damaging so many lives.

In the midst of it all, let us cling to relationships that mean the most to us, friends and family. Even if we can't be physically close to them we are surrounded by their love. Most of all, let's remember to cling to our relationship with our empathetic, compassionate, tender loving God who is God-With-Us and Who is ultimately in control of the victory over every evil.

When I begin to feel heavy hearted or overwhelmed with all the bad news, I find it helpful to take a moment to reflect on what I have to be grateful for. That changes my emotional and spiritual focus! Try it and see if that helps you!

We have some good news to share that might cheer you up! First, you have made our **Annual Appeal** a great success – thanks to you, we will soon have a new, more effective broadband Internet connection (hurray!) as well as a new computer server and at least a year of janitorial service! Thank you for your generosity once again – which is no surprise to us!

Our **Sr. Claudia celebrated her 50th Jubilee as a Poor Clare**, which you will read more about elsewhere in this newsletter. We were blessed that members of her family were able to join us and get to know her new community! We missed not being able to have our faith community join us for the celebration!

We are happy to tell you we have a **new member joining us soon**. Sr. Wylie is a Poor Clare who started her Poor Clare vocation in this community, then about 25 years ago left and transferred to our monastery in Duncan, British Columbia. Sadly, that monastery is closing and Sr. Wylie came to visit us for a few weeks in September and asked to transfer back "home". We are rejoicing!

We've also had **two women stay with us for Candidacy visits** in September and October; they both hope to enter the Postulancy in January or February if all goes well. God seems to be doing something special here and we're trying to listen carefully and respond wholeheartedly. Please pray for these new vocations, that they will respond to God's invitation and that we will carefully nurture their vocations.



Sr. Wylie and Sr. Nancy

After months of waiting, **our Sisters in Huehuetanango, Guatemala** were grateful to finally be able to receive the cremated remains of one of their North American founding Sisters, Sr. Mary Peter. On August 11th the Feast of St. Clare they buried her in their cemetery with a beautiful procession and ritual. She was very loved and they are happy to have her back home where she lived for so many years.

As you know we usually have a **special remembrance of deceased family members and friends during November**, as well as an **Advent Healing Service** on the 2nd Sunday of Advent. However, due to this darn pandemic, we won't be able to have them in person. Please write the names of the deceased you would like to have us hold in prayer, as well as the intentions for healing you would like us to pray for with you and send them to us in the enclosed envelope.

As you are, we are looking forward to the day when we can be free of masks and social distancing restrictions. Then we will be able to open our doors again to all who want to worship with us and we will be rejoicing! May that time come sooner rather than later (Lord, hear our prayer!).

As we enter this holiday season of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas, we pray all of you stay safe and keep well. You are precious and dear to us, each and every one. Your friendship, support, caring and love shown in so many ways, so faithfully, is balm for our very souls. We ask God's blessing on you and your family and loved ones.

Gratefully,

Sr. Nancy

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We must express the deepest thanks to our glorious God
our vocation is a great gift.—Saint Clare

Debemos expresar nuestros más sinceros agradecimientos a nuestro Dios glorioso,
nuestra vocación es un gran regalo. —Santa Clara

We praise you, O Lord, all your works are wonderful!

We praise you, O Lord, forever is your love.

What a joy it was to celebrate our Sister Mary Claudia's Golden Jubilee in the middle of the summer! A jubilee of profession honors the sister, but it especially remembers God's faithful love in the sister's family, her response and the goodness of all who have accompanied her on this journey.

The second of nine children, born to Annie and Claude Phillips in Chattanooga, Tennessee, she was baptized Mary Louise. One of her earliest memories at age three was seeing a sister when she was out with her mother. She asked, "Who is she?" and her mother responded, "Someone who loves Jesus very much." Little Mary Louise responded, "That's what I want to do." At her Jubilee, one of her family members shared that after this, her favorite pastime was playing sister and Mary Louise always had the starring role!

A year after high school graduation, she felt the nudge of the Spirit during Mass directing her to talk to her Pastor about her vocation. Before a word was out of her mouth, Fr. Pack said to her, "How about the Poor Clares in Memphis." She responded, "The who?" Soon she was visiting the monastery and decided to enter on October 2, 1968. A year later, she received the habit and her new name, Sister Mary Claudia of the Sacred Heart. Her first profession followed in 1971.

In 1980, a Guatemalan Bishop invited our Memphis sisters to make a foundation in Huehuetenango and she volunteered to be part of this group. Their mission was to pray for peace in this Central American country. Though she stayed only a year and a half this experience enriched and formed the woman she is today.

In 2019, the community in Memphis had only four sisters and together they discerned their need to find communities where they could continue to live their Poor Clare life. Sr. Mary Claudia with Sr. Mary Marguerite made the decision to join us. What a blessing to continue our journey with them! *We praise you, O Lord, forever is your love.*



Sr. Claudia in 1980
shortly before going
to Huehuetenango.

Sr. Claudia
and
Fr. David Phan, ofm
on the Jubilee day.



Sr. Claudia in the midst of her family.