



HORIZONS OF HOPE

Fixing the world with hope

SISTERS OF ST. CLARE, FLORIDA REGION SPRING 2014

Sr. Philippa Synnott (1930 - 2014) was called to special ministries

Dear Friends,

March 13 marked the first anniversary of the day that Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the archbishop of Buenos Aires, became the church's first Latin American and first Jesuit pope. What an inspiring year it has been!

On the feast of Christ the King, November 24, Pope Francis promulgated his first Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Latin for "The Joy of the Gospel," an important document which may be seen as his vision for the future of the Church. This exhortation includes many aspects that he has been preaching since being elected Pope, such as evangelization, peace, social justice, family, dignity of creation, faith and politics, ecumenism, interreligious dialogue, as well as female and lay people's role in the Church.

We believe it is important to emphasize the joy of having Christian faith, as well as its promotion by means of living it as a model. The idea of joy reflects the ideals of the Franciscan charism – caring for the poor, needy, and forsaken; fostering forgiveness and acceptance; and embracing all with a joyful spirit.

We believe whole-heartedly that Pope Francis's vision is going to change the Church significantly in 2014. We look forward to joyfully being part of this growing and changing Church together with all of you, our friends.

In Christ,

~Sr. Lucia Brady
for the Sisters of St. Clare

We mourn the passing of our dear Sister Philippa Synnott, who died Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2014.

She was a nurse, a certified Midwife, a counselor and a comforter: becoming a nurse as a Sister of St. Clare fulfilled Sr. Philppa's childhood dream. She entered the congregation in August 1953, made her First Profession in February 1955 and her final profession in April 1958. She was given the name "Philippa," the name of one of the first followers of St. Clare in Assisi.

As a Sister of St. Clare, Sr. Philippa was initially involved in a nursing ministry: until 1995 she cared mostly for children - from



newborns through 18-year-olds – in a variety of circumstances. In addition to general nursing assignments, she served as the Matron of the Sisters of St. Clare



Orphanage in Cavan Town, Ireland and she served as the Matron of the "Babies Home" in Stamullen, handling the placement of infants through adoptions. Sr. Philippa also served as the Matron of the Franciscan Boarding School for Boys aged 13 - 18 in Gormanston, County Meath, Ireland.

Since August, 1995 and until her illness recently prevented her, Sr. Philippa served the elderly and the sick in the Pastoral Care Ministry of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in New Port Richey, FL.

Sr. Philippa dedicated her life to God in the service of *all* people. May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in the peace of our God. Please keep Sr. Philippa in your prayers.

Feast of St. Clare Celebration



“St. Clare’s life continues to speak to all of us...”



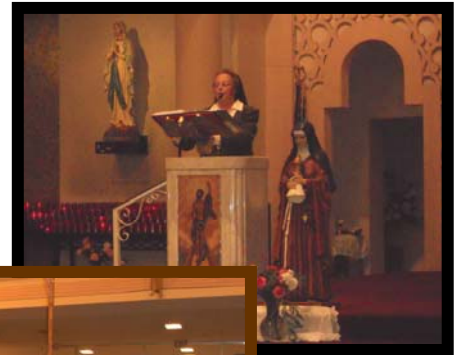
A warm “thank you” to all who joined us at the feast of St. Clare Mass of Thanksgiving that was celebrated last August 9th at St. John Vianney Church in St. Pete Beach. We estimate that approximately 200 people from many parishes throughout the diocese braved a torrential storm and severe flash flooding to attend the special Mass.



Fr. Ailbe O’Murcho was the main celebrant and Fr. John Blum, Pastor of St. John Parish concelebrated. We would like to extend out thanks to them and to the priests, staff and parishioners of St. John Vianney Parish for their warm hospitality.

We would also like to thank organist Paulette King and cantor Jennifer DeMarco, both of the St. Patrick Parish in Largo who, together with Sr. Kathleen playing the cello, enriched our celebration with their beautiful music. Very special appreciation also goes to the Catholic Daughters of America of St. John Parish who hosted a beautiful 3-course dinner for us after the Mass in the Msgr. Trainor Hall.

We were delighted to see so many of our parishioners and friends, and are so grateful for their continuing generous and loving support. Each and every one of you helped to make our Feast Day a joyous occasion, one of the many ways you support the Sisters of St. Clare throughout the years.



“Totally love Him, Who gave Himself totally for your love.” St. Clare

Central American Sister and European Sister Join the Florida Re-

In December, the US Department of Immigration granted Sr. Amparo of El Salvador an R-1 Visa which allows her to work as a Religious in this country. She has joined Sr. Christa Rowe and Sr. Bernadette Breen in Wilmington, Delaware to form a Community of the Sisters of St Clare at that location.



All three Sisters are now involved in the Ministry of Caring, a community-based nonprofit organization founded by Capuchin Franciscan friar, Brother Ronald Giannone. The Ministry of Caring provides a much-needed network of social, health and support services for the poor and the homeless.



