

A sister to the poor

Maria Clara do Menino Jesus
Foundress of the Congregation of the
Franciscan Hospitaller Sisters of the Immaculate Conception



October / December, 2019 – Quarterly Bulletin – Year XXV - Nº 102

BE VERY UNITED

The lack of unity among the different Christian confessions was a very painful wound for the members of II Vatican Council. At the basis of this suffering we find three reasons:

In the first place, disunity contradicts the will of God. “That all may be one” – it was the final petition of Jesus at the Last Supper. Mother Clara cried out in a similar way to her disciples: “Be very united!” “Have but one heart and only one soul”.

Besides this, disunity prevents the progress of the Gospel. “You preach Jesus Christ in the name of catholicity. A little in front others are announcing the same creed, but they represent Methodism. Others, in turn, thicken the ranks of Lutheranism. Do away with these isms, come to an agreement, and then we will speak”.

Ultimately, disunity, be it in a family, in a club or in any other place, constitutes shame, a stain, a scandal. It stands out even more, obviously in the followers of Him who left us the “new commandment”.

Blessed Maria Clara was burning with the desire of seeing her Sisters more affectionate, interconnected, friends, and for this there were many reasons: God is glorified when there is harmony and concord; the joyful living of fraternity contributes greatly towards the building up of the neighbour; Thence the good name of the

Congregation is favoured; and finally, as if in a bundle of sticks, union is strength.

“Without union there is no peace” – exclaimed Mother Clara. “Great and profound is my sorrow to see the lack of unity”. “My heart is broken with pain with the disunity that exists”.

She detested envy and classified it as a “pestilence”; gossip, tale-carrying, grumbling were the “plague of all pestilence”.

Her Letters are carpeted with five virtues that also formed part of the five virtues which also formed part of the florilegium of St. Paulo: meekness, kindness, humility, patience and magnanimity or greatness of spirit.

Clara wished her Sisters to be “angels of peace”, but she knew very well that they did not have wings: hence, she was not surprised, that there should be faults, defects. Of course that was the ideal that was clearly reflected and she never gave up the proclamation: “Be very united!”

At the present juncture – when the difficulties abound and the energy is decreasing – we need to count with one another, to cultivate cohesion, complementarity, mutual help, as together we will work wonders and we will be able to sing the joy and the beauty of fraternity. Let us be very united!

Fr. Abílio Pina Ribeiro, cmf
Colégio Universitário Pio XII, Lisbon



Like grains on the Cob

The second Chronicle of the Congregation (2C), with reference to life in common and the attitudes that must strengthen and tighten bonds, presents the image of a corn on the cob, meaning the unity that should exist in a fraternity. The comparison is suggestive, but the word completes and illumines the meaning of this unity.

In a letter to the Sisters, with this regard, Sister Maria Clara thus expresses herself:

«I want you to do your best to be always very united to Our Lord, with soul, life and heart, taking great care of your perfection and being very humble, obedient and charitable, so that among you, my dear daughters, there may be but one soul and one heart. May all selfishness that only thinks of itself and is not concerned with the wellbeing or adversity of the neighbour, flee from us all. (...) May in your house always reign the most affectionate charity and respectful obedience. Only this way will we be able to be happy in time and eternity».

In God and with the needy

Testimonies of favours received, through the intercession of Blessed Maria Clara:

M. H. P. - Ermesinde – I thank Blessed Maria Clara for her intercession in the big grace that I obtained in favour of a friend. Years ago a problem was detected in one of the breasts, over which she watched carefully. In one of the last tests it did not only show the usual, but even a lump that was the cause of great preoccupation. She was told that she would need a biopsy. On the appointed day, once again I entrusted to Blessed Maria Clara, asking her with great faith: “Accompany her, help her and look after her”. When everything was prepared, when the doctor was trying to locate the lump by palpation, astonished, said to the patient: But ... what is happening? I cannot find anything!... And my friend left the place without undergoing the test and happy with this revelation. Once again, God manifested his glory, through Sister Maria Clara. I am very grateful to her.

F. S. T. - Ribeira Grande, São Miguel – At the end of the year 2018/19, I suffered from a haemorrhage for 17 continuous days. The doctor did a DNC of the uterus, during Christmas time, a very sensitive time, going through months of anguish and pathological doubt, without knowing what to do or what it could be. I prayed much to my Mother Maria Clara, that the report of both the cytology to the uterus should be negative. Mother Maria Clara interceded with her kindness and being always ready to relieve the pain of the more afflicted; I am dumbfounded to express the light that lights up in my paths of darkness. I thank God and my intercessor, for having helped me once again.

