

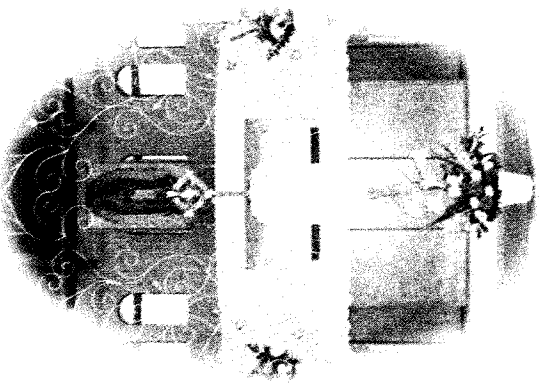


## Our Monastery

The Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Mercy was founded in June 1986 from the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. Upon completion of our permanent dwelling, the chapel was dedicated and the monastery solemnly blessed on December 8, 1989.

The structure of our building, the round chapel crowned with the cross-form monastery living quarters, well serves our simple, cloistered lifestyle and also bears eloquent material witness to the Poor Clares' contemplative vocation: a life of prayer and penance offered for all the world in union with the saving sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross.

Our monastery is under the patronage of Our Lady of Guadalupe who confided to Juan Diego when she appeared to him in 1531: "I am a merciful Mother to all who love and trust me and call upon me."



## Is Christ Calling You?

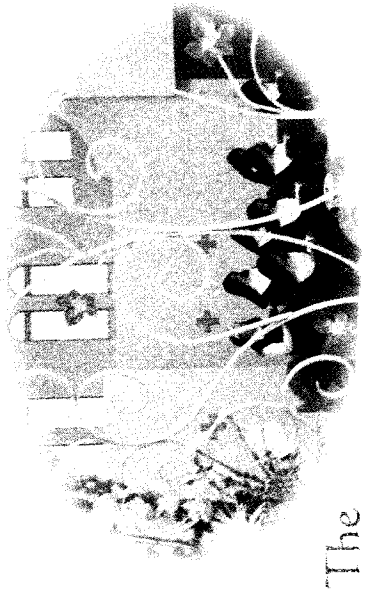
"I will speak to her heart," God said through the mouth of His prophet. Generous and joyful responding to the call to "go apart" with the Lord in silence and solitude, prayer and penance, opens the contemplative's heart to embrace the needs and concerns of the world.

Young women between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, with exceptions made where there is good reason, are eligible as applicants to our Order. Normal good health, a high school education, and the proper qualities of mind and heart are the other broad requisites. We ask no dowry of our postulants other than that of the desire to make their lives a total gift of love to God.

To learn more about our Poor Clare way of life you are welcome to write to:

The Poor Clare Monastery of  
Our Lady of Mercy  
300 North Sixtieth Street  
Belleville, Illinois 62223

or visit our web-site: [www.poorclares-belleville.info](http://www.poorclares-belleville.info)



# The Cloistered Poor Clare Nuns



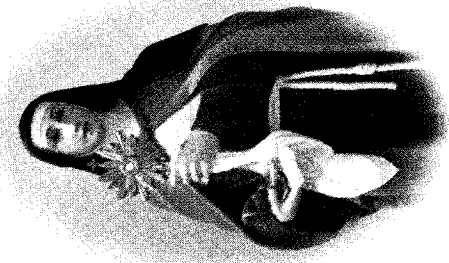
*"The Son of  
God became for  
us the tiny...."*  
St. Clare of Assisi



Monastery of Our Lady of Mercy  
Belleville, Illinois

## Who Are the Poor Clare Nuns?

History has given us many names. After the death of St. Clare in August 1253, the Order of Poor Ladies (as St. Francis loved to call Clare and her daughters) took to itself the name of its Mother and Foundress: *The Poor Clares*.



## Dedicated to a Life of Worshipful Love, our Daily Life Is:

- † centered on *Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament*;
- † enriched by daily participation in the *Eucharistic Liturgy*;
- † rooted in the sevenfold sacrifice of praise which is *the Divine Office*.

## Like our Mother St. Clare, We Desire to Live:

- † as *brides of Christ*, adding to the vows of *poverty, chastity and obedience*, a fourth vow of *enclosure*, “that liberating gift of the Holy Spirit which leads those who receive it over that threshold which opens upon a life of profound union with God.” (CONSTITUTIONS, art. 20.1)
- † as *daughters of the Church*, “distinguished by that loyal obedience to the Vicar of Christ and the holy Roman Church which so characterized our foundress.” (CONSTITUTIONS, art. 4.1)
- † as *sisters united in love*. “We cherish our *religious habit* as a sign of our consecration to God and as one of the most meaningful expressions of our shared life and ideal.” (CONSTITUTIONS, art. 44.1)
- † In solitude and silence, in persevering prayer and willing penance, in humble manual labor and contemplative study, in the intense community life of the cloister, the Poor Clare proclaims to the world that *in God alone* do we find hope and joy, fulfillment and peace.

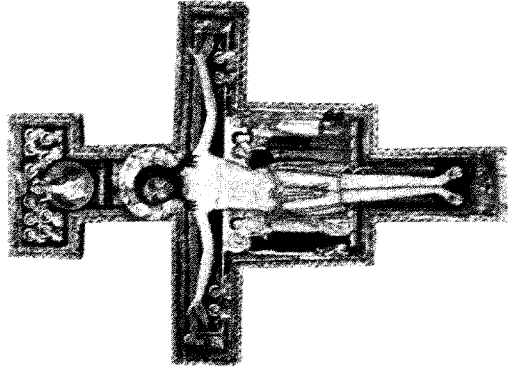
## Who Are We Today?

We are members of an enclosed contemplative Order of nuns, one of the oldest in the Church, founded in 1212 by St. Clare of Assisi under the guidance and inspiration of St. Francis.

St. Clare envisioned a simple life, a *Gospel life*, a life totally surrendered to Christ, a life offered in union with Him for the salvation of the world.

Our Mother St. Clare did more than nurture visions or dream dreams, though. For more than forty-two years, she set about living this God-inspired life generously, joyously, fully.

It is in this spirit that we, her daughters, strive to live the rich spiritual heritage that is ours.



*The life of  
the cloistered  
Poor Clare Nuns  
is a reminder  
of the fundamental vocation  
of everyone to come to God.  
In a spirit of freedom,  
with the tenderness of Christ,  
Poor Clares bear in their hearts  
the sufferings and anxieties  
of all men and women.  
They fulfill their contemplative mission  
in the heart of the Church,  
so that this world  
may never be without  
a ray of divine beauty  
to lighten the path  
of human existence.*