Outline

- Clare in our context
- Religion and contemplation
- Violence as Clare’s context
- Radical poverty as a response to violence
- Responses to violence in our world
Clare and Our Context

Clare of Assisi, friend of Francis, the founder of the Franciscans

SCU founded by Jesuits

You enroll at SCU

Jesus

Jesuits

Mission Santa Clara founded by Franciscans

6 BCE–28 CE

1094–1253

1777

1851

2017–2019

Jesus

Clare of Assisi

Mission Santa Clara

SCU

You enroll at SCU

Jesus’ Followers

Jesus’ Followers

Radical Poverty

Jesus

c.26 CE

17 And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 18 And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’” 20 And he said to him, “Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.” 21 And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” 22 Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Mark 10:17-22

Radical Poverty

Jesus’ Followers

c.26 CE

He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 2 He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 3 but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. 4 He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. 5 If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.”

Mark 6:7-11
Jump Forward to the Middle Ages

The Crusades

Gothic Cathedrals
Urbanization

Global Trade

The Holy Roman Empire

The Holy Roman Empire
The Holy Roman Empire

The Holy Roman Empire

1155–1268

Prague, Kingdom of Bohemia

Assisi

The Mendicant (Begging) Orders

The Mendicant (Begging) Orders

1150–1250 CE

- Roman Catholic religious orders who assume a corporate vow of poverty and support themselves by (work and) charitable contributions
- Originally, these differed from monastic orders because they owned no property and thus had no means of production
- Examples
  - Carmelites (1155) – crusaders and pilgrims modeled lives on the prophet Elijah on Mt. Carmel in Palestine
  - Franciscans (1210) – Assisi, in Umbria, Italy
  - Dominicans (1216) – Spain/Southern France
  - Servites (1215) – founded by 7 cloth merchants in Florence
  - Augustinians (1214) – Tuscany, Italy

Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone

Francis

1181/82–1226

Chiara Offreduccio

Clare

1194–1253
Francis of Assisi
Brief Bio

Hymage of a simple man to Francis and the majors, in front of the Temple of Minerva in Assisi
Giotto, or painters in his style, 1297–1300

Francis, representing his father’s cloth business, giving away his own cloak to a poor man (he began to give away a good deal of his father’s merchandise, as well)
c. 1202, age 20
Giotto, or painters in his style, 1297–1300
Francis, praying to an image of the crucified Jesus in a dilapidated San Damiano Church, hears the figure speak to him, “Go and repair my house”

Giotto, or painters in his style, 1297–1300

Francis renouncing his inheritance (and his clothes), in order to “rebuild God’s house”

c. 1205, age 23

Giotto, or painters in his style, 1297–1300

Christian Traditions Associated with Francis

- Nativity scenes
Christian Traditions Associated with Francis

- Nativity scenes

Hipster Nativity
Casey and Corey Wright, 2016 ($130)

- Stations of the Cross

Christian Traditions Associated with Francis

- Stigmata
Tavola (tablet) of St. Clare
Anonymous, 1283

From bottom left, clockwise:
1. Clare receives an olive branch on Palm Sunday, 1211 (age 17)
2. Clare runs away from home to the Portiuncula (now in Saint Maria of the Angels), where Francis and his brothers meet her
3. Francis clothes her in his simple habit
4. She clings to an altar to prevent her father from dragging her home
5. Clare’s sister Agnes resists her father, whose knights beat her and try to drag her home
6. The miracle of the loaves in the presence of Pope Gregory IX
7. Final moments of her life
8. Her death and funeral, celebrated by Pope Innocent IV (1253 CE)

Clare’s 4 letters to Agnes of Prague

Religion and Contemplation

Clare to her friend Agnes

Place your mind before the mirror of eternity!
Place your soul in the brilliance of glory!
And transform your entire being into the image of the Godhead itself through contemplation.
Clare of Assisi
On Poverty and Riches
To her friend Agnes

Thereupon, you have cast aside your garments, that is, earthly riches, so that instead of being overcome by the one fighting against you, you will be able to enter the kingdom of heaven through the straight path and the narrow gate.

What a great and praiseworthy exchange: to receive the hundred-fold in place of one, and to possess a blessed eternal life.

1LAff 29-30

How does her letter echo the gospel passages we began with?

Violence & Radical Poverty

- Form groups of 3 students
- Choose one person to write the group responses on a sheet of paper.
- Introduce yourselves to each other; write all the names on the top of the sheet.
- One one side of the room, respond to the question:
  1. List several specific examples of violence that Clare faced throughout her life.
- One the other side of the room, respond to the question:
  2. In what way was radical poverty an effective response to that violence? How did it undermine violence?

What violent episode was Clare facing at this moment, depicted in the statue on the Mission façade?
Responses to Violence in Our World

What are some effective strategies you have used or seen used to counter violence?

If you can’t think of any, consider strategies you’ve used or seen used against violence that haven’t worked, and try to identify why they failed.