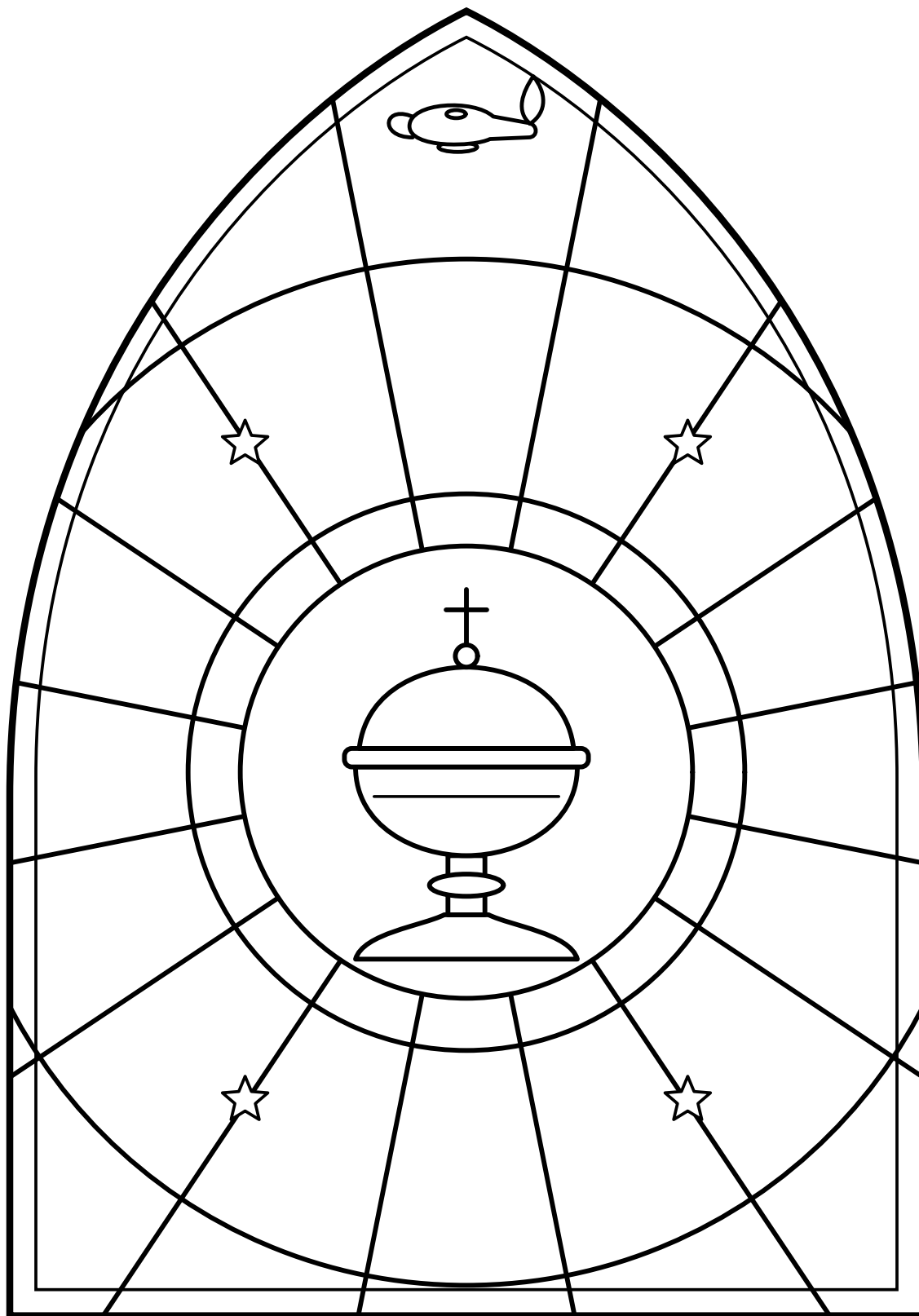


Clare Means Light

*Saint Clare's name means "light", and she was a light of faith to everyone who knew her.
Color the window in bright colors, then hang it where the sun can shine on it.*



You Are a Light!

