

AUGUST 12, ST. CLARE, VIRGIN

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St. Clare, born at Assisi in Umbria, was the first of the holy virgins whom St. Francis, consecrating to God, bound to Christlike poverty. On a visit to St. Francis, she expressed to him her desire to become a Spouse of Christ. To St. Francis had been given a little chapel called the Portiuncula by the Benedictine abbot of Monte Subasio. St. Francis gave to Clare the rule of St. Benedict to follow, as he desired to graft his new foundation on to the old Order, so as to give it a canonical basis, one already recognized by Holy Church. St. Francis determined that Clare should not imitate the rich convents of Benedictines then in Umbria, but should go back to the early traditions of Benedictine poverty; thus it was that Pope Gregory IX was able to write to them before they had a rule of their own: "Now you are worthy daughters of the blessed Benedict." Her sister Agnes and other women soon joined her; they walked barefooted, slept on the ground, observed perpetual abstinence, and made poverty the basis of their lives.

St. Clare teaches us to have great devotion to the Holy Eucharist. In the midst of her extreme poverty she created the Blessed Sacrament to be kept in a silver case placed in an ivory pyx. One day when the Saracens attacked the Convent of San Damiano, Clare herself held up the pyx containing the Blessed Sacrament like a shield between the nuns and the fury of the infidels. The enemy turned and fled. St. Clare passed to her heavenly reward, August 11, 1253, and was canonized by Pope Alexander IV, two years later.

INTROIT Psalms 44: 8

Dilexisti iustitiam, et odisti iniquitatem: propterea unxit te Deus, Deus tuus, oleo lætitiæ præ consórtibus tuis. (Ps. 44: 2) Eructávit cor meum verbum bonum: dico ego ópera mea Regi. Glória Patri et Fílio et Spíritui Sancto, sicut erat in princípío, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen. Dilexisti iustitiam, et odisti iniquitatem: propterea unxit te Deus, Deus tuus, oleo lætitiæ præ consórtibus tuis.

COLLECT

Exáudi nos, Deus salutáris noster: ut, sicut de, beátæ Claræ, Vírginis tuæ festivitáte gaudémus; ita piæ devotiónis erudiámur afféctu. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

EPISTLE

2 Corinthians 10: 17-18; 11: 1-2

Fratres: Qui gloriátur, in Dómino gloriétur. Non enim qui seipsum comméndat, ille probátus est; sed quem Deus comméndat. Utinam sustinerétis módicum quid insipiéntiæ meæ, sed et supportáte me: æmulor enim vos Dei æmulatióne. Despóndi enim vos uni viro vírginem castam exhibére Christo.

GRADUAL Psalms 44: 5

Spécie tua, et pulchritúdine tua inténde, prospere procéde, et regna. Propter veritátem, et mansuetúdinem, et iustitiam: et dedúcet te mirabíliter dextera tua.

GOSPEL Matthew 25: 1-13

In illo tempore: Dixit Jesus discipulis suis parabolam hanc: Símile erit regnum celórum decem virgínibus quæ accipiéntes lámpades suas exierunt óbviam sponso et sponsæ. Quinque autem ex eis erant fátuæ, et quinque prudéntes: sed quinque fátuæ, accéptis lámpádibus, non sumpsérunt óleum secum: prudéntes vero accepérunt óleum in vasis suis cum lámpádibus. Moram autem faciénte sponso, dormitáverunt omnes et dormiérunt. Média autem nocte clamor factus est: Ecce sponsus venit, exite óbviam ei. Tunc surrexérunt omnes vírgines illæ, et ornavérunt lámpádes suas. Fátuæ autem sapiéntibus dixérunt: Date nobis de óleo vestro: quia lámpádes nostræ exstinguúntur. Respondérunt prudéntes, dicentes: Ne forte non sufficiat nobis, et vobis, ite pótius ad vendéntes, et émite vobis. Dum autem irent émere, venit sponus: et quæ parátæ erant, intravérunt cum eo ad núptias, et clausa est jánuá. Novíssime vero véniunt et réliquæ vírgines, dicéntes: Dómine, Dómine, áperi nobis. At ille respóndens ait: Amen, dico vobis, nescío vos. Vigílate ítaque, quia nescítis diem, neque horam.

OFFERTORY Psalms 44: 10

Filiæ regum in honóre tuo: ádstitit regina a dextris tuis in vestítu deauráto, circúmdata varietáte.

SECRET

Accépta tibi sit, Dómine, sacrátæ plebis oblátio pro tuórum honóre Sanctórum: quorum se méritis, de tribulatióne percépisse cognóscit auxiliúm. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

COMMUNION Matthew 25: 4, 6

Quinque prudéntes vírgines accepérunt óleum in vasis suis cum lámpádibus: média autem nocte clamor factus est: Ecce sponsus venit: exite óbviam Christo Dómino.

POSTCOMMUNION

Satiásti, Dómine, familiam tuam munéribus sacris: ejus, quæsumus, semper interventióne nos réfove, cujus solémnia celebrámus. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (Ps. 44: 2) My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. 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. Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Harken unto us, O God, our Savior that as we rejoice in the festival of blessed Clare, Thy virgin, so we may be instructed by the affection of pious devotion. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Brethren, he that glory, let him glory in the Lord. For not that he that commendeth himself is approved, but he whom God commendeth. Would to God you could bear with some little of my folly, but do bear with me. For I am jealous of you with the jealousy of God. For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign. Because of truth, and meekness and justice: and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully.

At that time, Jesus spoke this parable to His disciples: The kingdom of Heaven shall be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five wise. But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps; and the foolish said to the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered, saying, Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. But at last came also the other virgins, saying Lord, Lord, open to us; but he answering said, Amen I say to you, I know ye not. Watch ye, therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour.

The daughters of kings in thy glory: the queen stood on thy right hand in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety.

May the offering of Thy consecrated people be accepted by Thee, O Lord, in honor of Thy saints, by whose merits it knoweth that it hath received aid in time of trouble. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

The five wise virgins took oil in their vessels with the lamps: and at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh: go ye forth to meet Christ our Lord.

Thou hast filled Thy household, O Lord, with sacred gifts; ever comfort us, we beseech Thee, through her intercession whose festival we celebrate. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.