

CLARE OF ASSISI



CLARE OF ASSISI

- ✘ Born 1194 into noble family - Offreduccio
- ✘ Receives tonsure from Francis approx 1212 at age 18 w/approval of Bishop Guido



CLARE OF ASSISI - “CHIARA” ~ BRIGHT ONE

- ✘ Later joined by her sister Catherine they settled into the convent at San Damiano
- ✘ Clare’s *Rule* bonded them to Francis’ evangelical life – became the **“Poor Ladies”**



CLARE OF ASSISI



- × Co-founder of Franciscan Tradition and Spirituality
- × Little Plant of Francis
- × Faithful to absolute poverty

CLARE'S SPIRITUALITY

Though monastic,
her spirituality is not the
classic monastic path of
ascent, or transcending the
material [inferior & evil] to
achieve spiritual perfection
[superior & holy] – **Escape
from nature**



CLARE'S SPIRITUALITY

- ✘ Based on her journey with Francis- Clare emphasizes

Incarnation

as starting point of spirituality,

goodness of creation and

God cannot be found
apart from the world –

immersed in nature



CLARE OF ASSISI

- × Jesus reveals the **totality of Love** and the heights we can aspire to.
- × Heaven is not a place out there, but being in a **Relationship of Love**
with the Trinity
 - × Everything that exists is dependent on and **uniquely loved by the Father** and called into relationship



POVERTY & HUMILITY~ DOORS TO TRANSFORMATION

Poverty

is the approach to God,
*not a poverty of
want/need,*

**but embracing our
humanity and realizing
our**

**absolute dependence on
God & each other –**

[contingency]



CLARE'S SPIRITUALITY ~ DOORS TO TRANSFORMATION

× Humility
[vulnerability]

× – allows us to
enter relationship
and to accept
relationship from
others



CLARE – POVERTY & HUMILITY

The Joy of Poverty

Is not to
have
nothing in
this world;



AND COME TO KNOW - PERFECT JOY

The Joy of
Poverty
is to have
*Nothing but
God*



TRAN-SFO-RMATION

No human
imperfection outweighs
God's love and embrace

We are uniquely loved
*just for being
who we are.*



CLARE'S SPIRITUALITY



Relationship

~

defines us and
our dignity

Body of Christ ~

our willingness to change
from self-importance/
aggrandizement in order to
become the
living face of Christ to our
world