Sister Bernadette came to Wilmington from Porthcawl, Wales in July 2013. Sr. "Bernie" enthusiastically informs us that she thoroughly enjoys managing the Ministry of Caring kitchen that provides meals for the homeless.



Since she began working with the Ministry of Caring in 2011, Sr. Christa has been involved in the effort that provides affordable independent housing with supportive services to low-income men and women disabled by HIV/AIDS.

Srs. Christa, Bernadette and Amparo have each expressed their delight in being in community together as well as their personal satisfaction in being part of the very important work of the Ministry of Caring.



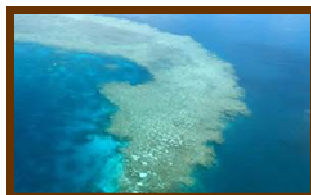
*May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May He show His face to you and be merciful to you.
May He turn His countenance to you and give you peace.
May the Lord be with you always, and
Wherever you are, may you be with Him always. Amen
The Blessing of St. Clare*

Generous Jubilee Gifts permit Sr. Lucia to Visit Australia & New Zealand



Sr. Lucia wishes to express a big “thank you” to parishioners and friends who generously made possible her trip to Australia and New Zealand in celebration of her Golden Jubilee. This trip far exceeded her expectations (which were extravagant to begin with, having been a geography teacher many years ago)!

Sr. Lucia explains, “It was breathtaking to see the beautiful New Zealand scenery – particularly in Queenstown and Milford Sound – and to actually see animals I had previously only read about! I was able to enjoy a wide variety of scenery in Australia, from the very cosmopolitan Melbourne area (where I spent time with the delightful Fr. Malcolm Crawford), to the picturesque Sydney with its very recognizable Opera House, to the most spectacular Great Barrier Reef.



Sister was also blessed to be able to take short trips to Canberra and the exceedingly interesting Tasmania, a large island south of Melbourne which was settled during the mid-1800’s as a penal colony for convicts from Britain & Ireland.”

Sr. Lucia was also able to spend time with the Poor Clares (founded from the Sisters of St. Clare in Newry in 1883) in Waverly, an eastern suburb of Sydney, Australia. Sister adds, “The Waverly Sisters are so welcoming and so very warm. We were able to be together for Mass in their chapel every morning. The Sisters showed me around the amazingly beautiful Sydney area and took me to Katoomba and the Blue Mountains area, where the “Three Sisters” rock formation is located.”



Sr. Lucia describes her trip as a time of many co-incidences – or ‘God-incidences’ as she likes to say. For example, she happened to be in Waverly when the esteemed Academic Dean and Professor of Spirituality at the Franciscan School of Theology, Br. William Short, OFM, came from the U.S. to the Australia Franciscan Schools Association Conference to talk about *What makes an Organization Franciscan?*



Sr. Lucia attended two of Br. Bill’s presentations at St. Clare College: *Educating the Good Person - Franciscan Pedagogy and the Franciscan Tradition and the Sciences.*

As another example of “God-incidence” - Sister also happened to be in Sydney on the Feast Day of St. Mary (of the Cross) MacKillop, Australia’s first and only saint who was canonized only two years ago. Sister attended the solemn Vigil Mass at the Cathedral in Sydney and described the music of the men’s and boys choir as “outstanding.” On the saint’s actual Feast Day, Sr. Lucia attended a joyous Mass and reception at the St. Mary Mackillop Shrine.

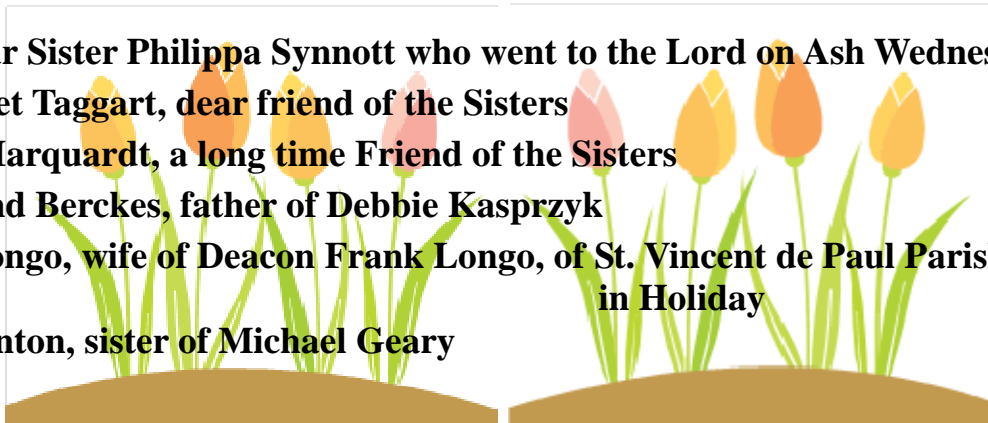


IN MEMORIAM

On earth, may He increase His grace and virtues...In heaven may He exalt and glorify you...from Clare’s 3rd letter to Blessed Agnes of Prague

