

HERE BEGINNETH THE LIFE OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ST. CLARE

Caxton added this life to his edition of the Golden Legend, but it was not a part of Voragine's original.

There was a marvellous holy woman in the city of Assisi, which was named Clare. First ye shall understand that her nativity was much worthy and noble. It is read that as touching the world she was of right noble lineage, and as touching the spirit to the regard of the estate of virtues and noble manners towards God, she was of right noble reputation. Then for to show that after her nativity she was a devout espouse of God, she is worthy to be of great recommendation.

QUALITIES OF ST. CLARE

Her Worthy and Noble Nativity

It is read that when her mother was enceinted or great with child of her, on a time as she was before the crucifix, weeping and praying that of his grace he would grant to her the deliverance of her fruit with joy and gladness, she heard a voice suddenly saying to her, "Woman, have thou no doubt [fear], for without peril thou shalt be delivered of a daughter which shall by her doctrine enlumine all the world." And therefore, as soon as she was born, she did do name her at the font, Clare.

Her Virtues

Secondly, is found in her life and known, great plenty of virtues. It is read that this holy virgin, after the time of her infancy, was so composed in all good manners, in port [behavior], in maintenance, and in continuance, that all others might take of her fair and good ensample for to maintain and govern them. And in especial she had so great pity of the poor people, that oftentimes she spared her own mouth and sent by secret messengers such as she should herself have been sustained by. Also in making devout prayer she had so great pleasure that oftentimes it seemed to her, being in orisons, that her spirit was refreshed with the sweetness of heaven.

She was in her array like others, but by penance she chastised her body, for how well that for the honour of her friends she was nobly apparelled, yet nevertheless she ware always the hair [hair-shirt] on her bare body, and from her infancy her heart had determined that for to die she would never have other espouse than Jesu Christ. And many other and plenty of virtues shone in her, the which were overlong to recount.

Spouse of God

Thirdly, how St. Francis showed to her the way of truth; it is read that as soon as St. Clare heard the renomee of St. Francis, it was spread over all the world as it were a new man sent into the

world, showing how we ought to follow the new way of Jesu Christ, she never might have rest in her heart till she was come to him, and that to him she had opened her heart. Then after she had sweetly understood him, and had received of him many a holy, sweet, and angelic word, St. Francis exhorted her above all other things to flee the world both with heart and her body. And to this he enjoined her that on Palm Sunday she should hallow the feast with the other people, but the night following, in remembrance of the passion of Jesu Christ, she should turn her joy into weeping and afflictions, for in such wise to weep the passion of Jesu Christ, finally she might come to heaven as virgin and espouse of God, well eurous and happy.

Her Entry into the Convent

Fourthly, how she had no quietness in her heart till she had accomplished her thought and purpose; it is read that St. Clare, thus informed of St. Francis, could have no rest in her heart till that, the night assigned and the hour, she issued out of the city of Assisi, in which she dwelled, and came to the church of our Lady of Portiuncula. And then the friars received her, which awoke in the said church, and abode for her tofore the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary. And there her hair was cut off, and after, they led her into an abbey of nuns and there left her.

She Leaves Behind Her Worldly Friends

Fifthly, how her friends despised this work ordained by our Lord; it is read when this lady was thus ordained, she laboured and did so much that she drew her sister named Agnes into her company, wherefore as well for that one as for that other, the carnal friends of St. Clare had her in indignation out of measure, wherefore St. Francis translated them into the church of St. Damian, which church by the commandment of the crucifix he had repaired. And there this lady began the religion that was called of poor sisters, and there she was inclosed in a little cell which St. Francis had edified.

Her Humility

Sixthly, how she had humility in her heart; it is read that St. Clare glorified herself sovereignly in humility, like as the wise man saith: Of so much that a creature is promoted, of so much ought he to be the more humble. Therefore, after that she had assembled a great convent of holy virgins, unneth and with great pain, if it had not been for the obedience of St. Francis, she had never received the sovereignty of them. And after that she had received the domination over them and governance, she was tofore all other ready to serve them that were sick, as she had been a handmaid or servant, and was so humble that she would wash the feet of her hand-maidens and servants when they came from without from their work, and dried them and kissed them.

Her Poverty

Seventhly, how St. Clare kept poverty; it is read that for to keep and to follow poverty after the gospel of Jesu Christ, St. Clare put thereto all her entent, wherefore sith the beginning of her holy life, all that ever that came to her of father and mother, she sold and gave it for God's sake, insomuch that for her ne for her sisters she had but simple feeding and clothing, ne would have none other. And notwithstanding that she was assoiled of the pope of the vow of poverty, and

thereupon had received letters of the pope, much suddenly weeping, she wrote again saying. I will well be assoiled of my sins, but the vow of poverty I shall keep unto the death.

How Jesus Provided for Her

The eighth, how in necessity Jesu Christ visited her; it is read that, on a time that at the hour of dinner in the college of St. Clare was but one loaf of bread, ne there might no more be had. Then St. Clare took this loaf of the hand of the dispenser, and made then her prayer, and after, of that loaf made as many loaves and parts as there were sisters. And as soon as every each had received her part, how well it was but little, the divine grace multiplied it so much that every each left some and had enough.

Item semblably it is read that that God did for her when in her college the pots were failed.

Her Self-Denial

Ninthly, how in straitness St. Clare was ruled; this holy lady was content with one poor coat lined with a mantlet; she used never pendants ne furs of skins, but dispensed all her time in keeping her body in servage of the spirit. And herewith thrice in the week she fasted in this manner that she never tasted thing that was sodden.

Item, every year she fasted two lentens to bread and water only, save the Sunday she took a little wine.

And shortly, she lived so straitly that she became so feeble that St. Francis commanded her by virtue of obedience that she should fail no day but that she should take for her refectation an ounce and a half of bread.

She was never without hair next her flesh, and for a pillow, she took a block or a great stone; she lay always on the bare ground, or for to take the better her rest she lay otherwhile upon the cuttings of vines, unto the time that St. Francis had commanded her, because that it was over foul, that she should use to lie on a sack full of straw.

Her Enmity with the Devil

Tenthly, how she hath despised the iniquity of the fiend our enemy; it is read that in especial she had a custom that from midday she was in prayers and remembering the passion and sufferance of Jesu Christ, two hours during, and after the eventide she was always a long while in orisons. And it is read that oftentimes the fiend appeared to her by night saying: If so be that ye abstain you not from waking and weeping, ye shall for certain be blind.

