

JUBILEE CELEBRATION      June 15, 2019

Readings from Mother Clara

Letter to Ephesians

Gospel of John

Good morning! And welcome to this celebration of 315 years of religious life lived by 5 dedicated women. Congratulations Rosemarie Burian, Pat Irr, Maureen Elfrink, Rose Mary Pint and Mary Lou Wirtz. We raise up these women today to honor them but even more importantly to inspire us. We live in a time that is challenging to say the least. Today more than ever before we are in need of courageous and faith-filled women and men who follow the gospel.

These women took the message of the gospel and Clara Pfaender and made it their own. Their individual stories are unique yet hold common threads. They heard a **call** to dedicate their lives to a special kind of service. They came to serve God's people as nurses or teachers. Maybe they weren't quite sure how they would serve but serve they did. And God had many surprises for them that would unfold in the years to come as they continued to say their "yes" to the call.

Much to their surprise and maybe delight or anxiety, the Community would call them to other forms service: sponsorship leadership, pastoral ministry, formation ministry, being a missionary in Brazil, spiritual direction and companioning, adult spiritual development, food bank ministry, congregational leadership, provincial leadership, and tending to the wellbeing of body and soul of so many people today. They each grew more and more in love with Love, that's Love with a capital "L". They were called to sacrifice, to give of themselves, to live in hope that their lives mattered and made a difference. As Mother Clara had hoped, they made Love the center of their lives and they have made a huge difference in all kind of ways.

Mother Clara had imagined that her sisters would centered themselves in Love. Which of you has seen love shining forth from their faces, from their eyes, from their lips, in their speech, in their manner, in all places and in all things, and producing great fruits? I venture to say all of us. We have seen how they sprinkle joy about, how they deal with grief and sadness, how they manage to help carry our burdens, how they continue to heal and teach and make the world more in tune with the will of God.

They teach us by example how to be the living, loving Presence of Christ. They teach us how to be intentional community. They teach us how to obey Jesus command: Love one another.

Oh, yes, we have reason enough to celebrate the lives of these special women who heard a call many years ago and said "yes" and continue to say "yes" today. We are grateful for their "yes" and their lives lived in Love.

And as we continue our celebration today may we bless them with St. Paul's words from Ephesians:

*May you be strengthened with power through the Spirit in the inner self and may Christ dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

**S. Diane**