Cut out a card and fold it in half, pictures outside. Finish "You are a light because...", and draw a picture inside.

Jesus told his friends, "You are the light of the world."

(Matthew 5:14)

You are a light because

From _____

fold

For _____



You are a light!

Jesus told his friends, "You are the light of the world."

(Matthew 5:14)

You are a light because

From _____

fold

For _____



You are a light!



A Letter to the Poor Clares

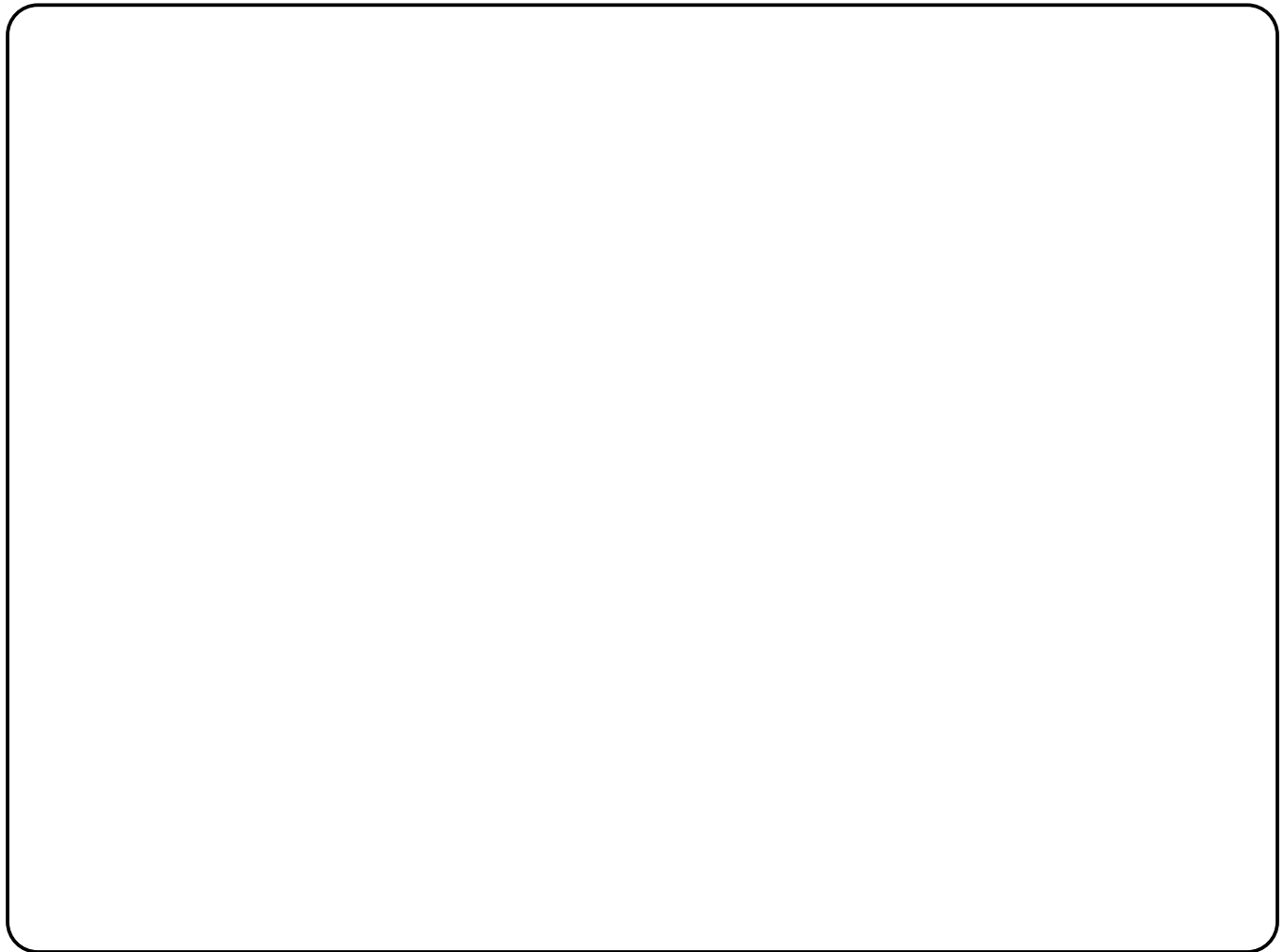


Saint Clare's sisters still pray for the world today. Ask them to pray for someone you love.

Dear Sisters,

Please pray for _____

Here is a picture for you:



Thank you, and God bless you!

From _____ (your first name)

Age _____



Saint Clare activity pack: leader's guide

Three activities for children aged 4 to 9, for Saint Clare's feast day (August 11) or any time of year. Her day falls as many schools begin, so it suits the first weeks of the year, when children are making new friends.

You'll need

For each child: the window page, one friendship card (each page has two) and the letter page. Crayons, scissors, and one envelope for the class's letters.

Tell her story

Clare was born into a rich, noble family in Assisi, Italy, more than 800 years ago. When she heard Francis speak about living simply for God, she knew it was the life she wanted, and one spring night she left her fine home to give her whole life to God. Other young women joined her, and people called them the Poor Clares. Her sisters told how soldiers once climbed their walls: Clare, too ill to stand, had herself carried to the door, held up the Blessed Sacrament and prayed, and the soldiers turned away. That's why she is often shown holding a cup like the one in the window. Her name means "light". She is also the patron saint of television: her sisters told how once, too ill to go to Christmas Mass, she saw and heard it from her bed as if she were there.

A plan for one session (45 minutes), or spread it over a few

- **Story (10 minutes).** Read the book or tell her story.
- **Clare Means Light (15 minutes).** The children color the window. Talk about how a friend can be a light. For a glowing window, color firmly with crayons; a grown-up can then rub the back lightly with a little cooking oil on a paper towel, so light shines through. Let it dry, then tape it to a sunny window.