And she answered: He shall not be blind that shall see our Lord in his glory.

And when the fiend heard this answer, anon he departed all confused, ne durst never after tempt her ne let her of her prayers.

Her Devotion to the Passion of Jesus

Eleventhly, God of his grace had pierced her heart, it is read that St. Clare for to dispend amorously the time that God had lent her, in especial she was determined that from the hour of mid-day unto evensong time, she would dispend all that time in thinking and beweeeping the passion of Jesu Christ, and say prayers and orisons according thereto, after unto the five wounds of the precious body of Jesu Christ, as smitten and pierced to the heart with the dart of the love divine.

It is read that from the time on a Shere Thursday [the Thursday in Holy Week], the hour of the maundy [the ceremony of the washing of the feet], unto Easter even the Saturday [i.e. the evening that precedes Easter Sunday], she was remembering and thinking on the sufferance of our Lord Jesu Christ so burningly, that she was ravished as all drunken in the love of God, that she knew not what was said ne done about her, but as unmovable or as all insensible, in standing she held her eyes fixed in one place.

Her Patience in Times of Sickness

Twelfthly, how in her disease and pain she was of God comforted; it is said that she was by the space of eight and twenty days in continual languor and sickness, nevertheless was never seen in her sign of impatience, but always sweet words and amiable in praising and thanking God of all. And in especial it is read that, in the sickness in which she passed toward the end of her life she was seventeen days without meat or drink. And nevertheless she was so sweetly visited of God that it seemed unto all them that saw her that she had no pain ne disease, but yet more every creature that came to her was comforted in God.

And in especial it is read that, when the hour of death approached, she, which long time had lost her speech, began to speak and say: Go out surely, thou hast a good safeconduct.

And when one of her sisters, being there present, heard that, she demanded her to whom she spake.

And she answered: To my soul, whom I see abashed to depart from my body, for he ought not for to doubt, for I see the holy Virgin Mary which abideth for me.

And this said, our Blessed Lady entered into the chamber where St. Clare lay. And she was crowned with a crown right clear shining, that the obscurity of the night was changed into clearness of mid-day. And she brought with her a right great multitude of other virgins all nobly crowned, among whom there was one that bare a rich mantle, to whom she said: Give hither the mantle.

And when she had sweetly embraced her she clad her with the mantle. And at that same time was weeping about her the college of sisters, and in especial Agnes the sister of St. Clare, making great moan and sorrow. Then St. Clare said sweetly: My sisters, discomfort you not, for ye shall have unto God of me a good and a true advocate. And thou Agnes shalt soon after follow me into glory.

THE GREAT MARVELS THAT GOD SHOWED FOR ST. CLARE

Now it is well reason and right that we say and show of the great marvels that God showed for St. Clare by her holy prayers, for she was veritable, true, and worthy of all honour.

Assisi Saved from the Saracens

That great tempest that was in the time of Frederick the emperor, whereof holy church had so much to suffer, that in divers parts of the world was much war, so that by the commandment of the emperor were battles established of knights, and with that so many archers of Saracens as they had been hills of bodies for to destroy the people, castles and cities. The Saracens ran as wood men till they came to the gates of Assisi. And the felon Saracens, that be full of all cruelty and falsehood, and seek nothing but for to slay and destroy Christian men's blood, and they came unto the cloister of the poor ladies of St. Damian, and the holy ladies had so great fear that their hearts melted in their bodies, and ran weeping to their mother St. Clare.

And she that was sick, without fear of heart, made her to be led tofore her enemies unto the door, and did do bear tofore the body of our Lord, the which was in a pix much richly garnished and devoutly. And this holy lady was on her knees, saying with weeping tears unto our Lord: Ah! fair Lord God, please it you then that they that serve you, and be disarmed, whom I nourish for your love, be brought into the hands and power of the paynims? Fair sweet Lord, I beseech thee that thou keep thy handmaidens and servants, for I may not keep them in this point.

And our Lord anon sent of his special grace a voice as it had been a child, which said to her: I shall keep you always.

O sweet fair Lord, keep this city if it please you, which hath given to us such things as hath been needful to us, for the love of you.

And he answered: The city shall have some grievance, but nevertheless I shall keep and defend it.

Then this holy virgin St. Clare arose from her prayer, which had yet her visage all bewept, and comforted much sweetly her sisters that wept, and said to them: I command you fair daughters that ye comfort you in good faith, and trust ye only in our Lord, for the Saracens shall never do you harm.

Anon then the Saracens had so great dread and fear, that over the walls, and by those places that they had entered, they fled hastily, and were in this wise by the orison and prayer of St. Clare destroubled and put from their emprise. Then commanded she to all them that heard the voice that in no manner they should discover ne tell it to any that lived.

Assisi Saved from a Captain of the Emperor Frederick

On another time it happed that an old squire, full of vain glory, the which was much hardy in battle and was captain of a great host, which Frederick had delivered to him, and came with all

his host for to take the city of Assisi, he did do hew down the trees, and destroy the country all about, and besieged the city, and sware that he would not depart thence till he had taken the city, and thus was the city besieged for to have been taken. And when St. Clare, the handmaid of Jesu Christ, heard the tidings, she had great pity and did do call her sisters and said to them: Right sweet daughters, we receive daily many benefits of this city, and it should be a great unkindness in us if we succoured it not in this great need as much as we may.

Then commanded she to bring ashes, and said to her sisters that they should discover [uncover] their heads, and she herself first cast great plenty of ashes upon her head, and after, upon the heads of all the others, and said to them: Now go, fair daughters, and with all your hearts require and pray ye to our Lord that he will deliver this city.

And then every each by themselves, in great weepings and tears, made their orisons and prayers devoutly to our Lord, in such wise that he kept and defended the city, that on the morn the host departed out of the country, and it was not long after that they all were dead and slain.

THE POWER OF ST. CLARE'S PRAYERS

It should not be according that we should hele and keep secret the marvellous virtue of her prayer, by the which at the beginning of her conversion she converted a soul to God.

Her Prayer for the Conversion of Her Sister Agnes

For she had a sister younger than herself was, whose conversation she much desired, and in all her prayers that she made, she prayed at the beginning with all her heart to our Lord that like as she and her sister had been in the world of one heart and of one will, that it might please the Father of mercy that Agnes, her sister, whom she had left in the world, might despise the world, and savour the sweetness of God, so that she might have no will to marry her[self], save only to God her true friend, in such wise that between them both they might espouse their virginity to our Lord.