M. E. S. C. - Velas, São Jorge. Az. – To thank the “holy” Maria Clara, who helped me much in my sickness of the cancer of the bladder, asking God for my healing, I am sending a donation. Since six months, I feel I am healed and with great faith I ask for her blessing.

L. A. - Praia do Norte, Faial, Az. – I asked Blessed Maria Clara do Menino Jesus to intercede for me with God for my son who met with a serious accident. She heard my prayer. I come to thank for everything that she has granted me. I would like my gratitude to God and to Mother Clara be published in her bulletin.

M. J. L. - Amadora – I was greatly distressed. My daughter had to undergo several cytological tests. Then, since there were doubts, she had to undergo a biopsy of the uterus. A very deep examination. It was very, very painful. She underwent other tests the results of which were negative. Hence, I come to thank and to request to publish in the Bulletin of Mother Clara. I am grateful.

M. A. A. R. - Barbeito, Chave, Arouca – I thank the intercession of Blessed Maria Clara, for a special favour received over a year ago. My nephew had met with an accident, due to which he was practically unable to walk. I prayed to Mother Clara do Menino Jesus to intercede to God for him. Thanks to Him, he is already able to walk.

I also prayed for another two sick boys for their wellbeing. From the depths of my heart I am grateful. Thank you, Mother Clara!

M. C. R. R. - Paredes – About a year ago, I had the good fortune of knowing Blessed Maria Clara and from that day, I began to pray the prayer asking for the favour of employment for one of my son-in-law. It was becoming very difficult for him and for my daughter, since

they were worried. We have already this favour and I promised to publish my testimony and to thank with a donation that I promised. I thank God for the intercession of Sister Maria Clara.

M. S. D. S. - Campizes, Ega – My husband’s car and mine had to go for inspection in January. Since they are a few years old, I feared they would not be passed and that they would have to be sent to the mechanic; this would be a little costly, in financial terms, since we were facing difficulties. I made a novena to Sister Maria Clara, asking for the favour of both the cars passing the inspection at once, without having to go to the mechanic; Only some small repairs were needed. We are very grateful to God and to Sister Maria Clara!

H. I. S. F. S. - Arapiraca, Alagoas – I come to give testimony of a favour obtained through the intercession of Mother Maria Clara do Menino Jesus: God granted me what I was asking for so insistently: my much desired pregnancy. Being under treatment for two years for endometrioses, I was able to conceive. Thank you, my God. Thank you, Mother Clara!

Sr. E. added: This letter is from a young lady who, through the intercession of Mother Clara, obtained her great desire of having a child, in spite of having only one fallopian tube. Raphael was born beautiful and healthy seven months ago. Let us praise God through Mother Clara.

Sr. Vijaya - Chennai, India – I prayed to Blessed Mother Maria Clara to intercede for a neighbour of mine, by name J.R. that she may conceive a child, after six years of marriage. Mother Clara heard my prayer and now, she has a girl. I come to thank for the miracle that God granted her, through the intercession of Blessed Mother Clara.

Ch. R. - Mumbai, In. – We have prayed to Mother Clara, asking for various favours. We were blessed, because we have been granted most of them, especially, those related with health problems:

- L. G., from our ward was healed of acute cirrhosis.
- S. D'S. my aunt, is better from her arthritis.
- For improvement in the health of my parents, my brother, my own and that of my nephew.
- My mother suffered from boils on the face and is completely healed.

L. A. T. - Mumemo, Moç. – I come to thank Mother Maria Clara do Menino Jesus for the favours obtained, above all the cure of the headaches that my brother was suffering from. He was on leave admitted in the Hospital of Vilanculos. He underwent many tests, but the doctors could find nothing and since there was no diagnosis, could not administer any medication and he further worsened... I had recourse to Mother Clara, asking her and praying with great faith to grant him the favour of a cure. Thanks to God, he got it. I wish to thank the intercession of Blessed Maria Clara. Thank you, Mother Clara!

M. D. - Vigo, Esp. – Feeling very frightened with pain in one of my eyes, I fervently interceded to Blessed Mother Clara asking that the pain should disappear and I get back my sight. Since this happened I am publishing as I had promised. The doctor told me that it was due to the problems of circulation; it could be, but she interceded for me and that is why I give thanks.

