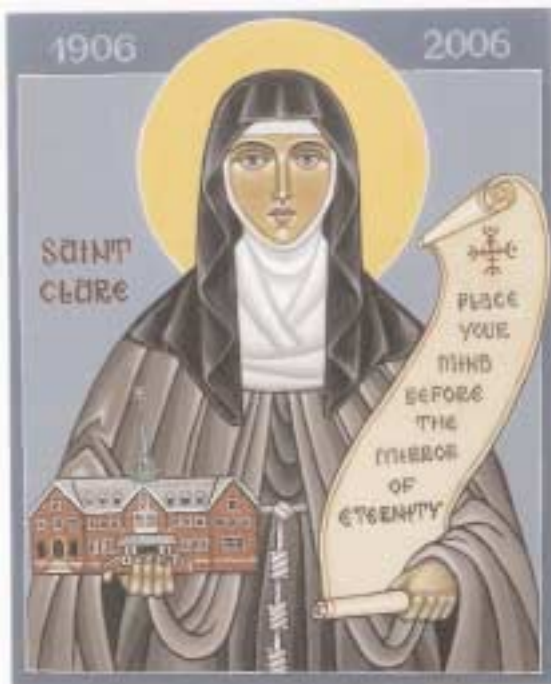




Celebrating 100 Years in Boston!

This year marks the one-hundredth anniversary of the coming of the first Poor Clares to Boston in 1906. On September 16th our own Cardinal Sean will lead our friends and benefactors in our Eucharistic celebration in thanksgiving to God for the countless graces lavished upon us during all those years. This special year of remembering starts with our founding sisters who lived in the abandoned Working Boys Home on what was Bennett Street in the South End. Their dedicated labors and sacrifices, along with the generosity of countless people, made possible the completion of our present monastery here in Jamaica Plain.



Rev. Leonard Tighe, our faithful friend for many years, commissioned Bro. Anthony Joseph Dusza, a member of the Little Brothers of St. Francis, to write this special icon of Saint Clare for the occasion. Fr. Tighe wanted our monastery to be the monstrance in Clare's hand because we bring the presence of Christ to the city of Boston through our dedicated lives of Eucharistic adoration and prayer for its people. Clare calls us still today to "contemplate the Mirror of eternity," Jesus Christ, the reflection of God.

"My Sisters, I bless you as much as I can and more than I can." (St. Clare)

Meet Sister Caritas



The Visitation of Mary was the perfect day for Tina Ngoc Mai Truong to be received into our community as a novice. The memory of St. Clare's reception by the St. Francis and his brothers, was kept alive in the person of Fr. Philip O'Shea, OFM, who blessed the habit she would receive. Afterwards, Sister Maria (center) made her delicious ginger cookies to the delight of our new postulant, Anne (right). Tina's new name is Sister Caritas of the Heart of Jesus Crucified.

The Story of Our Faith Quilt



In our previous newsletter we told you about our Faith quilt project and promised to show it to you. It has been on display and now has returned home.

We chose an earth color for the basic fabric, coarse like the unbleached wool of poor Italian peasants, which became the cloth used for our Franciscan habit.

Our quilt is framed with words from the Gospel, the foundation of our lives. I am the way, the truth and the life...Happy are the poor in spirit... Throughout our quilt the color gold represents the presence of God. Thus, the Gospel texts are gold. The border is red to symbolize the love and vitality of the Holy Spirit, the Source of the Word.

The central point is the living Body of Christ as Eucharistic bread. In a voice that came from the Sacred Host Christ promised Clare and her sisters: "I will always take care of you." We have embroidered these words on the white host (not visible in the photo) to symbolize the gracious care Divine Providence has lavished upon us for the 800 years of our order's existence, and in particular during the 100 years of our Jamaica Plain Monastery. The Eucharistic Bread is encircled with gold and gold rays emanate from the Bread across the entire surface of the quilt to represent the Divine Presence in which we live.

The Eucharist is superimposed over the outline of the San Damiano cross revered by Franciscans as the image of Christ which called Francis to rebuild His house. The red border again symbolizes the love and fire of the Holy Spirit which inspired Jesus Christ to give His life on the cross, and which inspired Francis and his followers to give their lives for the Church and the world.

Saint Francis would bring Clare and her sisters to live in the little monastery that housed this crucifix. Clare prayed before it all her life. After her death her sisters took it with them to the new Monastery of Santa Chiara in Assisi, which became the Proto-Monastery of all Poor Clares.

The icon of Saint Clare at the foot of the cross portrays a woman who was filled with the spirit of God, and is still the vital source and continued nourishment of Poor Clare life today. Gold threads run through her and extend out from her sending her spirit-filled charism into her daughters. Her spirit has been life-giving, sending forth roots that have caused us to spread throughout the world.



Sister Mary John Dedeko of our Lady of Dolors, went home to the eternal feast of her heavenly Bridegroom at the age of 68, after two years of treatments for an aggressive form of cancer. Sister is pictured above, left, with our abbess, Sr. Clare Frances McAvoy, a few months before.

Sister had volunteered to go to Japan to help start our new foundation and worked hard there for 20 years to make it a success. It's hard to believe she is gone so soon. We miss her a lot.