

Monastery of St. Clare

Thanksgiving 2006

May almighty God bless you. May God look upon you with mercy and give you peace.

Blessing of St. Clare

Everyone Loves a Story

We like to hear one and are usually anxious to share our own. When we do tell the tale of our vocation; and we all have a vocation story. It is simply the unfolding of God's creative action and our ongoing response. Here are some of the chapters.

First chapter: "Before you were born, I knew you..." We come into being in response to a divine call. In the beginning, we are loved into being, gifted with the incredible mystery of existence. We can't claim it as a right, we can only be grateful that we are. A second gift is the genetic blue print we receive from our parents. This too is a package we have received, one which will give a certain shape to everything else that comes along in life. And with it comes the womb warmth that is our first environment, something else that will be factored in everything that follows.

Second chapter. Every birthday celebrates these beginning and gives thanks for them, as well as for all that follows. These first years are the most formative of all. They are the matrix of our vocation story and we will live out of them all the rest of our days. Who we are becoming is continuously revealed as the story unfolds.

Third chapter. We might title this one "Growing up". Remember when being a "grown up" was the height of your ambition. At the time, it seemed a slow process; in retrospect, it happened all too quickly. The meaning of our life continued to unfold as we experienced each day's divine invitation to new life. With these passing years vocation took on a still more personal shape. The

shelter of school gave way to career choices and we began to form relationships, some of which would give permanent shape to what followed. God's call's continued in an attraction to a specific way of living with and for others. Our choice spoke words of commitment as we married, became a religious, decided that a profession would be our life focus. These calls to community continue to form our vocation.

Fourth chapter. The plot picks up pace. Our vocation story unfolds in surprising ways: joys we never dreamed of; sorrows we didn't think we would ever be able to bear. The dailyness of life also shape our story and give it local color. They continue to so each day, every day, all the days of our life.

Last chapter. In one sense it has yet to be written; in another sense it already has. We are who we have become out of those very first beginnings, the "characters" that were our parents, the first experiences of our childhood as well as our growing up years. Now the plot line of each passing year moves us closer to the end of our story. Better said, it offers the promise of eternal unfolding of our vocation story. To be continued....forever and ever.

-Sr. Marie Beha, osc

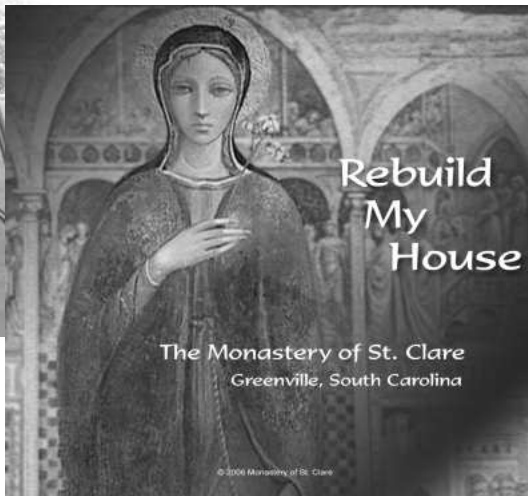




Sr. Judy Zielinski and cameraman Douglas Thomas with Lyn our Director of Development prepare for filming of our video.



Sr. Kathleen Kalinowski and Sr. Grace Sbrissa share their expertise as NRRO consultants.



The past few months have held a variety of experiences here at the monastery: a solemn profession, the arrival of our newest member, a golden jubilee, a wedding, a vocation discernment weekend, consultation with NRRO for a grant request and the making of a movie. We rejoice in so many signs of new Life!



Above: Cheryl Roberts and Louis Batson celebrate their wedding in our chapel.



Left: Sr. Marilyn Berry, osf returns to Greenville for a Jubilee celebration.

Message from the Abbess
Sister Carolyn Forgette, OSC

THE GIFT

Dear Friends,

Three days before Sister Kathleen DeLancey's Solemn Profession I walked into the community room to see a beautifully wrapped gift on the table with Kathy's name on it. My imagination began to ponder what could be inside the package and wonder how it would be a gift in sister's life. Before Sister Kathy even had a chance to open it my mind had moved on to listing all the ways that Kathy herself is a gift to this Poor Clare community, to our Church and to our whole world.

On September 17, the Feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, Nancy Carnes arrived at our door to begin in earnest her life in the monastery. One week later on Sunday, September 24 Nancy was received as a postulant into our community. The gift of Nancy's life among us is just beginning to be unwrapped. I invite you to pray with us for Nancy as she meets the challenges of a whole new beginning.

Wedding bells aren't often connected with a monastery, but this fall we had that gift as well. Two of our dear friends, Cheryl Roberts and Louis Batson III exchanged their wedding vows in the monastery chapel in the presence of their families and the Poor Clare Community.

Some things in our lives aren't so easily recognized as gift. For several years we have been having special Evening Prayer Services during Advent and Lent. At this time we have decided to discontinue these services. We know that in God's goodness this decision will also somehow prove to be gift. Each Sunday the sisters will be gathering as usual in the monastery choir chapel praying Evening Prayer in union with the whole church. If any one of you would like to join us there you are most welcome. Just let us know ahead of time so we can have your book ready for you.

We also invite you to come pray with us at our traditional Thanksgiving liturgy at 11:30 AM on November 23. Fr. David Hyman, OFM will be presiding and several of our Franciscan Brothers from the area will be with us. Each year we look forward to this day of celebration and giving thanks. Your presence at the Eucharist that day is a special gift to us, but even if you are unable to attend have no doubt that YOU are among the many gifts for which we give thanks.

Sr. Kathleen's beautifully wrapped gift has been opened. Inside was a Tibetan singing bowl over 100 years old. These bowls have been used over the years to call to prayer, aid in meditation and lift the hearts of men and women to worship. With reverence we listen as the tone resonates through the room and we join our prayer and yours to all that has gone before.

May God give you peace.

Sister Carolyn

“Rebuild My House”

These words God spoke to St. Francis have had particular meaning for over eight hundred years for all Poor Clares around the world. Today, these same words have a deeper meaning for your Poor Clare Sisters here in Greenville, South Carolina, as we prepare to break ground on March 1, 2007, at the site of the new Monastery of St. Clare. To share what Poor Clare life is and how we and some dear friends of ours feel about our building project, we have prepared a video titled “Rebuild My House” which you may view from the home page of our website: www.poorclaresc.com. Call Anne at our development office for questions about the video: 864-292-9650.

*Join us in prayers
of thanksgiving and joy!*

**Because of God's providence, your faith in
our life of prayer and your generosity in
sharing your resources your Poor Clare Nuns
are able to break ground for our new
Monastery of St. Clare on March first, 2007!**

We will send you all the details for that glorious day, which is also the anniversary of our Foundation here over fifty years ago, in our next newsletter. In the meantime, please call Lyn for more information at this time: 864-292-9650. We wanted to let you know as soon as we could that we have set the date. Please pray with us that this day will bring blessings to all those who are a part of our undertaking.

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