i.e. enflesh God and become
an *Image of God*

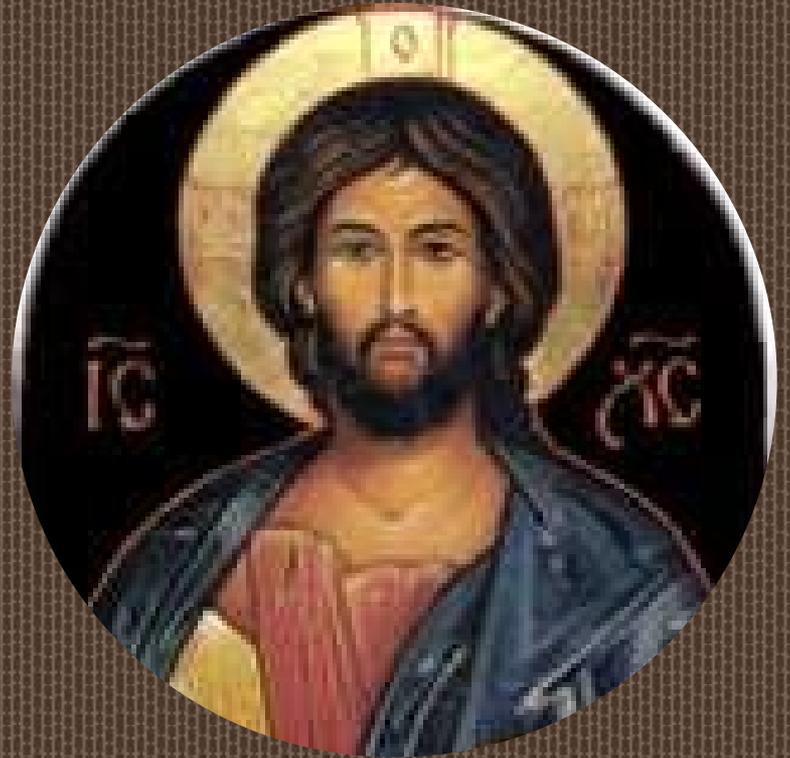


IMAGE OF GOD



Not having power of
authority over others

But accepting
Our vocation to

Serve others

Image of God ~

Being Relational

CLARE'S SPIRITUALITY

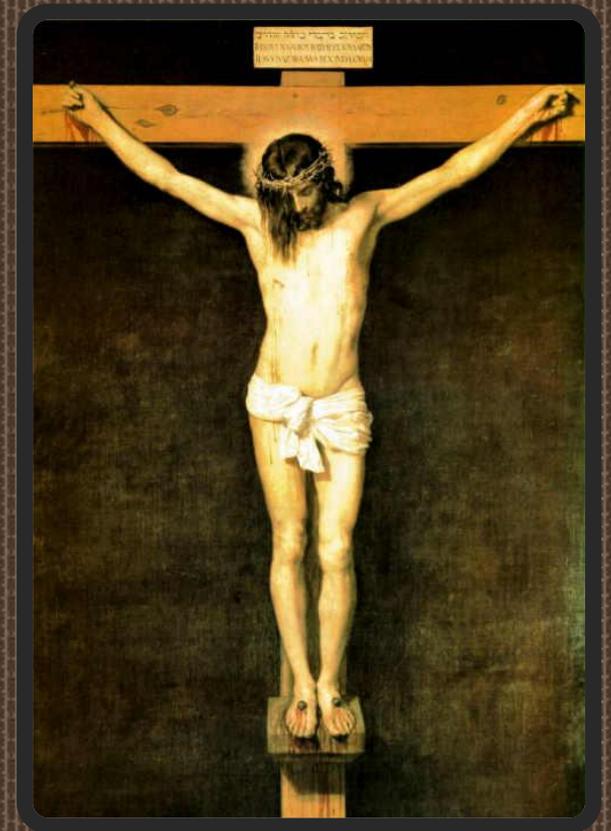
- × *To love, To feel, laugh, cry, suffer & /or enjoy the other*
- × Ultimately to lay down one's life -- *to make the others need more important than self*



MIRROR OF THE CROSS ~ CLARE'S TRANSFORMING TOOL

Cross is love made visible
-- *Mirror of Perfection*

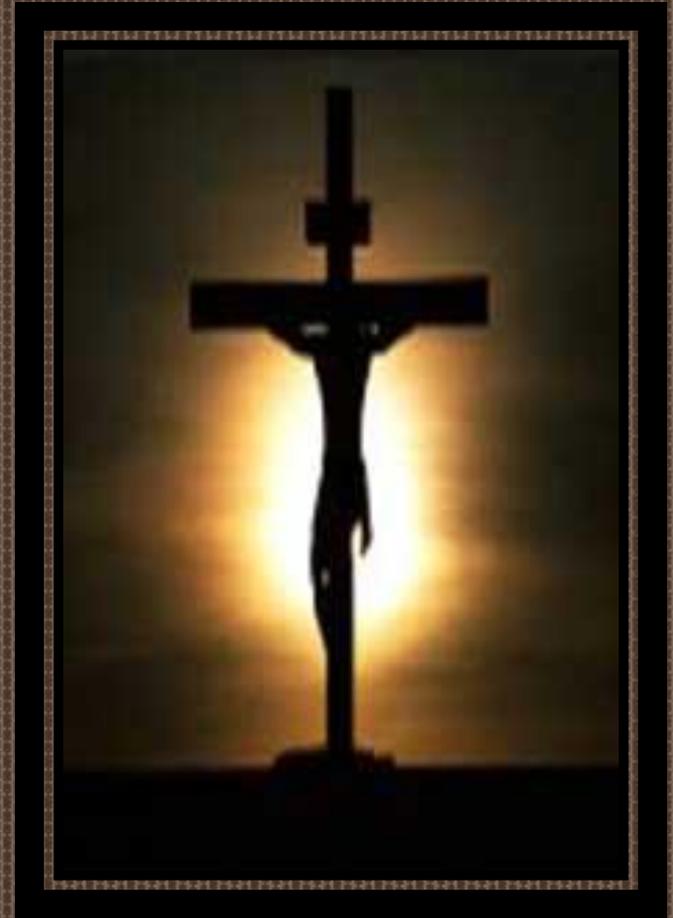
Inward image –
Discover yourself in the
depth of your being



MIRROR OF THE CROSS

× Outward reflected image

– Do you reflect your
authentic self,
who you really are or
the you, that you wish
others to see?



Christian life is about
visible presence,
not just an intellectual
assent to a belief,
but a *real lived*
experience of that
belief.



