

The Little Portion

Newsletter of The School Sisters of St. Francis -- Texas Region

Panhandle Franciscans

Fall 2011

The Franciscan Romance

St. Clare called it the "LAUDIBLE EXCHANGE"

"to leave the things of time for those of eternity,
to choose the things of heaven for the goods of earth,
to receive the hundred-fold in place of one,
and to possess a blessed and eternal life."

The Franciscan Spirit has always had an element of romance in it! As one reads about St. Clare sneaking out at night to follow Francis against her parents' wishes, it's easy to see a love story that touches the heart and incites the imagination. It was as if she were eloping...but not with just an ordinary man! She was sneaking out to give her life to Jesus Christ. Clare went that same night to meet Francis and the brothers at San Damiano. Francis cut off her beautiful blonde curls (still on display at the Basilica of St. Clare in Assisi) and took her right away to the nearby Benedictine convent for safety, knowing that her father and others would be coming soon to find her. The next morning, her father and uncle were in the convent demanding her return home. Clare took off her veil and showed them her clipped hair. That was the end of the interference.

Her little sister, Agnes, followed Clare, but when her father and uncle came with men to take her home, she was dragged out of the convent and miraculously became so heavy that they couldn't pick her up. It was obvious that they were battling something bigger than anything they had experienced before.

Look again at Clare's words that speak to the heart of someone that is hungry for God: "to leave the things of time for those of eternity", to "choose the things of heaven for the goods of earth", to "receive the hundred-fold in place of one". Doesn't this put things into perspective? Clare, in the worldly sense, had everything she could possibly want -- wealth, a family that loved her, a husband-to-be, fine clothes, and a "future". But God had planted a totally different dream in her heart. It was the same as Francis' dream.

How radical they were. How *happy* they were!

What was the gel that brought their dream together? It was the belief that the Gospel can be lived without watering it down in any way. They happily discarded their rich clothes for a poor tunic. They discarded their opportunities for earthly marriage for an intimate love relationship with God.

To many, this may sound absurd. To those called to it, it sounds *wonderful*!



What a "Laudible Exchange"

Congratulations to our Sisters!

Sr. M. Celine - Celebrated her 50th Jubilee!

Renewal of Vows:

Sr. Mary Jude
Sr. Mary Magdalene
Sr. Mary Grace



Welcome to Crystal
who entered our Community
last July!



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Keep up with us on our website / blog!
www.panhandlefranciscans.org

School Sisters
"Harvest of Blessings"
Gala

Saturday, Nov. 19

Check out details inside!



Too Busy to Pray?! S-E-R-I-O-U-S-L-Y???

Too busy to pray? That's like saying you're too busy to love your wife or husband. . . or too busy to eat.

How much time do people spend trying to "feel" better? It's absolutely amazing how we are so tempted to put everything else in front of God. Some people will tell you, "Well, I go to Church every Sunday. The rest of the week is mine." Others might say, "Well, I go to Church most Sundays. We have a soccer game . . . we are too tired . . . or . . . I just don't feel like it." We are always trying to fill that hole in our hearts with things that will not really satisfy us -- food! alcohol! drugs! pornography! movies! computer games! or _____ (fill in the blank yourself).

Let's think about this. God WANTS us to be happy. He WANTS us to have a beautiful fulfilling LOVE relationship with Him, but we are many times too lazy, unorganized, or simply have our priorities out of order. No one would really be willing to take the risk of Jesus saying to us, "I do not know you . . ." when we meet him in the next life. When we are searching for things to make us happy in this life, we are really looking for God. He is the only one that can satisfy our longings.

The case of Father Steve Scheier. He was in a car accident in 1985 and recounts his encounter with Christ at his judgement. He said that he was not very spiritual and practically had no prayer life. He said that Jesus was "honoring his choice" when he was judged for hell because he had been living for himself instead of for God.

By choosing to be lukewarm or not, we could be making choices about Eternity.

What happened next is so powerful -- he heard a woman's voice pleading to spare his soul and to give him more graces and another chance. He heard Jesus say: 'Mother, he has been a priest for 12 years for himself and not for me; let him reap the punishment he deserves.' Our Lady responded, 'But Son, what if we give him special graces and strengths and then see if he bears fruit? If not, your will be done.' Jesus replied, 'Mother, he's yours.' To read the full article, see: <http://www.ncregister.com/site/article/wake-up-call-changes-priest/>

We do not think we have time to pray, but we can check our Facebook, and if a friend calls needing to talk, we have time. **Every day we are tempted to choose so many things instead of God and the fulfilling love relationship that He wants to have with us.** In fact, if we were to truly put God first on our daily agendas instead of last, so many of those things we think we need will not even be a temptation. It's as if our desires are transformed or re-aligned. No, it's never perfect. We have to keep working at it and continue to choose Christ over things and people. Hopefully it becomes a way of life (with some struggles in between).

