

Reflection

*Offered by Sr. Georgene Wilson
December 6, 2015*

140th Anniversary of the Wreck of the Deutschland and the death of our five sisters as well as the celebration of Mother Clara Pfaender's birthday on December 6, 2015 – The Second Sunday of Advent – proclaimed by Georgene L. Wilson, OSF, D. MIN

I hope, in this reflection, to connect the many facets of focus that this day invites us to ponder and to weave them into some Wisdom for our heart's deeping.....

Let me first name the facets.....

Readings for the Christian Community this Second Sunday of Advent:

Baruch 5: 1-9
Phil. 1: 4-5, 8-11
Luke 3: 1-6

Our Advent Focus: *Our Light Has Come. Let Us Live in the Light.*

The Cry of our Franciscan Sisters Henrica, Barbara, Norberta, Brigitta and Aurea

(See the story in the brochure for the full story.). We find their cry in Gerrard Manley Hopkins' poem, **The Wreck of the Deutschland:**

*"She to the black-about air, to the
breaker, the thickly Falling flakes, to the
throng that catches and quails Was
calling 'O Christ, Christ, come quickly':
The cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens
her wild-worst Best."*

Mother Clara Pfaender's Brithday: It is she who urges us all to *"Let love be the queen, the rule, the spirit and the life of the congregation..... Let it shine forth (as LIGHT) from our faces, from our eyes, from our lips, in our speech, in our manner, in all places and in all things..."* (Adapted by glw)

Some artistic images displayed here:

- A photo/picture of the banner representing the Poem. The large original hangs in the Deutschland Chapel.
 - In front of it is an artistic circle of the waters that 140 years ago received our sisters bodies and sent forth their LIGHT as a shining witness of Love and Compassion.
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These are the focuses of grace that we gather to ponder and integrate into our own lives.

- We began our Liturgy this morning with the song/prayer:
"What Wondrous Love is This".

We sang it in remembrance and gratitude for:

- Christ, Our Light who has come and lives as Light in our life,
 - The lives of our five SISTERS who gave their lives so that we might have life and light, and
 - The life and love and witness of M. Clara.
- We lit our symbol, the Second Advent Candle, to remind us that we are on a journey into a deeper light within each of us and among all of us.
 - And we have just heard our Scriptures proclaimed.
 - Let us gaze into these scriptures and ponder how they source our celebration of the Five Sisters and M. Clara and each one of our lives:
 - **The reading from Baruch** invites us to wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around us, for God means to show our splendor to all...

...as God has shown such splendor through the witness of our Five Sisters on the Deutschland (see the brochure)
and the life and love of M. Clara

...so God wraps each one of us in the cloak

of Wisdom and Discernment to be a LIGHT
for our world.

- **The Letter to the Philippines** calls us to remember how we have been missioned to spread the Good News from the day we were born till NOW!

...The Sisters on the sinking ship had to put their trust in remembering this promise. They were the precursors of the American Province of the Franciscan Sisters, Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The sisters and companions continue to put our trust in God from the day we were born until now. Let us continue to deepen this Way of Life.

... The 5 Sisters were the seeds of the Wheaton Franciscan Province. 140 years ago it seemed that these seeds had been destroyed in their drowning. But the waters were only washing their witness and courage into the lives of all of us....

...“For God has done this good work in us and brings fruit forward” from all experiences of life.....even from the death of loved ones and from our own dying and painful experiences.

...Let us remember what M. Clara said to the departing sisters: “My love for each of you increases. May you always recognize what is BEST and give it forth for the good of all others.”

...this BEST love is what prepares us, protects us and send us to SHINE and BE THE LIGHT OF THE GLORY OF GOD.

- **The Gospel from and for the Community of St. Luke** reminds us....

... that within the Earthly time of “once before but

really still yet!" the Word of God came to John the Baptist,
and comes to each of us,
to be the precursor of THE CREATOR,
THE WORD of GOD,
THE SPIRIT OF LOVE
AND
COMPASSION,
- to unite and reconcile,
- to level the hills, the mountains of hatred
- to straighten the paths, to shine the way
of LIGHT for ALL,
- to live forth with open eyes, ears, and with
all the senses of our hearts
- and to pray always,
CHRIST COME
QUICKLY
- and live, believing
that OUR LIGHT
HAS COME!

May this be so.
Let the church gathered here proclaim AMEN!

When we bring forth the Gifts of Bread and Wine for our preparation of the Liturgy of Eucharist we will sing again the hymn **What Wondrous Love Is This.**

This time imagine that the Sisters of the Deutschland and M. Clara are singing it to us.....encouraging us to be such LOVE and BEST for our world today.