- **You Are a Light! (10 minutes).** Each child makes a card for a classmate, finishing "You are a light because..." on the back, then gives it.
- **A letter to the Poor Clares (10 minutes).** Each child asks the sisters to pray for someone and draws a picture.
- **Pray (2 minutes).** End with the book's prayer: *Dear God, You are the truest friend of all. Help me to be a good and loyal friend: to stay close on happy days and hard days, to keep my promises, and to help the people I love be good and brave, the way Saint Clare did. Amen.*

What "You are a light" means

Before the cards, ask: what does a light do? It helps us see in the dark, makes things warm and bright, and shows the way. A friend can be like that: smiling at someone who is sad, helping, sharing, letting someone join in. Jesus told his friends, "You are the light of the world," and Clare's name means "light". Each child finishes "You are a light because..." for their classmate: *you share your crayons, you help me, you make me laugh, you smiled at me on my first day.* Little ones can tell a grown-up, who writes it down.

Every child gets a card

Before the children start, draw names from a hat or pair them up, so that every child makes exactly one card and receives exactly one. Make a card yourself for anyone who is away.

Sending the letters

- Many Poor Clare monasteries in the United States welcome prayer requests by mail. Search for "Poor Clare monastery" and your state, or ask your diocese, and check the monastery's website for how it likes to receive them. Send the letters together in one envelope.
- Children write their first name and age only, never a surname or address. Read every letter before it goes. If a child writes something that worries you, follow your school's or parish's safeguarding procedures.

Be a true friend this week

The book ends with three challenges the children can try: stay close to a friend who is having a hard day, and let them know you care; keep a promise you have made, even when it turns out to be hard; after a quarrel, be the first to say sorry and make up.

More ideas for Saint Clare's day, and the book *Clare, the Truest Friend*, are at littlesaintsbighearts.com/saint-clare-feast-day