Lord, give me the insights I need to change my life so that I can choose You first instead of all the things that I really do not need. I need You and Your life of grace!!

*Being in Love with God is never boring.
-Teresa of Avila*

Teach Me How to Pray

How does one get a deeper prayer life? Five "Easy" Steps:

- 1) **Desire:** if you truly desire a deeper prayer life, you'll get one. Jesus said that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, they will be satisfied (Mt. 5:6). It may take some cooperation with grace, discipline, and rearranging your priorities (see #2), and some time, but it will happen.
- 2) **Prioritize:** Soccer, football, or basketball running you ragged? Is texting people really that important? More important than God?
How about finances? Is it really necessary to have all the stuff? All the meetings? If one wants to grow in a deeper prayer/love relationship with God, one has to make time for it.
- 3) **Old Couples in Love:** You know how beautiful it is to see older couples sitting together holding hands and saying not much of anything? Prayer is not always asking God for favors (or telling Him what to do). There comes a time in our relationship with God that is like a couple that's been married for a long time. They just like being together. . . they already know what the other one thinks and desires. Go to an Adoration Chapel once a week for an hour and spend time with the One that loves you unconditionally and totally. Spend time before and after Mass desiring union with Him!
- 4) **Pray the Scriptures:** Take time with the Scriptures and good spiritual reading every day. As Franciscans, the Scriptures are not only important, they are our daily food. We meditate especially on the Gospels to hopefully become the Gospels. We read about saints and holy people hoping to become holy and filled with God and His awesomeness.

*Prayer doesn't change God,
it changes me.
- C.S. Lewis*

- 5) **Living the Virtues:** Teresa of Avila said that unless we strive to live the virtues, we will not experience a deep prayer life.



The Sisters were recently honored at the dedication of the newly renovated St. Anthony's Church and School in Dalhart, TX. There have been School Sisters of St. Francis there for almost 60 years. It is amazing to think of how many lives our Community have touched, and how many lives have touched our Community.



"I absolutely loved every minute of it."

-2010 Retreater

Join others age 18-35 to pray with us, discuss some of those deep questions of life, and experience Religious Life firsthand.

God is awesome and is calling you to something. Take some steps to find out what it is!

November 4-6, 2011

For more information or to schedule a visit, contact:

Sr. Mary Michael Huseman, O.S.F.
P.O. Box 906, Panhandle, TX 79068
806-537-3182, ext. 21
schrs@gmail.com

[facebook.com/schrs](https://www.facebook.com/schrs)

Receive Love - Be Love

"Amazing" Come and See Retreat

*What is it like to be a "Bride of Christ"?
What does that mean?*

What do Sisters do all day?

How do you know if you're called or not?

*How do you get a deeper love relationship with God
(even if you're not called to Religious Life)?*

Do Sisters have fun?

Can one be a Sister and still be themselves?

*Is it fulfilling to be a Sister?
What if I want to get married and have children?*



Besides our Apostolates, we have many visitors keeping us busy, coming to see what it's like to live in a convent.



We have some volunteers to help here and there.

We are most grateful to all of our volunteers and benefactors of all kinds! You and your intentions are remembered daily in our prayers.

WISH LIST:

- Garage doors need to be repaired or replaced
- Drivers needed for doctors appointments
- Donations needed for the upcoming kitchen renovation

Gala Coming up!



School Sisters of St. Francis
P.O. Box 906
119 Franciscan Way
Panhandle, TX 79068

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



"Like" us -- facebook.com/schsrs

Harvest of Blessings Gala
School Sisters FUN RAISER



Buy a Table to Sit with Your Friends

*\$500 buys 5 tickets with a Reservation for 8
to Sit with your Company or Friends*



Save the Date -- Saturday, November 19th!

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church Gym
Amarillo, TX

6:00 - 11:00 p.m. (meal served until 8 p.m.)

\$100 Ticket for 2 includes:

- a chance in the Reverse Raffle for a \$10,000 Visa Card
- Beef Tenderloin Dinner and Dance
 - Live Music by AFK
 - Calcutta Boards
- Craft Items made by the Sisters
 - Live & Silent Auctions that include beautiful Advent and Christmas Gifts
 - Fun and Fellowship with the Sisters

**All proceeds to benefit our life and
ministry of evangelization!**

400 Tickets to be Sold

**To buy tickets, send check to:
School Sisters Gala
P.O. Box 906
Panhandle, TX 79068
806-537-3182**

www.panhandlefranciscans.org/gala