Clare, the Truest Friend

Ages 4 to 9 · About 10 minutes to read aloud · Feast day August 11

Virtue: Being a true and loyal friend

The story in a nutshell

Clare, from a rich family in Assisi, hears Francis speak and leaves her fine home to give her whole life to God. She and her sisters, the Poor Clares, live simply and joyfully, and Clare stays loyal to God, to her sisters and to her friend Francis all her life, in happy days and hard days.

Before reading

- What makes someone a good friend?
- Have you ever kept a promise that was hard to keep?

While reading

- When Clare hears Francis speak: why did her heart leap? *Listen for: She wanted to live simply for God too.*
- When the sisters share everything: they had almost nothing. Why were they so happy? *Listen for: They loved God and one another.*
- When the soldiers come: what did Clare do to keep her sisters safe? *Listen for: She held up the Blessed Sacrament and prayed.*

After reading

- How was Clare a true friend to Francis? *Listen for: She gave him courage, and kept their dream alive after he died.*
- The book says a true friend helps you be your very best. Who helps you be your best?
- What can you do for a friend who is having a hard day? *Listen for: Stay close, listen, include them, say something kind.*
- *Older children:* People begged Clare to make her life easier, but she kept her promise. Why do promises matter?

Words to explain

- **Poor Clares**: Clare's sisters, who still live and pray in monasteries around the world
- **San Damiano**: the little church in Assisi where Clare and her sisters lived
- **Blessed Sacrament**: Jesus, truly present in the Eucharist
- **patron saint**: a saint who prays for a group; Clare is the patron of television

Be a Little Saint this week

The book ends with three challenges. Choose one to try together, or send all three home:

1. Stay close to a friend who is having a hard day, and let them know you care.
2. Keep a promise you have made, even when it turns out to be hard.
3. After a quarrel, be the first to say sorry and make up.

Pray together

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.

A note for the leader

Leaving home at night. If a child asks about Clare slipping out while her family slept, explain that she was a grown young woman of about eighteen, giving her life to God. Children should always tell a grown-up where they are going.

Go further

Our free **Saint Clare activity pack** has a stained-glass window to color, friendship cards so every child gives one and gets one, and a letter asking the Poor Clare sisters to pray. More ideas for the feast day are at littlesaintsbighearts.com/saint-clare-feast-day, and every free printable is at littlesaintsbighearts.com/printables.

Clare, the Truest Friend by Joseph Glazier. Free to copy for your class or program.