

Homily – Feast of St. Francis
October 4, 2020
Sr. Alice Drewek

On this feast of St. Francis, our hearts are not only full but over-flowing with the blessings God has given us. And we have been in such good company these past days...with each other, of course, that goes without saying, and with our guardian angels, Clare, Francis, and Mother Clara!

We have been on quite a journey since the Provincial Chapter was convoked in March 2019, and these guides and our ancestors have been faithfully walking with us.

Think back to the gatherings, to the pre-chapter meetings when we were physically present to one another in the auditorium and chapel and then, to the most recent times when we were together in the "we" space of the internet. We laid out a route for our Journey even though we were not exactly sure of our destination. We calculated the amount of time we thought it would take, and had to do some adjusting when Covid came around. We traveled down the highways and byways of

- listening and speaking,
- asking and answering,
- waiting and acting,
- creating and revising,
- discerning and deciding.

We walked the path of this Journey with intention and attention and tried to take to heart the wisdom shared in today's readings:

- to let go of undo anxiety,
- to be open to our guides: Francis, Clare, and M. Clara, our ancestors, and the Spirit within and among us,
- To pray, to ask for what we needed
- To offer our gifts and call forth the gifts of others'
- To embrace change
- To walk with gentle and peaceful steps.

St. Francis once said: "Let us begin to serve the Lord sisters and brothers, for up until now, we have done nothing."

And our response is: "We hear you, Francis."

We are at a new starting point. We blessed and honored the past, let it go, and are beginning again

as a new region,
with a new leadership team,
with renewed bylaws and statutes,
new recommendations,
and an inspiring vision prayer.

This new beginning is exciting, exhilarating, and perhaps a bit daunting.

But we know we can ask Francis, Clare, and M. Clara to continue to be with us, to guide us, to encourage us, to challenge us **"to be a blessing in the heart of the world."**

With our whole being...our eyes, our ears, and our hands,

with our minds, our hearts, and our entire lives

we take this first next step into the unknown, secure, and strengthened by the words of St. Clare:

"what we hold may we always hold.

What we do may we always do, and never abandon."

To this we say a resounding **Amen, Alleluia**