These two sisters loved marvellously together, and were much sorrowful of their departing, and that one more than that other. But our Lord granted unto St. Clare the first gift that she demanded, for it was a thing that much pleased him. After the seventh day that St. Clare was converted, Agnes, her sister, came to her and discovered her secretness to her and will, and said utterly that she would serve God. And when St. Clare heard that, anon she embraced her, and said for joy that she had: My sister, ye be right welcome, I thank God that hath heard me for thee, for whom I was in great sorrow.

Her Prayers When the Family Tried to Take Agnes Back

Howbeit that this conversion was marvellous, and yet more to be wondered how Clare defended her sister by her prayers. At that time were the good blessed sisters at St. Michael of Pambo, which were joined to God, and they followed the life and works of Jesu Christ. And there was St. Clare, which felt more of God than the other, and she informed her sister, her nurse, how she should rule her. And the parents and kinsmen of St. Clare began a new battle and strife against

the virgins. For when they heard say that Agnes was gone to dwell with her sister St. Clare, there came on the morn to the place where St. Clare dwelled, twelve of her kinsmen and friends all from themselves, all araged, and showed not withoutforth the malice that they had in their hearts, but gave them to understand that they came for good.

And when they came within they made no force of St. Clare for to draw her out, for they knew well that they should nothing exploit of their intent, but they turned to Agnes and said to her: What makest thou here? Come out with us home to thy house.

And she answered, that she would never depart from the company of St. Clare. And a tyrant, a knight, took and drew her by the hair, and the other took her by the arms, and carried her forth afar. And she, which seemed that she was among the hands of a lion, and taken from the hands of God, began to cry and said: Fair dear sister! help me, and suffer not that I be taken from the holy company of Jesu Christ.

But the felons drew this virgin against her will over the mountain, and rent her clothes and drew and rased out her hair.

And the holy sweet virgin St. Clare kneeled down, and put herself to prayer, and prayed our Lord to give her sister a strong heart and a stable, and that she might by the puissance of God overcome and surmount the puissance of the people. And anon the Holy Ghost made her so pesant [weighty] and heavy, that it seemed that her body were fixed to the ground, in such wise that for all the force and power that they could do they might not bear her over a little brook. And the men that were in the fields and river came for to help them, but they might never remove her from the earth. And then one of them said in mocking: It is no wonder though she be heavy, for she hath eaten much lead.

Then the lord Mouvalt, her uncle, lift up his arm for to beat her cruelly, but an ache and pain took him suddenly, and tormented him a long time right cruelly. After that this said St. Agnes had suffered this long wrestling of her kinsmen and friends, came St. Clare and prayed them for God's sake they should leave this battle with her sister, and go their way and take heed of themselves. And she received the cure and charge of Agnes, her sister, which lay there on the ground in great disease, and finally her kinsmen departed in great anguish and sorrow of heart.

And then anon after, she arose up much gladly, and had much great joy of that first battle that she had suffered for the love of Jesu Christ, and from this time forward she ordained herself to serve God perdurably. And St. Francis cut off her hair with his own hands, and induced and taught her to serve God, and so did St. Clare her sister. And because we may not shortly account with few words the great perfection of the life of Agnes, therefore we shall entend unto the life of St. Clare the virgin.

How Her Prayers Delivered a Woman from Five Devils

Was it not great marvel of the orisons and prayers of St. Clare, which were so strong, and so much availed against the malice of the people, when they fled and were puissant to burn the devils? It happed on a time that a much devout woman of the bishopric of Pisa, came to one of

the ladies for to yield thankings to God and St. Clare which had delivered her from the hands of five devils. For they fled, and wailed that the orisons of St. Clare burnt them all, and therefore they might no longer dwell in that place.

How Pope Gregory Benefitted from Her Prayers

The pope Gregory had much great faith and great devotion in the prayers of that holy virgin, and not without cause, for he had proved and felt certain virtue thereof, which had holpen many and divers that had necessity and need. And when he was bishop of Hostence and after when he was pope, he sent his letters to her by which he required her to pray for him, and anon he felt eased and alleged [comforted] by her prayers. Then certainly if he which was vicar of Jesu Christ, by his humility, as we may see, had so great devotion to St. Clare, of whom he required her aid, and recommended him to the virtue of her orisons, as well ought we then to ensue [follow] with all our power the devotion of such a man. For he knew well how much love is mighty and how the pure virgins have delivered entry into the door of the heart of our Lord. And if our sweet Lord give himself to them that love him firmly, who may he deny to them for whom they require him devoutly? Always seen that they require of him that is needful and behoveful.

HER DEVOTION TO THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR

The holy work showeth well the great faith and the great devotion that she had in the holy sacrament of the altar. For in that great malady which had so vexed her that she lay in her bed, she arose and did her to be borne from one place to another, and did spin a fine small cloth of which she made more than fifty corporas ["corporals," used in the Mass], and sent them in fair towels of silk into divers churches in divers places of Assisi.

When she should receive the body of our Lord, it was marvel to see the tears that she wept, of which she was all wet. And she had so great fear when she approached nigh unto her Saviour, that she ne doubted [feared] him no less which is in semblance very God in the form of bread, the sacrament, than him that governeth heaven and earth, which is all one.

THE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Thus as she had always souvenance [memory] and mind of Jesu Christ in her malady, so God comforted her and visited her in her infirmity and languor. In the hour of the nativity of Jesu Christ at Christmas, when the angels and the world made feast and sung and enjoyed of little Jesus that was born, all the poor ladies went to matins into their monastery, and left alone their poor mother sore grieved in her malady.

Then she began to think on little Jesus, and was sorrowful that she might not be at the service, and praise our Lord, and said in sighing: Fair Lord God, I wake here alone. And anon she began to hear the friars that sang, and St. Francis, and heard well the jubilation, the psalmody, and the great melody of the song, howbeit her bed was not so nigh that the voice of a man ne of a woman might not be heard, ne understood if God did it not by his courtesy, or if God had not given to her, above all nature of man, force and power to hear it. But this passed all, for she was worthy to see in her oratory the joy of our Lord.

On the morning, when the ladies, her daughters, came to her, she said to them: Blessed be our Lord Jesu Christ, for when ye left me, he left me not truly, and I say to you that I have heard this night all the service and solemnity that hath been done in the church by St. Francis, through the grace of Jesu Christ.

