

A Reflection by Georgene L. Wilson, OSF, D.Min - Dec. 6, 2019

Remembering

The Anniversary of the Wreck of the Deutschland  
&  
The Birthday of Mother Clara Pfaender

*We gather this morning for REMEMBERING.....*

*remembering the life, death and forever loving presence of  
Jesus the Christ,*

*remembering the birthday of our foundress, M. Clara Pfaender,  
remembering the anniversary of the death of 5 our Sisters in the wreck of  
the Deutschland: Henrica, Barbara, Norberta, Brigitta and Aurea  
and remembering the legion of St. Nicolas!*

*I begin my reflections with gratitude to St. Nicolas,*

*a legend known for gifting children on his feastday with just rewards for  
the way that they lived or did not live with loving kindness.*

*And I am grateful that he seems, to me, to be pleased with me, for he has  
gifted me, not with coal, but with fine memories on the life and death of  
the women we gather to celebrate today around this table and in the  
breaking of the bread.*

*Let me share these rememberings with you.....*

*There is a hymn by Bernadette Ferrel that we often sing: God Beyond All Names.  
In the refrain we repeat:*

**All around us, we have known you;  
All creation lives to hold you,  
In our living and our dying  
We are bringing you to birth .**

*"In our living and our dying we are bringing God to birth." These words are the theme of what I want to share with you, today. For, it seems to me, that they are as true of us today as they were in the living and dying of M. Clara and our Five Sisters.*

*In Paul's Letter to the Philippians ...*

*... we receive, as did our sisters, a love letter and an invitation to always remember that our love increases as we practice loving others. And we are promised that the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus, the Christ, will be ours in living and in dying.....from our birth , until now, and in our dying !*

*M. Clara learned this wisdom, probably through her mother and father, lived this wisdom, and passed it on to her sisters in community. It was her belief that*

*"In our living and our dying we are bringing God to birth."*

*And, this is what allowed our sister, as Gerard Manley Hopkins poets it, to call out:*

*"O Christ, Christ, come quickly." And in the midst of "falling flakes",  
Christ "christens her wild-worst Best!"*

*In Mother Clara's words to Sister Germana...*

*.. we hear: "We must be steadfast and not waver when stones are thrown at us. The sun is still above and will again bring light into this darkness."*

*M. Clara could have possibly heard a similar teaching from her mother, for a mother in labor has to have such faith if she is to birth the child.*

*M. Clara certainly passed on such wisdom to her daughters and the Sisters on the Deutchland remembered them.....RE LIVED them! They gave their lives into the Mystery of The Sea of Death for the sake of others' lives.*

*"In our living and our dying we are bringing God to birth."*

*In the Gospel of John..*

*... we receive words of truth, as the evangelist tells us:*

*"A wheat grain remains no more than a grain,  
unless it is dropped into the ground and dies.  
If it dies, it yields a rich harvest."*

*Yes!*

*We receive this word, as our Foundress and 5 Sisters received its wisdom and truth, for we believe that:*

*"In our living and our dying we are bringing God to birth."*

*We, a rich harvest of life and love  
are held in this Common Union– Communion-Circle of Love  
by the memory of Mother Clara's birth  
and the memory of our 5 Sisters' Deaths on the Wreck of the Deutchland.*

*Let us who gather around this table of Common Union,  
as this Community,  
in this Circle of Love,  
let us proclaim our gratitude, our thanksgiving, our Eucharist,  
in and with M. Clara and Sisters Henrica, Barbara, Norberta, Brigitta and Aurea.*

*Let us together proclaim:*

*"In our living and our dying we are bringing God to birth."*

*SO BE IT!*

*AMEN!*