You are the now of God!

«Do not allow anyone to steal away from you hope and joy, to narcotize you, to use you as a slave of their interests. Dare to be greater, because your being is more important than anything else. It is of no use to you to have or to appear. You can become what God, your Creator, knows that you are, if you recognize that you are called for much. Invoke the Holy Spirit and journey confidently to the goal: holiness. That way you will not be a photocopy. You will totally be yourself. For this, you need to acknowledge one fundamental thing: to be young is not only to seek passing pleasures and superficial successes. So that the youth may fulfil the purpose that it has in the course of your life, it should be a time of generous surrender, of sincere offering, of sacrifices that are painful, but makes us fruitful. It is as the great poet used to say:

If to recover the recovered,
I had to first lose the lost,
If to achieve what is achieved,
I had to support the supported,
If to be in love now,
It was necessary to be hurt,
It was well to have suffered what I suffered,
That I cried what was cried over.

Because at the end of all it was proved
That one does not enjoy well what is enjoyed,
Except after having suffered.

Because at the end of all it was understood
That what the blossoms of the tree
Nourishes itself from what has been buried.

[Francisco L. Bernárdez, «Soneto», B. Aires.]

If you are young at age, but you feel weak or disheartened, ask Jesus to renew you. With Him, there is no lack of hope. Jesus, full of life, wishes to help you, so that being young is worthwhile. That way you will not deprive the world of the contribution that only you can give it, being unique and unrepeatable as you are. However, I also want to remind you that “it is very difficult to fight against one’s own concupiscence and against the harassment and temptations of the devil and the world and of the selfish world, if we are isolated. The bombardment is so great that it seduces us who, if we are too lonely, we will easily lose the sense of reality, inner clarity, and we will succumb”. This applies especially to the youth, because you, united, have the admirable strength. When you are enthusiastic for a community life, you are capable of great sacrifices for the others and for the community. Isolation, on the contrary, weakens you and exposes you to worse evils of our time.

Pope Francis: Ref. Christ lives, nn. 107-110



A challenge for your reflection on the text.

Send your answers to the Secretariat:

1. Two most challenging imperatives which touch you and “stir” you.
2. The phrase of the Pope which best portrays the last two verses of the sonnet by Francisco Luis Bernárdez.

Send by post, before 30.11.2019.

You may have a surprise...

Testimonies in prayer

Whenever difficulties arise, I have recourse to the mediation of Blessed Maria Clara and, almost always, my petitions are granted. I am grateful for all the help received during the course of my life and I ask God that, in the near future, to enlighten the person that will make her a universal saint. I take great pride in learning of her existence and once again, I thank for the one who has given an answer to my petitions.

M.J.S.A.F. - Arcozelo, PTL

I thank for the protection that has been granted to me and to my whole family during this year. I also thank for those whom I ask for your blessed help. Thank you, for being in your hands whenever needed, for I am attended to.

J. M. T. L. – Chaves

A chain of prayer

Well known is the power of intercession of Blessed Maria Clara. We also know that the power of prayer is always strengthened by union of hearts that supplicate. And Jesus, when he teaches, usually speaks in plural: “Pray”... “When two or three are gathered in prayer, I am in their midst”... We are guessing: when an intention is presented by many, will God close his ears?”. Let us be in solidarity. Let join those who trustfully ask for her intercession:

A.C. - Bodiosa; A.D. - Linda a Velha; A.M. - Queluz; A.R. - Leiria; F.S.T. - Ribeira Grande, Aç.; L.C.S. - Chaves; L.F.M.C. - Sertão; M.A.O.B. - Valbom; M.A.P.C. - Sta M^a da Feira; M.A.V.L. - Viana do Castelo; M.C.A.; M.C.A.L.; G.B.O. - Vila Praia de Âncora; M.C.S. - Pinheiro, Amares; M.L.S. - Ponta Delgada; M.H.P.A. - Passos de Arcos; M.M. - Paredes; M.V.G.F. - Viseu; T.A.M.; A.; M.B.H.; M.J.R. - Horta, Az., and many other persons who recommend themselves to our prayers.

A well learnt lesson

It is said that the Franciscan Hospitaller Sisters, escorted from Portugal, received in Tui, Galicia, an aspirant, young and fresh like a bud to open. Unfortunately, due to sickness, Conceição – such was her grace – had to be sent back to her father's house, in the distant town of Caxarias, municipality of Ourém.

