August 11th: Memorial of Saint Clare, Virgin

Gospel text (*Jn* 15:4-10): Jesus said to his disciples: «Live in me as I live in you (...). As long as you remain in me and I in you, you bear much fruit (...)».

St. Clare of Assisi, virgin (1194-1253)

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today is the day of St. Clare of Assisi, one of the best loved Saints, contemporary of St Francis. Her testimony shows us how indebted the Church is to courageous women, full of faith like her, who can give a crucial impetus to the Church's renewal. She renounced her noble status and wealth to live in humility and poverty, adopting the lifestyle that Francis of Assisi recommended. Clare, with a daring act inspired by her deep desire to follow Christ and her admiration for Francis, at the age of 18 left her family home and made her way in secret to the Friars Minor at the little Church of the Portiuncula. From that moment she had become the virgin bride of Christ, humble and poor, and she consecrated herself totally to him.

A characteristic trait of Franciscan spirituality about which Clare was deeply sensitive was the radicalism of poverty associated with total trust in Divine Providence. Clare was the first woman in the Church's history who composed a written Rule, submitted for the Pope's approval, to ensure the preservation of Francis of Assisi's charism in all the communities of women, large numbers of which were already springing up in her time.

—“How powerful was the illumination of this light and how strong the brightness of this source of light. Clare in fact lay hidden, but her life was revealed to all. Clare was silent, but her fame was shouted out” (Pope Alexander IV).