HER DEATH

At the pains of her death our Lord comforted her always. For she drew out of the holy wounds of Jesu Christ a bitterness, of which her heart, her will, and her thought were full of anguish, marvellously bitter, and often as she had been drunken of the sorrow and tears that she wept for the love of Jesu Christ. For oftentimes the love of God which she had imprinted in her heart withinforth she made to appear by signs outward. She informed and taught the novices, and admonished them that they have in their mind the sorrow and pain of the death of Jesu Christ.

And that she said with her mouth, she did it in her heart, and gave ensample. When she was secretly alone, tofore she might say anything she was all bedewed with tears. She was most devout and had more fervour of devotion between undern and noon than any other time, because she would that in the hour that Jesu Christ was crucified in the altar of the cross, that her heart should be sacrificed to God our Lord.

On a time it happed at the hour of noon that she prayed to God in her cell, and the devil gave to her such a stroke under the ear, that her eyes and her visage were all covered with blood. She had learned an orison of the five wounds of Jesu Christ, which she oft recorded and remembered because her heart and thought were nourished therein, and might feel the delights that be in Jesu Christ. She learned the office of the Cross of St. Francis, which loved her truly, and she said it as gladly, to her power, as he did. She girded to her flesh a cord whereon were thirteen knots which were full of brochets of small needles, and thereon small rings, and this did she in remembrance of the wounds of our Lord.

It happed on a time on the holy Shere Thursday, which is the day when our Lord made his maundy or supper, whereas is remembered how God loved unto the end his disciples, about the hour of even, when God began the wresting of his passion, then St. Clare being heavy and sorrowful, enclosed her in the chamber of her cell. And it happed that she prayed God long, and was sorrowful unto the death, and in that sorrow and heaviness she drew a fervent love full of desire, for she remembered how Jesus in that hour was taken, estrained, haled forth and mocked, insomuch that of this remembrance she was all drunken, and sat in her bed.

All that night she was so ravished and on the morn, that she wist not where her body was. The eyes of her head looked steadfastly in one place, without moving or looking aside, and the eye of her heart was so fixed in Jesu Christ that she felt nothing. One of her daughters, more familiar and secret with her than other, went oft to her for to see her, and always she found her in one point. The night of the Saturday, this good devout daughter brought a candle burning, and without speaking made a sign to her blessed mother Clare that she should remember the commandments of St. Francis, for he had commanded that every day she should eat somewhat. Then as she stood tofore her with a candle burning, St. Clare came again to her estate, and her seemed she was come from another world.

And she said: Fair daughter, what need is of a candle, is it not yet day? And she answered: Right, dear fair mother, the night is passed and the day is gone, and that other night is come.

Fair daughter, said St. Clare, this sleep that I have made be blessed, for I have much desired it, and God hath given it to me, but beware that thou say it never to creature as long as I live.

HER LOVE OF THE CROSS

When our Lord knew and apperceived how well and how much this holy Clare loved him, and the right great love that she had to the very cross for the love of him, he so illumined and privileged her in such manner that she had power to make tokens and miracles by the cross. For when she made the sign of the very cross upon them that were sick, anon the malady fled away.

A MIRACLE OF ST. CLARE

And so many miracles God showed for her of which I shall tell you some. First, of a friar that was out of his wit. On a time it happed that St. Francis sent to St. Clare a friar named Steven, and was all mad from himself, that she should make upon him the sign of the cross. For he knew well that she was a woman of great perfection, and he honoured her much for the virtue that was in her.

And she, that was obeissant and good daughter of obedience, blessed the friar by the commandment of St. Francis, and made him to sleep a little, and after, she took him by the hand and he arose all whole, and went to St. Francis clean delivered of all his malady.

HOW SHE INSTRUCTED THE SISTERS IN HER CARE

This blessed St. Clare was a good mistress and true for to inform young people that knew but little of religion, and she was president and upperest of the maidens of our Lord, and informed them in good customs and taught them right well to do penance. She nourished them by so great love that unnethe [hardly] any tongue may express, she taught them privily to flee all noise of the world, because they should join to our Lord, and also she exhorted them that they should put from them all carnal affection and fleshly love of their friends, and that they should not be over tender over them ne love them over much, ne houses, ne land, but make them strong to please and serve God. She counselled them and warned them that they should hate to do the will of the body, and that the delights and fleshly desires of the flesh they should with all their heart and good reason go thereagainst. She said to them the fiend of hell lieth in await and layeth his hooks and grinnes [traps] subtilly for to take and bind the holy souls, and yet they tempt more the good people than them of the world.

She would that they should work and labour with their proper hands in such works as she had established to them. She would that when they had done their bodily travail they should go to prayer, for prayer is a thing that pleaseth much God. And she would that in praying they

should rechaufe [kindle spiritually] their bodies, and that they should leave and depress negligence and all coldness of heart, and be kindled and lighted in the holy love of God, so that instead of coldness they should be hot in devotion.

In no place ne in no cloister was silence better kept ne holden, there was no lavas [lavishness, freedom] in their speech ne evil, but they were sober and so good that they showed well that in their hearts was none evil but all goodness. The good mistress St. Clare herself spake so little that she restrained them and thought marvellously on their words, howbeit that in her heart ne in her thought was but all holiness. This good lady purveyed to her daughters the Word of God by devout preachings, and had so much joy and gladness profoundly in her heart in hearing the words of the holy predication, that all her delight was in our Lord Jesu Christ her spouse.

THE FRIARS WHO CAME TO PREACH

For on a time as friar Philip Adrian preached, a right fair child was tofore St. Clare and abode there a great part of the sermon, and beheld marvellously and graciously St. Clare, whereof it happed that he was worthy to know and see so high things, of St. Clare received in that sight, and beholding so great a sweetness in his heart and so great comfort, that it might not be said ne expressed.

And howbeit that she was not lettered, yet heard she more gladly the sermons in Latin than in her vulgar tongue. She knew well that within the shell was the kernel, she heard the sermons entently and assavoured them more sweetly. She could much well draw to her that was most profitable for her soul. And well knew she that it was no less cunning to gather fair flowers among the sharp thorns, than to eat the fruit of a fair tree, that is to say that she loved better a rude sermon well edifying than a fair polished, little profiting.

On a time it happed that the pope Gregory defended that no friar should go to the house of the ladies without his leave. And when the holy mother St. Clare knew that, she had much sorrow in her heart, because she saw well she might not have that which was needful, which was the nurture of Holy Scripture, and said to her sisters with a sorrowful heart; Now forthon well may the pope Gregory take from us all the friars, when he hath taken from us them that nourished our souls with the Word of God. And anon she sent again all the friars of her house to the master or minister, for she said she had nothing to do to have friars to get them bodily bread, when they failed them that nourished her and her sisters with the Word of God. Anon as the pope Gregory heard this tiding he repealed that which he had defended, and set all at the will of God.