Please remember in your prayers our deceased friends and benefactors, including the following who recently passed away

Our dear Sister Philippa Synnott who went to the Lord on Ash Wednesday
Margaret Taggart, dear friend of the Sisters
Mark Marquardt, a long time Friend of the Sisters
Raymond Berckes, father of Debbie Kasprzyk
Lucy Longo, wife of Deacon Frank Longo, of St. Vincent de Paul Parish
Bree Fenton, sister of Michael Geary
in Holiday



Sr. Lucia Enjoys Time Spent with California Sisters

On her way home from Australia, Sr. Lucia enjoyed spending a few days with the Sisters of St. Clare in California. Sister stayed mainly in Vista where Sr. Madeline, who years ago taught at St. Lawrence School in Tampa, has ministered for 34 years. Sr. Madeline works with the RCIA and the ministry to sick and homebound programs of St. Francis Church, a multicultural parish with many of its parishioners being originally from Mexico or Vietnam.



Sr. Lucia also spent time with the Sisters in Brea: Sr. Anne Otter, who ministers at the St. Angela Merici Parish School in Brea and Sr. Sarah Shrewsbury, who is Vocation Director for the Diocese of San Bernardino. Apart from visiting, attending Mass and praying with the Sisters, there wasn't much time for Sr. Lucia to sightsee. However, she did especially enjoy seeing the

St Clare's Garden retreat house managed by Sr. Brigeen. She also enjoyed visiting Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral in Los Angeles which was built by Bishop Roger Mahony about twelve years ago and is the burial place of actor Gregory Peck and his wife.



Sr. Lucia had the opportunity to spend time with Sr. Karen Small who recently arrived from Ireland, having taught at St Clare's High School, Newry, County Down. Sr. Karen had a sabbatical for study at the

Franciscan School of Theology that recently moved from Berkeley to San Luis Rey. Interestingly, Sr. Karen's advisor is Br. Bill Short OFM, who Sr. Lucia knows from retreats at St. Bonaventure in New York and most recently in Waverly, Australia during her trip.



Evangelium secundum Mattheum



Sisters and Friends Celebrate St. Francis Feast

On October 4, 2013 the Sisters and a few of their Associates and friends, including Jerry and Anne O’Riordan visiting from County Cork, Ireland, gathered at the St. Clare Convent for Mass of Thanksgiving for St. Francis’ Feast Day. Msgr. Brendan Muldoon, pastor of St. Jerome Parish, celebrated the Mass and spoke eloquently about Pope Francis’s embrace of the hallmarks of Franciscan spirituality.

Msgr. Muldoon observed that Pope Francis seeks to emulate St. Francis’s simplicity of life, explaining that Francis stripped himself of everything that was unnecessary and dedicated himself wholeheartedly to caring for the poor and all people in need. Monsignor added that St. Francis was keenly aware that all creation is God’s gift to us and that we are all children of God, brothers and sisters who belong to one immense family that includes all that God has made -- sun and stars, plants and animals, and women and men of every race, culture and social condition. On top of all of this, St. Francis was a joyful man and praised God for the goodness that surrounded him every day.

All who attended the gathering were moved by the inspirational homily and they thoroughly enjoyed the wonderful meal and fellowship that followed the Mass.



Heartfelt Congratulations!

The Sisters wish to convey their warm wishes to Msgr. Brendan Muldoon, Pastor of St. Jerome Parish and long time friend of the Sisters, on the occasion of the his Golden Jubilee celebrating his fifty years in the Priesthood.

The Sister also extend congratulations to our fellow Franciscan, Fr. Gregory Reisert, OFM, Cap., who is celebrating his Golden Jubilee

Regional Sisters Gather for Retreat

All of the Sisters of the Florida Region gathered in Largo on February 6th through 8th for a retreat led by Franciscan Retreat master and Lecturer Br. Thomas Barton, OSF. Br. Tom has long been a lecturer on Franciscan Life; interestingly, his area of specialization is St. Clare of Assisi. In addition to being on the staff of Franciscan Pilgrimage Pro-



grams, Br. Tom is a certified Social Worker for the State of New Jersey.

During their time together, Br. Tom and the Sisters discussed many Franciscan themes, particularly the Franciscan privilege of poverty and Franciscan life in today’s world. Most importantly, they set aside time each day of the retreat for prayer and contemplation.



SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY, AUGUST 9TH



This year we will be blessed to celebrate
ST. CLARE'S FEAST DAY
at **St. Jerome Parish**
10895 Hamlin Blvd., Largo, FL 33774
on **Saturday, AUGUST 9th, at 11:00 am**

Please plan to join us!
We will mail you further details later.

Mark your calendar and join us
Saturday, August 9th

**SISTERS OF ST. CLARE
FLORIDA REGION
SPRING 2014**

St. Francis House
11235 Apache Place
Largo, FL 33774

Phone: 727 593 8195

Find us on the web
sistersofstclare.org