August 11

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THE ICONS OF BOSE, Clare of Assisi

Clare of Assisi (1193-1253) nun

Clare of Assisi, a sister of the monastery of San Damiano, died in Assisi in 1253, thanking God for creating her.

Born in 1193 and raised in the noble Favarone family, Clare met the living Gospel whose name was Francis of Assisi, and felt called to make a radical conversion.
On the night between Palm Sunday and Holy Monday of 1212, she gave up everything and went to the Porziuncola chapel, where she placed her life in God's hands in the presence of the first Friars Minor. From then on Clare walked resolutely in Christ's footsteps, living in poverty and self-abasement as her Lord had done, when he had left his own riches to become poor for humanity's sake.
Her sister Catherine soon joined her, and Clare followed Francis' advice and made her home at San Damiano, receiving from him "a way of life and the encouragement to persevere in holy poverty."
Clare had to fight long and hard against Church authorities, and even against the Friars Minor, in order to keep her community faithful to the lifestyle of radical poverty she and her sisters had chosen.
The champion of a Church aware of its own poverty, Clare served her sisters as "minor among the minors" until the end of her life, encouraging them to live in communion and respecting each woman's conscience. The San Damiano community was required to adopt the monastic enclosure, but Clare was aware that the real cloister in which she and her sisters were called to live, and grow in free and loving obedience to the Gospel, was that of their heart.
Clare's monastic rule, the first written by a woman for the sisters of her own community, was approved on August 9, 1253, two days before her death.

PRAYER

In your mercy, Lord,
you inspired in Clare an ardent love of poverty
in the spirit of the Gospel:
grant that we too may follow Christ, humble and poor,
in perfect joy,
and that we may remain faithful
to the Gospel's demands
and always thankful to you
for having created and redeemed us
in Christ our Lord.

BIBLICAL READINGS:
1 Cor 7:25-31; Lk 14:25-35

John Henry Newman

(1801-1890)

pastor

In 1890 John Henry Newman, an Anglican priest who became a Catholic cardinal, died at the Oratory of Edgbaston, where he had lived since 1852.
Newman was born in London in 1801, and was a young man with exceptional intellectual gifts. After finishing his classical studies at Oxford, he decided to become a priest of the Church of England, into which he had been baptized. He was ordained in 1824, and was soon setting the pace for the Oxford academic world. A loving and demanding teacher, and a preacher who never failed to respect his listeners' intelligence, Newman decided under the impulse of his patristic studies to work for the reform of the Anglican Church. With his well-known contemporaries Keble and Pursey and several others, he started the Oxford Movement. An intense personal crisis, described in his Apologia pro vita sua of 1864, led him to convert to Catholicism.
Even after his conversion, Newman's prophetic intuitions and intellectual rigor did not allow him to find the peace he coveted. However, unlike a number of other well-known Catholic bishops of the time, Newman he was eventually rewarded for the unfailing integrity of his conduct even after he expressed discomfort regarding the debate on papal infallibility during the First Vatican Council. In 1879, Leo XIII made him cardinal, and the Anglican world began to

reevalute his personal parable.
Newman died after a short illness. He asked that the inscription on his tomb read, "Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem," in witness to the kindly light he had so often invoked, and that had guided him every day of his life.

BIBLICAL READINGS
Mal 2:5-7; 1 Cor 4:1-5; Mt 24:42-46

Eustacius of Mtskheta (d. ca. 545) martyr

Today the Georgian Church commemorates one of its earliest and most famous martyrs, Eustacius of Mtskheta.
Eustacius was Persian by birth, and was given the name Gwirobandak. At the age of thirty he went to Mtskheta, an important center of the Persian administration in Georgia, and learned the shoemaker's trade.
When he met the Christians of his country, his life changed radically: he himself became a Christian, was baptized with the name Eustacius, and married a Christian woman.
His faith soon began to cause him problems with the shoemakers' corporation, which was closely tied to Persian divinity cults. His colleagues tried to make him participate in their religious celebrations, but Eustacius did not give in to their pressure. Accused in the presence of the governor of Tbilisi, he refused to deny his Christian faith, and was decapitated around the year 545. His body was taken to Mtskheta by the Christians of the city.
The story of Eutacius's Passion was one of the first such accounts to be written in Georgia. It is also one of the most restrained accounts of martyrdom in Christian antiquity, and at the same time one of the richest in historical details.

BIBLICAL READINGS
2 Tm 2:1-10; Jn 15:17-16:2

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:
Clare of Assisi, founder of the Minoresses
John Henry Newman, priest, tractarian

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Clare, virgin (Roman and Ambrosian calendars)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (5 misra/nahasse):
John the Soldier (4th cent.; Coptic Church)
Philip of Dabra Bizan (d. 1406), monk (Ethiopian Church)

LUTHERANS:
Clare of Assisi, founder of an order in Italy

ORTHODOX CHRISTAINAS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Euplus the Deacon (d. 304), megalomartyr
Niphon (d. 1508), patriarch of Constantinople (Romanian Church)
Eustacius of Mtskheta, martyr (Georgian Church)

OLD CATHOLICS:
Clare of Assisi, virgin