HER SERVICE TO THE SISTERS

This holy and good abbess loved not only the souls of her good daughters, but thought well in her heart oft-times how she might serve their bodies most charitably. For when it was right cold she covered by night them that were feeble, and visited them much sweetly. And if she saw any trouble by any temptation or any anger, which happeth sometimes, she would call them secretly and comforted them, all weeping. And other while she would fall down to the feet of her daughters that were mat and heavy, and kneeled tofore them, so that by the sweetness and

debonairty [mildness] that the ladies saw in their good mother, that she alleged and took away their sorrow, whereof the ladies, her daughters, couthe her much thanks. And thus learned they to do well by devotion and to love their good mother more sweetly, and followed by the right way the works of their good abess.

THE DEATH OF ST. CLARE

And they marvelled much of the great abundance of holiness that God had given to his spouse. When she had been forty years in the state of right holy poverty it pleased to our Lord to call her to be rewarded in heaven, and sent to her a great malady, and multiplied her languor and sickness. She had sometime done so sharp penance that her body ne her flesh had no strength. And at the last she was over sick and much more than she was wont to be, for as our Lord had given to her in her health, riches of merits, of good virtues and of good are works, right so would God enrich her in her sickness, to the end that she should suffer for him right great pain and torments, for in suffering of sickness is virtue perfect. How and in what wise she was virtuous in her malady and perfect, ye may hear. For howbeit that she had been eight and twenty years in languor and malady, yet never she grudged, ne murmured, ne plained [complained], but always said holy words and rendered thankings to our Lord, howbeit that she was marvellously aggrieved and sick, so that it seemed that she hasted much to draw to her end.

It pleased nevertheless to our Lord that he respited her from the death unto the time that her end might be honoured, and enhanced her by the presence of the pope and of the cardinals, to whom she was especial daughter. For when the pope and the cardinals had abode a great while at Lyons, St. Clare was then marvellously destrained by sickness, so that her daughters had great sorrow at their hearts that them seemed that a glaive [spear] had pierced them, or that they had been riven with a sword. But our Lord showed anon a vision to one, his handmaid, which dwelled at St. Paul's, for it seemed to her that she and her sisters were at St. Damian's tofore St. Clare, which was right sick. And her seemed that this Clare lay in a much fair bed and much precious, and her seemed that her daughters wept when the soul should pass out of the body. And anon she saw a right fair lady at the head of the bed, and said to them that wept: Fair daughters, weep no more, for this lady shall overcome all. And know ye that she shall not die till that our Lord and his disciples shall come. And she shall not abide long after that the pope and the court of Rome shall come to Perugia.

And anon as the Bishop of Hostence heard say that this holy woman was sick, anon in great haste he went to see and visit the spouse of Jesu Christ, for he was her ghostly father, and had the cure of her soul, and nourished her with pure heart and will, for he had always devoutly loved the holy virgin. And then he gave to her in her malady the body of our Lord, for that is the very feeding of the soul, and he comforted the other daughters by his sermons and holy words. Then the holy good mother, weeping, prayed him much sweetly that he would take heed of her daughters there being, and of all the others, and that for the love of our Lord he would remember her. And above all other things she prayed him that he would do so much that her privilege of poverty might be confirmed of the pope and of the cardinals. And he that loved verily her and the religion, and that had always truly aided her, promised that he should do, and did it.

In the year after came the pope and the cardinals to Assisi for to see the departing of the holy virgin, and to put to effect the vision that had been seen and signified of her. For the pope is the highest man in earth under God, and that best representeth the person of Jesu Christ, for like as our Lord had his disciples which were joined to him in earth, in like wise the pope hath his cardinals, the which be joined to him in the holy church. Our Lord God hasted him as he that knew the firm purpose of his spouse St. Clare, and hasted for to honour her, and to set in the palace of the king of paradise his poor pilgrim, and the good lady also coveted and wished with all her heart that she might be delivered of her mortal body, and that she might see in heaven Jesu Christ as she that had ensued him in the earth with all her heart in very poverty.

Her members were bruised and troubled by great sickness that the body might not endure, for it was over much enfeebled, so that our Lord called her from this world, and ordained for her health perdurable. Then pope Innocent the fourth and the cardinals came with him for to visit the handmaid of God, of whom he had better proved the holy life than of any woman that was in his time. And therefore he knew certainly that it was reason [reasonable] that he should come and honour her with his presence.

And when he came into the house of the ladies, he went thither whereas this holy saint lay, and took to her his hand for to kiss. And the pope, which was courteous, stood upon a tree and took to her his foot to kiss by great humility. And she took it and kissed it much sweetly, and after inclined herself to the pope much humbly, and required him with a sweet cheer that he would assoil her of all her sins. To whom he said: Would God that we had no more need of absolution of sins that we have done than ye have. And then he assoiled her of all her sins and gave to her largely his benediction.

And when they were all departed, forasmuch as she had received that day, by the hands of the minister provincial, the very body of our Lord, she lift up her eyes to our Lord to heaven, and joined her hands together and said then: Ah! my right sweet and fair daughters, our Lord Jesu Christ by his debonairty hath done to me so great good, and given to me so great a gift that heaven ne earth may not know, for I have received this day a much high Lord and also have seen his vicar.

The good daughters were about the bed, which wept and abode for the orphans whereof they had great sorrow in their hearts, for the death of their mother pierced their hearts like as it were a sword. Which daughters departed not from her ne for hunger, ne for thirst, ne for no sleep, ne they thought neither of bed ne of table. All the delights that they had was for to cry, to weep and to make sorrow. And among all the others her sister, which was a much devout virgin, wept many tears and said to St. Clare her sister: Fair and right sweet sister, depart not away from me and leave me not here alone.

And St. Clare answered to her much sweetly: Fair sweet sister, it pleaseth to God that I depart from this world, but weep no more, fair sister, for ye shall come hastily to our Lord after me. And also I say unto you that our Lord shall do to you great comfort and consolation tofore or ye die.

After, this holy and good Clare drew fast to her end. And the folk and people had to her great devotion and the prelates and cardinals came oft to see her, and honoured her as a very saint. But there was a marvellous thing to hear, for she was by the space of twelve days that never entered into her body no corporal meat, and she was so strong by the suffrance and grace of God that she comforted in the service of God all them that came tofore her, and desired and charged them to do well.