Two years later, the Chaplain of the Sisters got down precisely at the station of Caxarias and, providentially, at once noticed the father of the girl. Then he learnt that the girl was very sick and felt obliged to go to visit her. According to doctor's advice, the girl should have died more than fifteen days ago, but she stated that she could not still die as she did not have the permission.

When the Priest entered the room of the patient, skin and bone, he heard her exclaim in agitation, as one who feels great relief: "O Fr, what a miracle! Every day I was praying to God asking to bring you. I know that I can live no longer, hence I wanted to ask you the permission to allow me to die".

After the Priest had told her that she could die in peace and to remember him to Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, that same evening, practically without agony, Conceição flew to Heaven.

She had learnt well the lesson that Maria Clara do Menino Jesus had passed on to her Daughters: to do the will of God, through human mediations, their life and their nourishment.

Fr. Abílio Pina Ribeiro

Colégio Universitário Pio XII, Lisbon

**Let us bow down to the Will of God
and He will fulfil our desires.**

Blessed Maria Clara

**Entrust your worries to God, for He
looks after you**

1 Peter 5, 6-7

Prayer to Request Cures

Blessed Mother Clara, by the love you had for Jesus in the Eucharist and for the glory of His Most Holy name, with filial confidence in Mary, the Mother of Sorrows, and for the exaltation of her Immaculate Conception, I supplicate that you plead for the cure of... (name) and attend to the prayers of those who ask for your intercession with God.

Glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (3 times).

Crown of Praises to God

It consists of 56 "Glory be" in praise of the Most Blessed Trinity for the 56 years of the life of Mother Clara.

Using the Rosary beads, In place of the "Our Father" say;

To you, all honour and all glory, for ever and ever;

In place of the "Hail Mary" say: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son...;

- at the end of the last 6 "Glory be"

Conclude saying 3 times:

To you, all honour and all glory, for ever and ever.

(With ecclesiastical approval)

Communicate favours received to:

**The Provincial Secretariat
of Mother Clara**
Clara Sadan Provincialte
Carmelaram P.O.
Bangaluru 560 035

**The Provincial Secretariat
of Mother Clara**
Provincial House
Mary Hill, 2nd and 3rd Floor
60, Mount Mary Road -
Bandra West - Mumbai 400 050

Only One makes us one!

To come out of oneself to join the others, does good!

(Pope Francis)

Without unity there is no Peace!

(Blessed Maria Clara)

More than 2000 years ago,
Jesus lived intensely the reality of lack of love,
of atrocious selfishness,
of the human tendency to close oneself up,
of separating oneself from the other, of the difference,
of the diverse...
Escaping from the message of truth and life,
of escaping from the demands of passing from the "I" to
"we" and of living and thinking together.
It is enough to recall His most intense and extensive prayer:
Father, keep us in your name.
I pray for these and for those who will believe.
That they may all be one,
just as You are in me and I am in You! [Jn17:20]
And still: He who does not gather with me, scatters. [Lk.11:23]

At the present juncture like the "grains attached to the cob",
we need a real and strong union with God,
the only creator of curative communion,
promoter of cohesion
and the reinforcement of interpersonal bond.
We need to humbly acknowledge
that all of us, above all, we ourselves need one another,
in union, in complementarity, in mutual help.
Together, we will work wonders
and we will be able to sing the beauty of fraternity.
Be very united! It is the appeal of the Founders,
and of all those in authority
who know that isolated and lonely,
will not build any innovative,
reinvigorative and solid project.
Yes to union that creates strength!
Yes to the friendly embrace that unites diversity!
Yes, to the healing of all the wounds of past divisions!
Yes, to the personal decision of being an **instrument of unity!**

Prayer to ask for favours and for the canonization of Blessed Maria Clara

Most Holy Trinity, most high,
omnipotent and good Lord!

You caused your holiness to shine in the simple and humble life
of Blessed Maria Clara do Menino Jesus, by calling her to be
an apostle of your tenderness and mercy.

Grant us the grace of her canonization and may the brightness of
your light shine upon us so that, by living in the spirit
of the beatitudes, we may practice the Works of Mercy,
in fidelity to the Holy Gospel.

Through the intercession of Blessed Maria Clara do Menino Jesus,
hear our prayers and Grant us the grace which we confidently
ask You (mention your petition).

To You all honour and glory, forever and ever. Amen!

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be...

Blessed Maria Clara, pray for us!

(With ecclesiastical approval)