MIRROR OF THE CROSS

Mirror exercise ~

*JUST **LOOK** INTO
ANY MIRROR*

***WHAT DO YOU SEE**
IN A MIRROR?*

*WHAT **SERVICE** DOES
A MIRROR PROVIDE?*



LECTIO VS MIRROR ME~GOD VS IMAGE OF

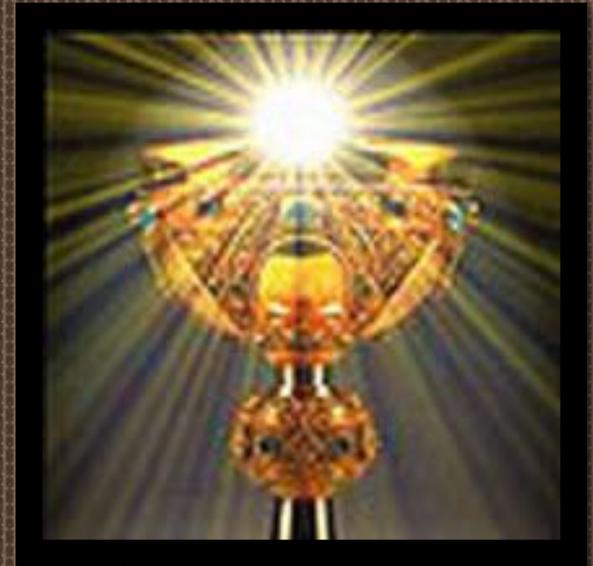
- × **Read Scripture** – orally savor the words of the text, taste and see
- × **Meditate** on the story – actively imagine yourself as a person in the story
- × **Pray** – allow the Scripture to raise a voice within to pray – thanksgiving, praise even supplication
- × **Contemplate** – sit in quiet, allow God the space to speak to you – draw you into a deeper union, relationship, and escape the world.
- **Gaze on Him** = visually embrace the crucified Christ
- **Consider Him** = how do I participate in His life – *loving, forgiving & healing*
- **Contemplate Him** = to move beyond ourselves and allow ourselves to be transformed into **similitude**
- **Imitate Him** = become that which we love in reality & action. Leads us to see God in all creation & invites our participation

TRANSFORMING SELF

“Place your mind before the mirror
of eternity!

Place your soul in the brilliance of
glory!

Place your heart *in the figure of the
divine substance (Cfr. Heb 1:3).*



SAINT CLARE



- ✘ *And transform your entire being into the image (Cfr. 2Cor 3:18) of the Godhead Itself through contemplation*

3rd letter to

Agnes

GAZE UPON HIM

- × *Gaze* upon that mirror each day, O Queen and Spouse of Jesus Christ, *and continually study your face within it*, that you may adorn yourself within and without with beautiful robes,
- × Indeed, blessed poverty, holy humility, and inexpressible charity are reflected in that mirror, as, with the grace of God, you can contemplate them throughout the entire mirror.



Clare and Agnes

St Clare 2nd Letter to Agnes of Prague

CONSIDER HIM



Look at the border of this mirror,
that is, the **poverty of Him**

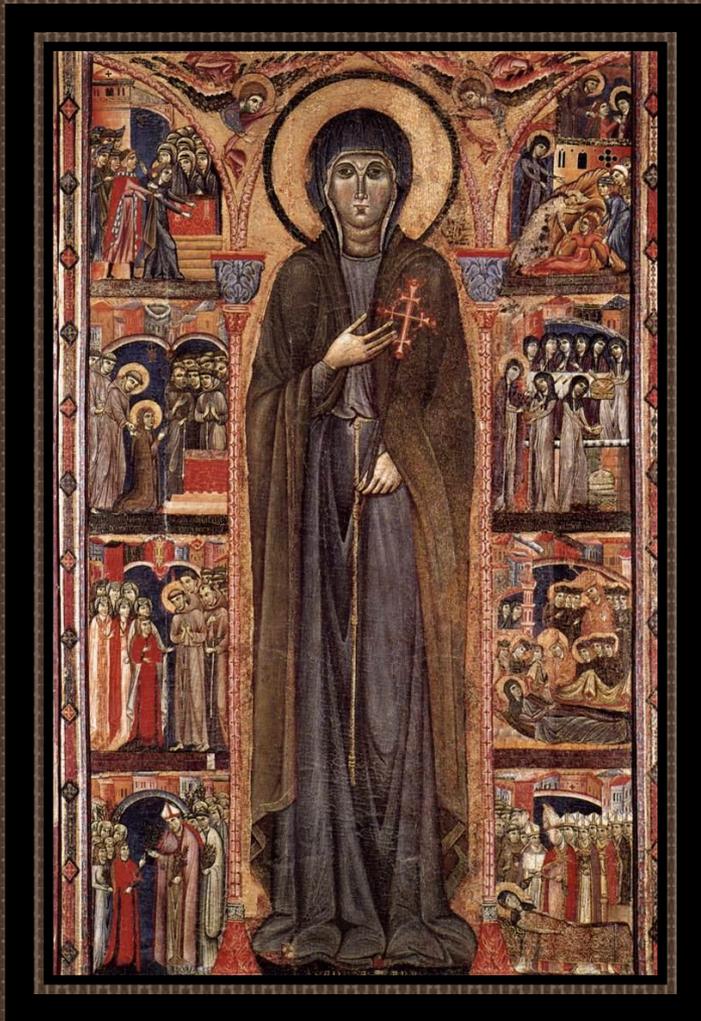
Who was placed in a manger and
wrapped in swaddling clothes.