And when Friar Reynald, which was debonair, came for to see her and beheld the great sickness that she had long time suffered, he preached to her, and prayed her much to have patience. And anon she answered to him freely and debonairly: Sith that the holy man St. Francis, the servant of Jesu Christ hath showed to me the way of truth, and that I have felt and known the will and grace of Jesu Christ by the advertisement of St. Francis, know ye, right dear brother, that no pains displease me, ne no penance grieveth me, ne no sicknesses be to me hard ne displeasing.

And then answered she to the friar, when she felt our Lord knock at her gate for to take her soul out of this world, and required that good folk and spiritual should be with her, that she might hear of them the holy words of God, and specially the words of the death and passion of Jesu Christ.

And among all others came a friar named Vinberes, which was one of the noblest preachers that was in earth, and that oftentimes spake and said noble and holy words, ardent and good. Of whose coming she was much glad, and prayed him that if he had made ready any new thing that he should say it. And then the friar opened his mouth and began to say so sweet words that they were like sparkles of fire and of ardent fervour, or heat, whereof the holy virgin had much great consolation.

Then she turned her and said to her daughters: Sweet daughters, I recommend to you the holy poverty of our Lord, and give ye to him thankings for that he hath done to you. Then she blessed all them that had devotion to her and to her order, and gave largely and wisely her blessing to all the poor ladies of her order that were tofore her there.

The two fellows of St. Francis that were there, of whom that one was named Angel, comforted them that were full of sorrow, and that other friar kissed devoutly and holily the bed of her that should pass to our Lord. The holy ladies sorrowed much the loss of their mother, and as much more as they cried and wept withoutforth, so much more were they ardently grieved within forth.

Then St. Clare began to speak to her soul all softly: Go, said she, go surely, for thou hast a good guide and conductor in the way whereas thou shalt go, which shall lead thee well the right way. Go, said she hardily, for he that made thee and sanctified thee shall keep thee, for he loveth thee also tenderly as the mother doth her child. Lord God, said she, blessed be thou that madest me.

And then one of her sisters demanded her to whom she spake. I have, said she, spoken to my blessed soul, and without fail her glorious conductor is not far from her.

Then she called one of her daughters and said to her: Fair daughter, seest thou the king of glory whom I see? But the daughter saw him not, for the will of God was that one should see that another saw not, for there was a happy widow and comfortable, which saw him with the eyes of her head among the tears that she wept, and yet nevertheless she was wounded to the heart with a dart full of sweetness and of sorrow.

Then she turned her sight toward the door of the house and saw a great company of virgins enter into the house all clad with white clothes, and each of them bare a crown of gold on her head. And among all other, there was one much more clear and fairer than the others which bare a crown of gold windowed, out whereof issued a right great clearness, that all the house was so clearly light, that it seemed the night to be clear day. And this lady that was so clear, approached to the bed whereas the spouse of her son lay, and she inclined upon her and embraced her much sweetly.

Then the virgins brought a mantle of right great beauty, and the virgins enforced them to serve and to cover the body of St. Clare and well to make ready the house. And on the morn was the feast of St. Laurence, and then died and departed out of this mortal life the holy lady and friend of our Lord, and anon the soul of her was crowned in everlasting joy. The spirit of her was much benignly and joyously loosed and delivered from the flesh, and when the body abode in the earth the soul went with God which was her life.

And blessed be the holy company of God that from the valley of this world conducted the holy soul of this lady into the mountain of heaven where the blessed life is. Now is the blessed virgin in the company of them that be in the court of heaven, now hath she changed her poor little life, which hath brought her for to sit at the table where the great delights be. Now hath she, for the little life of humility and of sharpness, the blessed reign of heaven, whereas she is clad and arrayed with the robe of perdurable glory.

Anon the tidings were spread abroad that the blessed virgin was departed, and when the people of Assisi heard thereof, they came to the place, both men and women, by so great companies, that it seemed that in the city abode neither man ne woman. And all crying: O, dear lady, and friend of God, and therewith they praised her, and wept much tenderly.

The potestate and the provost of the city ran much hastily thither, and with them many companies of knights and of people armed, which all that day and all night kept the body of the holy virgin much honourably. For they would in no wise that the town should not have, by any adventure, damage or hurt in taking away the treasure that lay there. On the morn came the vicar of Jesu Christ and all the cardinals with him, with all the city of Assisi, unto the church of St. Damian.

And when it came there to that they should begin the mass for the blessed St. Clare, it happed that he that began would have begun the office of them that were dead. And anon the pope said that they ought better do the office of virgins than the office of dead folk, so that it seemed that he would canonise her tofore ere she was buried. Then answered the wise man, the bishop of Hostence, and said it was more accustomed to say of them that be dead in this case, and then they said the mass of requiem, and all the prelates and the bishop of Hostence began to

preach, and took their matter how all the world is vanity, and began to praise much greatly this sweet saint, St. Clare, and how she had despised the world and all that was therein.

Then the cardinals that were there went first and did holily the service about the holy body, and the office, like as it is accustomed. And because that them seemed neither right ne reason that the precious body should not be far from the city, they bare it to St. George's with so right great feast, singing and praising God in hymns and lauds, and in so great melody, that there was honour enough. And in the same place was first buried the body of St. Francis.

And from this time forthon came much people every day to the tomb of St. Clare, and giving praisings and laud to our Lord God. And veritably this is a right very saint and glorious virgin, reigning with the company of angels to whom God hath given so much honour in earth. Ah! sweet virgin, pray thou to Jesu Christ for us, for thou wert the first flower of the holy poor ladies which hast drawn to penance without number, and that thou mayst conduct us to the life permanable. Amen.

THE DEATH OF AGNES

It was not long after greatly, that Agnes, sister of St. Clare, was summoned and called to wedding of the very lamb Jesu Christ, and also St. Clare led her sister unto the joy perdurable, full of delices. There be now the two daughters of Sion which were sisters germane [having the same two parents] of grace and of nature and be now heritors of the joy of heaven, there where they feel the sweetness of God and enjoy with him. Now is Agnes in the joy and in the consolation that Clare, her sister, had promised to her tofore that she died, for like as Clare brought her out of the world, so brought she herself in the cross of penance by which she is shining in heaven. Thus went Agnes after her sister right soon out of this mortal life full of weeping and of sorrow unto our Lord, which is lite of the soul in heaven, which reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

HERE FOLLOW MIRACLES WHICH WERE SHOWED AFTER HER DEATH.

