

Singing Our Faith

Feast of St. Clare of Assisi – August 12, 2018

Although we celebrate the feast of our patroness, we still hear the readings from the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time. The gospel is a continuation of the Bread of Life Discourse—Jesus’ teachings on the Eucharist. Our opening hymn, “Alleluia! Sing to Jesus” proclaims the glory of the Eucharistic Feast. How appropriate that we hear these readings as we celebrate St. Clare, who was so devoted to Jesus in the Eucharist!

A couple years ago while preparing for the Feast of St. Clare, I found the hymn text below, penned by contemporary composer J. Michael Thompson. As we did last year, we’ll sing this as a reflection after communion. This is a well-crafted text – from the first stanza, which focuses on light (“Clare” means light), to the references to St. Francis and simple cloistered life. It perfectly sums up our patroness. Although we will use this text as a reflection, I invite us to reflect on it first as we enter into the Sunday Mass. Let us model our faithfulness after St. Clare’s, turning to the Eucharist for strength, encountering God through contemplative prayer, and recognizing beauty in the most simple parts of God’s creation.

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Hymn to St. Clare of Assisi

O Light from Light, all splendor's Source,
Whose clear beams shine with heaven's joy,
We give You thanks for Mother Clare
And ev'ry form of praise employ.

Enticed by Francis' preaching sweet,
Christ Crucified became her Spouse;
She gathered sisters to her side
Where Poverty would grace the house.

She left behind all earthly gain
That riches true might be her all;
In poverty, obedience,
And chastity she heard Christ's call.

As mother to her flock, she lived
And modeled Christ to ev'ryone;
In loving service spent herself
In toil from dawn to setting sun.

As she has shown us, Lord, Your way,
So give us grace like her to be,
That we may turn from self to You
And in your Way be truly free.

Most high, omnipotent, good God,
O Father, Son and Spirit blest,
With Mother Clare and all your saints
Bring us, Your Church, to endless rest