○ *marvelous humility!*

○ *astonishing poverty!*

The King of angels,
the Lord of heaven & earth,
is laid in a manger!

CONSIDER HIM



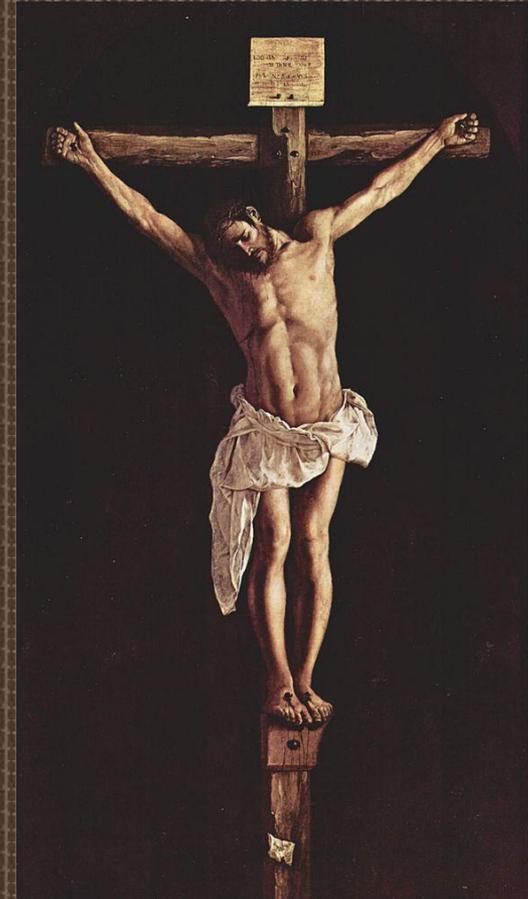
Then, at the surface of the mirror, consider the *holy humility*, the *blessed poverty*, the untold labors and burdens that He endured for the redemption of the whole human race.

4th Letter to Agnes

COMTEMPLATE THE CROSS

Then, in the depth
of this same mirror,
Contemplate the
ineffable *Charity* that led
Him to suffer
on the wood of the Cross
and to die there
the most shameful death

...



CONTEMPLATE HIM

From this moment, then,
O Queen of our heavenly King,
let yourself be inflamed
more strongly with the fervor of
charity.

As you further contemplate
His ineffable delights,
eternal riches and honors,
and sigh for them in the great desire
and *love* of your heart . . .



-
- × Indeed, it is now clear that the soul of a faithful person, the most worthy of all creatures because of the grace of God, is greater than heaven itself, since the heavens and the rest of creation cannot contain their Creator and only the faithful soul is His dwelling place and throne

IMITATE HIM

*As you desire to **imitate** [Him]*

*If you **suffer** with Him,
you will reign with Him (Cfr. Rm 8:17).*

Embrace the poor Christ.

*Look upon Him Who became
contemptible for you,*

*Follow Him,
Making yourself contemptible
in this world for Him*





WHY?

Clare's Spirituality is a Eucharistic Spirituality

- × The Mirror of Perfection is to draw us into seeing in the face of Jesus our own face and to help transform us into the hands and feet of Jesus walking in the world today.
- × It is to see the love of God in everything and everyone and in turn to become the love of God given for others
- *Eucharist*

-
- × Eucharist is not a private dinner to refresh our souls or feed our personal piety,
 - × *It is the body and blood of Christ combining with our body and blood and becoming real in the world.*

PRAYER FOR GAZING

“Who are you
O God?”

And who
am I?”



GAZE AT HIM

And see yourself in
the Mirror Of
Eternity