The tokens and miracles of saints ought to be showed, praised, and honoured and also witnessed, when the works in the life were holy and full of perfection. We find not many signs ne miracles that St. John the Baptist did, nevertheless he is a much holy saint, and greater than such ones as have been showed for many miracles. And therefore I say that the right holy life and the great perfection of St. Clare, which she used and demened here in earth, ought well to suffice and witness that she is a very saint, if it were not for the people, which have the more great devotion and more greater faith unto the saints when they see the signs and miracles that God showeth for them.

I know well that St. Clare was in the way full of merits, and that she was ravished in the profoundness of the great clearness and light of heaven, nevertheless though she were resplendissant [splendid], well savorous, and right full of great miracles as is well declared by the cardinals of Rome, mine oath of truth that I have made and my conscience, constraineth me that I write to my power the life truly and the miracles of her, how well I pass over many fair things.

Of one that was delivered of the fiend.

There was a child named Jaquemin of Perugia, which had in his body the devil, in such wise that this Jaquemin fell in the fire as he that could not keep him. Sometime he hurtled strongly against the ground, sometime he bit the stones so that he brake his teeth, and otherwhile brake his head, that all his body was bloody, and fouled his mouth and put out his tongue. And sometimes he lay and wallowed, and was round, so that oft he laid his thigh in his neck. And every day twice this malady came to him, and two persons might not keep him ne hold him but that he would despoil and unclothe him maugre them both.

There could no physician ne wise man that was in all the country find any remedy ne give counsel to ease him. But the father, which was named Quindelcor, when he saw that he could find no counsel nor remedy for this malady, began to cry and call on St. Clare the holy virgin, and said: To thee that art worthy of all honours, I avow my child which is meschant [bad] and caitiff [wretched], and pray thee, right sweet saint, that thou wilt send to my child health.

And forthwith went to her tomb full of belief to have his request, and laid the child upon the tomb of the virgin and made his prayers. And anon he was delivered of the malady, ne never was sick after of that sickness, ne never hurt him after by reason of that malady.

Another miracle.

Alexandrine of Perugia had in her body a right felonous devil, which had so utterly power over her that he made her descend from a rock that stood upon a river of water, and made her to flee over the water as she had been a bird, and made her to light upon a little bough of a tree which hung over the river, and ceased not to play there. Also for her sin it happed that she lost her left side, and was lame of that one hand. And she assayed much if she might be healed by any medicine, but all the medicines that she took availed her not. And then she came to the tomb of St. Clare with great repentance of heart, and began to require [ask] St. Clare that she would help her, and anon she was healed and redressed in all health. And her side was whole, and hand also, and delivered of the possession of the devil which was in her, and of many other sicknesses and maladies tofore the sepulchre of St. Clare.

Of one being mad that she healed.

A man born in France came on a time from the court and fell in a malady, that he was out of his wit and might not speak, and so demeaned [mistreated] his body that he might have no rest, and was much over strange and hideous to look on. No man might so hold him but that he brake from them maugre [despite] them that held him, and broke asunder cords or any thing that they bound him with, and they of his country brought him to St. Clare and anon he was healed and well delivered of his malady.

Another Miracle.

There was a man named Valentine Despole, which had a horrible malady, that he fell of the foul evil well six times in a day. And therewith he was lame of one thigh so that he might not go, but

was set upon an ass, which brought him whereas St. Clare lieth, and he was set tofore her tomb three nights and two days, and on the third day, without touching of anybody, his thigh began rumble, and made so great a noise that it seemed that the bone brake, and forthwith he was whole of both diseases

Of a blind man that had his sight again.

Jacob, the son of Spoleline, had been two years blind, so that he must be led, for when he had no leader he went here and there. And on a time the child that led him let him go alone, and he fell so that he brake his arm, and a great wound in his head. And it happed on a night as he slept by the bridge of Margue, there appeared to him in his sleep a lady, and said to him: Jacobel, wherefore comest thou not to me for to be whole?

And on the morn he recounted his dream unto two other blind men, all trembling. And the blind men told to him that there was newly dead a lady, in the city of Assisi, for whom God showed many miracles to them that came to her tomb sick and diseased, and when they should depart were all whole. And anon as he heard that he was not slow, but hasted him and came first to Spoleto, and that night he saw the same vision that he had first seen that other night tofore. On a time he went and ran by the way, and for the desire to have his sight he went that night to Assisi.

And when he came thither he found so much people in the monastery, and lying tofore the tomb of the holy virgin, that he might not enter ne come into the monastery ne to the tomb where the virgin lay. And then he laid a stone under his head, and abode there with great devotion, sorrowing and angry that he might not enter. And the same night, as he slept, he heard a voice that said to him: Jacobel, if thou mayst come and enter herein, God shall do well to thee.

And on the morn, when he was awaked, he began to pray with great tears that the people would give and make to him way for the love of God, and besought the people, crying them mercy, that they would bring him in. And the people began to make him way. And anon he did off his hosen and shoon and despoiled him by great devotion, and he put his girdle about his neck, and so went to the tomb, and there being in great devotion, fell asleep a little. And St. Clare appeared to him and said to him: Arise up, for thou art all whole.

And anon he arose and saw clearly. And when he saw that he was enlumined, and saw the clearness of the day by the merit of St. Clare, he praised and glorified our Lord that had done to him so much bounty, and prayed the good people to give praisings and thankings to God.

Of a man that was healed of his hand

There was a man of Perugia which was named Good John, the son of Martin, and went for to fight against them of Foligno, and that one part and that other began the strife, and began to cast stones so great and fast that this John had his one hand all to-frushed [crushed] and broken of a stone. And because he had great desire to be healed, he dispensed much money on masters and surgeons, but he could find none that could heal him, but that he abode always lame on his hand, ne might do nothing ne work therewith, whereof he had so great sorrow that he hasted him for to

have it smitten off many times. But when he heard the great marvels that our Lord had done for St. Clare, he avowed that he should visit her. And then came to the sepulchre of St. Clare, the holy virgin, and bare thither an image of wax in his hand, and laid him down upon the tomb, and anon he was perfectly healed of his hand.

Another miracle.

