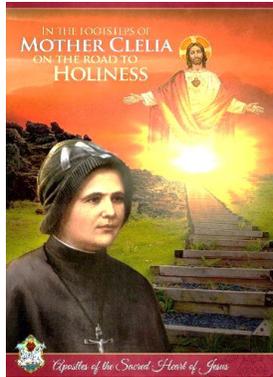




GFASC Holiness Reflection 5



Blessed Mother Clelia Woman of Forgiveness and Charity

Mother Clelia: Woman of Forgiveness and Charity

Mother Clelia is a model of Christian forgiveness. On several occasions in her life she proved how great her charity was toward those who had offended, slandered, and deceived her. The opportunities were not lacking, but her greatness in forgiving was even more evident if we consider that those who betrayed her and caused her so much suffering were some of her closest collaborators in the Congregation. *(Nicola Gori, A Woman of Forgiveness)*

Examine your conscience and see if there flourishes in your heart that generous charity which reaches the point of sacrifice, which spares neither its time nor effort nor money for the good of its neighbor. Doesn't egotism sometimes close your heart to compassion, your hand to alms? *(Spiritual Anthology 3.2.1. p. 101; Mg., I, p.22)*

"Jesus not only wants me to forgive from my heart all the wrongs received from my offenders, but to seek to do them as much good as possible, especially to pray much for them, to compassionate with

them and to excuse them, desiring that they too take part in His heavenly glory. He wants me to pray always for those who are the cause of my suffering, never speaking of their faults. He wants me to love those who have offended me, as He has loved us.” (*Mother Clelia, Diary*)

Luke 6:37-42

Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.” And he told them a parable: “Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? No disciple is superior to the teacher; but when fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher. Why do you notice the splinter in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own? How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye,’ when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother’s eye.”

Pope Francis

We all have a great need to be a bit more merciful, to not speak ill of others, to not judge, to not “sting” others with criticism, with envy and jealousy. We must forgive, be merciful, and live our lives with love. Do not forget this: mercy and gift; forgiveness and gift. In this way, the heart expands, it grows with love. While selfishness and anger make the heart small, they make it harden like a stone. Which do you prefer? A heart of stone or a heart full of love? If you prefer a heart full of love, be merciful!

Jesus also indicates a second pillar to us who are his Church: “to give.” . . . God gives far beyond our merits, but He will be even more generous with those who have been generous on earth. . . . With the

measure that we give, it is we who determine how we will be judged, how we will be loved. If we look closely, there is a coherent logic: the extent to which you receive from God, you give to your brother, and the extent to which you give to your brother, you will receive from God! Merciful love is therefore the only way forward. (*cf. General Audience, Sept. 21, 2016*)

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I ask you today for the grace to forgive everyone who is part of my life in any way. You love me, Jesus, and you want to free me from my heavy burdens because you desire my joy and my salvation.

Glory be to the Father...

Jesus, I forgive my friends, my coworkers, my family members. I forgive those who are insincere, those who gossip, those who speak badly of others.

Jesus, in a special way I ask you now: give me the grace to forgive the person who has caused me more suffering than anyone else has and whom I said I no longer want to forgive. Jesus, I forgive (*name or names*).

Glory be to the Father...

Jesus, I ask forgiveness for hurting so many people (*name or names*). Thank you for the love they have given me. Jesus, with your power and mercy break and uproot all that leads me to wrong others.

Glory be to the Father...

Thank you, Jesus, for freeing me from the harmful consequences of unforgiveness. May the Holy Spirit fill with His light all in me that remains in darkness.

Amen.

To Ponder

If we learn to apologize promptly and to give each other mutual forgiveness, wounds heal (*Pope Francis*).

- ***When I hurt others, do I ask pardon and act charitably toward them?***

God is love, forgiveness, peace, joy, and charity. Do not give in to murmuring, but think about what you say and how you say it. Do not speak thoughtlessly, but responsibly.

- ***How do I react to life's happenings?***

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"Jesus does not want me to murmur nor allow myself to be overcome by irritation against those who do wrong" (Mother Clelia, Diary).

*Trust in the Lord's great mercy and do not fear;
He has a wonderful plan for you but try to put it
into practice as He desires.*

