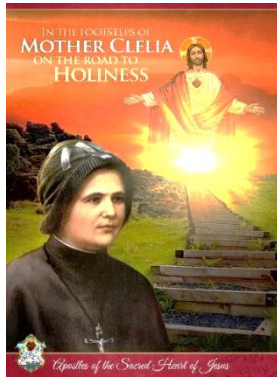




GFASC Holiness Reflection 4



Blessed Clelia – Woman of Prayer ***Without prayer, there is no holiness***

Mark 1: 35-36 – “Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed.³⁶ Simon and those who were with him pursued him.”

“Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11: 1)

The disciples saw how Jesus prayed. They were impressed particularly by the way he characteristically addressed God: he called him “Father.”

John 17: 10-11 – “Everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine, and I have been glorified in them. And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are.”

John 14: 13-14 – “And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.”

Mother Clelia: Woman of prayer

The core of her faith always remained Christ, encountered especially in the Eucharistic mystery, in the long hours spent in chapel, even during the night and when she was ill. A witness recounted: "After serious incidents, she took refuge in the chapel and many elderly sisters who saw her reported that they had to shake her with their hand to make her respond because she was submerged in the contemplation of God and remained in stillness with Him as if in profound ecstasy."

From the centrality of the Eucharist flowed her attention to care for the altar, the liturgical functions, and ministers of the altar, for whom she prayed in a special way, especially for those in crisis.

She was a religious who always gazed only on God. Her motto was "God alone." God above all and above everything. It was worth it to choose him as the only ideal of her life and to trust Him alone, especially in light of experiences she lived in her own flesh and in the collapse of so many human certainties. She was right to recommend to her sisters "Impress upon your heart that God alone is your only good and your only refuge."

Totally belonging to God alone, she savored his continual presence, immersing herself in the supernatural, to the point of being transformed into a "flame of love."

In fact, Blessed Clelia's life of contemplative prayer was intense and constant. Witnesses agree that she prayed continuously, maintaining her gaze fixed on God, scrutinizing his Word and intertwining her prayer with all her actions. Her life had become a prayer.

She was so attached to prayer that her inner union with God led her to skip meals. When others asked her "Mother, how do you live without eating?" she answered that prayer was her food. *(From the Homily of Cardinal Angelo Becciu, November 3, 2018, Beatification of Mother Clelia)*

Words of Mother Clelia

“Pray much, and Jesus will speak to you in the same measure that you speak to Him in prayer. You need much enlightenment and strength to fulfill your duty according to the divine will. Don’t be satisfied to turn to God only at the times prescribed for prayer; you need to have a nearly constant union between yourself and Him. (*Spiritual Anthology* 2.6.1, Mg.II, p. 121)

In constant prayer (Pope Francis)

Finally, though it may seem obvious, we should remember that holiness consists in a habitual openness to the transcendent, expressed in prayer and adoration. The saints are distinguished by a spirit of prayer and a need for communion with God. They find an exclusive concern with this world to be narrow and stifling, and, amid their own concerns and commitments, they long for God, losing themselves in praise and contemplation of the Lord. I do not believe in holiness without prayer, even though that prayer need not be lengthy or involve intense emotions. (*Gaudete et exsultate*, 147)

Gazing

The Curé of Ars would often find in church a simple farmer from his parish. The man would remain for hours kneeling before the tabernacle, without moving his lips. One day the pastor asked him, “What do you do here for so long?” The man responded, “It’s simple. He looks at me and I look at Him.”

You can go to the tabernacle as you are. With your burden of fears, uncertainties, distractions, confusion, hopes, and infidelities. You will hear an extraordinary response: “I am here.” “What will become of me? Everything is so uncertain?” “I am here.” I don’t know what to say, how to act, what to do in the difficulty that awaits me.” “I am here.” “The road is so long, I am so small and tired and alone...” “I am here.”

Pledge

I need to find time each day to dedicate to prayer.

- Do you value daily prayer? How do you pray?
- Do you have a witness story to share about your prayer?

Prayer of Mother Clelia

“Enlighten me, O Lord, that I may know from now on how to recognize the cunning of this terrible enemy which is always at my back; give me strength to conquer him, give me the grace to be inwardly and outwardly that which You want, that is, what I should be in your sight.” (From the Diary)

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“Impress upon your heart that God alone is your only good and your only refuge.”

(Mother Clelia)