There was a man named Petrius of the castle of Byconne which had been three years sick, and was so enfeebled that by the strength of his malady that he was all dried up, and had so much pain in his reins that he was become so crooked that he went like a beast. For which cause his father led him to the best masters and medicines that he might find and know, and also to such as entremeted of broken bones, and the father would well have spent all his goods on the condition to have his son whole. And when he heard say of the masters that no physic nor no man might heal him of his malady, then he thought to go to St. Clare, and led his son thither. And so he did, and laid him tofore the sepulchre of the holy virgin. And he had not been long there, but by the grace of God, and by the merits of the holy virgin he was all whole, and arose up guerished of all his malady, and gave laud, thankings, and praisings to our Lord God, and to St. Clare, and prayed the people to do in like wise because of his health.

Another miracle.

There was also a child of the age of two years in the town of St. Quirito in the bishopric of Assisi, which was born crooked in the back and lame, which his thighs and feet turned athwart, and went in such wise that it was all out of order, and when he was fallen he could not arise. His mother had oftentimes vowed him to St. Francis, and was not thereby holpen [helped], and when she heard that God showed new miracles for St. Clare, she bare her child to her sepulchre and abode there certain days. But within a few days his legs began to grow, and his thighs within the skin were redressed naturally, and he went upright and was all guerished [cured] and made whole. And thus he that had been divers times at St. Francis was healed by the merits of his good disciple St. Clare, by the virtue of our Lord Jesu.

Of a lame child that never had gone [walked].

A burgess of Augulum named Jacques de Franque had a child of five years of age which had no feet for to bear him, ne had never gone ne might go. Wherefore his father oft wept and sorrowed much at his heart for his deformity, and thought it a reproach to him to have such one disfigured born of his blood. For he lay on the earth and in the ashes, wallowing and addressing him against the wall, desiring by nature to help him, but might and power failed him. Then his father and mother vowed him to St. Clare that he should be her servant if by her prayers and merits he might be healed. And as soon as the father and mother had made their vow, the holy virgin healed her servant, so that he had his right limbs and went upright. And anon the father and mother led him to St. Clare, which went leaping and running, praising our Lord and thanking him, and then the father and mother offered him to our Lord.

Another miracle.

There was a woman of the castle of Bruane named Pleniere which had been long sick in her reins [kidneys], in such wise that she might not go without help, ne address her but with great pain, and was all crooked. It happed that on a Friday she did her to be borne to the tomb of St. Clare and prayed her right devoutly that she would help her. And it happed as she prayed she was suddenly made all whole. And on the morn that was Saturday, she went upright all whole on her feet home to her house, whereas the day tofore she was borne for feebleness.

Of her that was healed of the escroceles [scrofula].

There was a maid of the land of Perugia which had her throat greatly swollen of a malady called escroceles, which she had long, and had about her neck and throat a twenty botches [swellings] called glanders, so that her neck seemed greater than her head. And oft she had been led to St. Clare, and the father and mother of the maid had prayed her devoutly to heal their daughter. And it happed on a night as the maid lay tofore the tomb she began to sweat, and the escroceles and the malady began to mollify, and to remove, and anon after, the malady vanished away all clean, and so net that, by the merits of St. Clare there nas seen sign ne token thereof.

Of a sister of the order.

One of the sisters of the order of St. Clare, in the time that she lived, had such a malady in her throat, which sister was named Andrea, but it was of one thing marvel, how that among the sisters which were as precious stones, all full of the fervent love of the Holy Ghost, that such one that was so cold might dwell among them as was this Andrea, so foolish, that dishonoureth the other virgins.

Then it happed on a night that she distrained herself by the throat that she was almost estrangled, which thing St. Clare saw and knew by the Holy Ghost, and said to one of her sisters: Now go hastily and take a soft egg and bear it to sister Andrea of Ferrara for to rume [ease?] her throat, and come again and bring her with thee hither to me.

And then she hasted her and found the same Andrea, that she might not speak, for she had almost strangled her with her own hands. And she relieved her as well as she might, and brought her to her good mother.

Then St. Clare said to her: Thou caitiff, go and confess thee of thine evil thoughts, and I wot well that our Lord will heal thee, but amend thy life that thou mayest die of some other malady than this which thou hast suffered so long. And anon as St. Clare had said these words she began to repent her with good heart, and amended her life marvellously, and was all healed of the escroceles, by the grace of God, but she died anon after of another malady.

Of a wolf that bare away a child.

In the land of Assisi there was a wolf over sore cruel, which tormented the country and the people and ran upon them and slew and ate them. So there was a woman named Gallane of the Mount of Gallum which had children, and the wolf had ravished and borne away one of them, and had eaten him, wherefore she wept oft. And on a time the wolf came for his prey as he had done tofore for to devour some child. And it happed that this woman was busy in her work which she had in hand, and one of her sons went out, and anon, the wolf caught him by the head and ran with him towards the wood.

And a man that was among the vines labouring, heard the child bray otherwise than he had heard any, and came running to the mother of the child, and bade her see if she had all her children, for he said that he had heard the cry of a child otherwise than they be wonted to cry.

And anon the mother looked and saw that the wolf had ravished her child, and went towards the wood with him like as he did with that other, and cried also high as she might cry: Ah! glorious virgin St. Clare, save my child and keep him, and if thou do not I shall go drown myself.

And therewith the neighbours came out and ran after the wolf, and found the child, whom the wolf had left, and a hound beside him licking his wounds. For the wolf had first taken him by the head, and after took him by the reins, for the more easilier to bear him. and the biting of his teeth appeared both in the head and reins. And then the mother went with him to St. Clare that had so well holpen her, and brought with her her neighbours, and showed the wounds of the child to all them that would see them, and thanked God and St. Clare that she had her child again rendered to her.

The Maid of the Castle Convary

There was a maid of the castle Convary which sat on a time in a field, and another woman had laid her head in her lap. And in the mean while there came a wolf which was accustomed to run on the people, and came to this maid and swallowed the visage and all the mouth and so ran with her toward the wood. And the good woman that rested in her lap when she saw it, was much abashed and began to call on St. Clare and said: Help! help! St. Clare, and succour us, I recommend to thee at this time this maid.

And she whom the wolf bare, said unto the wolf: Art not thou afeard to bear me any farther that am recommended to so great and worthy lady? And with that word that the maid said, the wolf, all confused and shamed, set softly the maid down, and fled away like a thief, and so she was delivered.

Then let us pray unto this glorious virgin St. Clare to be our advocate in all our needs; and by the merits of her we may so amend our life in this world that we may come unto everlasting life and bliss in heaven. Amen

The [iconography of St. Clare](#) is available at the [Christian iconography website](#).

For other saints, see the [index to this Golden Legend website](#).

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