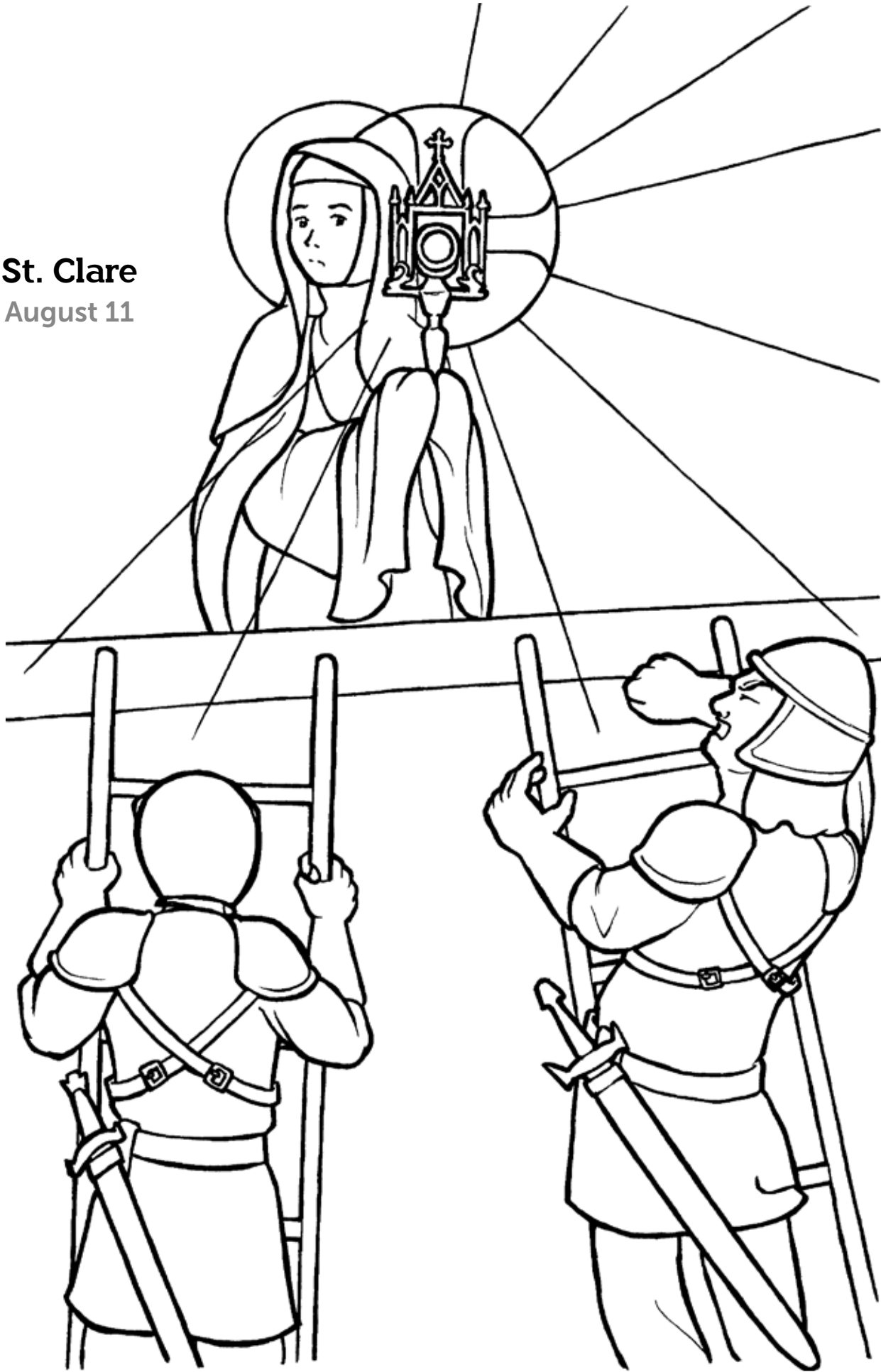


**St. Clare**  
August 11



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# St. Clare

1194–1253 • Italy

Eighteen-year-old Clare, in her fine dress and with perfectly combed hair, could not take her eyes away from the friar living like a beggar. The friar was St. Francis of Assisi, and he preached about how we can live as Jesus did, in poverty and humility.

St. Francis's words touched Clare's soul, and she went to Francis and told him that she, too, wanted to live as Jesus had lived and become a poor and humble nun. Both Francis and Clare knew that it would not be easy for her to become a nun. She was the oldest daughter of a noble family, and her parents would want her to marry a wealthy man. So Francis and Clare hatched a plan.

In the dead of night, Clare snuck out of her parents' home with her aunt to meet Francis in a small chapel. There, he and his friars were waiting for her, holding bright candles in the dark. Clare changed out of her rich dress into a poor robe and veil and made her vows to live in poverty and humility, like Jesus.

Clare's parents were furious and tried to drag her back home. But she bravely resisted them, and when they saw that nothing would change her mind, they let her remain a nun.

Clare and some other nuns lived in the poor church of San Damiano, the church that St. Francis had rebuilt with his own hands right outside of Assisi. Clare became the leader of the Franciscan nuns, who became known as the Poor Clares.

One day, when Clare was sick in bed, an army attacked Assisi. Hearing that soldiers were scaling the walls of San Damiano, Clare rose from her sickbed and took the monstrance containing the Eucharist from the chapel.

Clare knew that Jesus would protect Assisi.

She went to the walls and lifted the monstrance up high. A brilliant light shone from the monstrance, and the soldiers fell back and ran away in fright.

A new commander arrived with an even larger army to conquer the city. This time, Clare gathered her nuns, and they prayed for Assisi on their knees. A terrible storm broke out, and the winds uprooted the army tents and scattered the soldiers so that they, too, ran away. Assisi was saved, and the people celebrated with cheers that Clare and her nuns had defended the city.

Clare led the Poor Clares until she died a holy death. St. Clare, please help me to live in poverty and humility!