



In this bicentennial year of his birth, the Saint himself leads our Novena Prayer with his own Prayer to Jesus, present and active in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

ME AND JESUS WITH CLARET

It is not necessary, my child, to know much to please me greatly. It is enough for you to love me fervently. At any rate, talk to me here, now, as if you were speaking to your closest friend, your mother, your brother.

Ask me to do something for someone whenever you like. Give me names. Are they your parents, your siblings, your friends? Tell me now what you want me to do for them. Ask a lot, for as much as you want; don't be afraid to ask. I love generous hearts that somehow come to forget themselves and so see the needs of others. At any rate, tell me sincerely about the poor individuals you would

console, the sick you see suffer, those straying who you long to see return to the right path, the absent friends you would like to have with you again. Tell me at least a word about each one of them, the loving word of a friend. Remind me how I have promised to hear each prayer that comes from the heart—and a prayer for those you love in a special way is certainly such a prayer.

And for yourself—do you need a special favor? Make a list of all the things you need, and come, read them in my presence.

Tell me honestly that you are prone to anger, that you love luxury and pleasure, that you are a bit proud, unreliable, negligent. Ask me to come to your aid in the efforts, big or small, that you are undertaking to free yourself of your faults.

Poor thing, don't feel ashamed. In heaven there are many, many saints who suffer from the same defects. But they prayed in humility, and little by little they found themselves free of them.

Don't hesitate to ask me for spiritual and material goods. Health, sound mind, success in your work, your plans, your studies. I can give you all these things—and I always do—when they do not hinder you, or better, when they help you to become a saint. What do you need right now, today? What can I do for you? If you only knew how much I want to help you!

Do you have some project in mind right now? Tell me everything in detail. What worries you? What are you thinking? What do you long for? What would you like me to do for your parents, your brothers and sisters, your children, your superiors? What would you like me to do for them?

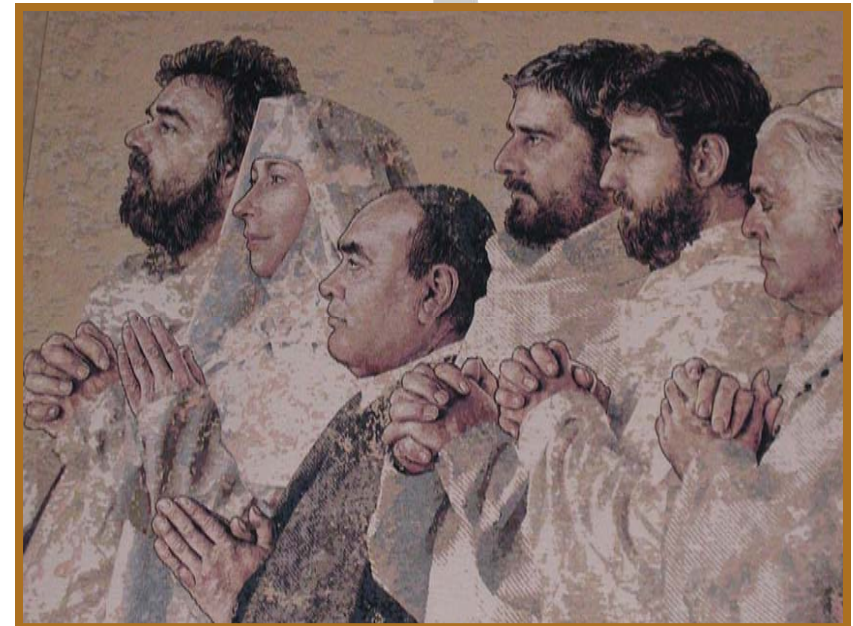
What about me? Do you feel drawn to my glory? Would you like me to do

something for those friends you love so much but who may be living far from me?

Tell me what particular thing demands your attention today, what you want more than anything, and what means you are counting on to obtain it. Let me know if your plans are not working out and I will tell you the reason for your difficulties. Surely you want me to be part of your quest? My child, I am the master of hearts, and move them as I wish, without violating their freedom.

Are you sad at times, or in a bad mood? Tell, oh tell me, you tortured soul. Tell me your troubles in full detail. Who has injured you? Who has hurt your pride? Who has treated you badly? Come to my heart and find there the balm that will sooth the wounds in yours. Then say openly that, like me, you forgive everything, forget everything. In appreciation, you will receive the consolation of my blessing.

Are you afraid at times? Do you feel in your soul a vague sense of sadness that, as groundless as it may be, can still be so heartbreaking? Throw yourself into the arms of my providence. I am with you. I am at your side. I see and hear it all. I will not leave you alone for a moment.



St. Anthony with others in procession to the altar of the cathedral of Los Angeles

Do you feel ignored by people you once loved, but who now have forgotten you for no reason? Pray for them and I will bring them back to you if it is not an obstacle to your salvation.

You may also have some joy to tell me about as well. Why not let me share it with you as a friend?

Tell me what has given your heart joy and consolation since yesterday, since the last time you talked with me? Perhaps you had some pleasant surprise. Maybe some serious doubts have been dispelled, or some good news has come your way—a message or gesture of love perhaps.

Maybe you have overcome some difficulty, or escaped from a tight spot. All of this is my doing. I have obtained this for you. You could show me your gratitude and, like a child to its father, say: Thank you, thank you, Father! Gratitude brings forth new gifts since benefactors, as you know, like to hear how much you appreciate them.

Do you have a promise you would like to make to me? As you know, I read the depths of the human heart. Human beings are easily tricked, but not God. At any rate, speak honestly. Tell me that you have a firm intention to avoid the occasions of sin, to deny yourself that one thing that is such a danger to your soul, to not look at that book again that roused your imagination, to avoid that person who disturbed the peace of your soul.

Can you be generous to that person whom you count as your enemy because they offended you?

And now, my child, go back to your work, to your office, to your family, to your studies, but don't forget these fifteen minutes of intimate conversation we have had in the privacy of this holy place. As much as possible, hold on to this quietness, acceptance, and simplicity, this affection for those around you. Love and honor my Mother; she is your mother too. And please come back again tomorrow, with your heart yearning more than ever to be joined to mine. In it you will daily find love made new, and new graces and consolations. I wait for you here.

How can I share in the Gospel life and mission of the Claretians?

Your Prayers

Your daily prayers sustain us in our missionary labors as we seek all things in the greater glory of God, our own personal growth in holiness, and the salvation of the whole human race.

Your Sacrifice

Your donations, whether large or small, go to support our ministries and work at home and abroad, educate missionary seminarians around the world, and care for our infirm and senior members.

Your Vocation

Come, join us as a volunteer, or for life. Vocation Office: 323-733-7712

Your Will

A bequest in your will is a personal legacy that will continue the mission of Jesus in time and human history, and make a difference in other's lives according to the measure that you yourself will have chosen. To remember us in your will, simply use the following title as a beneficiary:

Claretian Missionaries

Western Province, Inc.

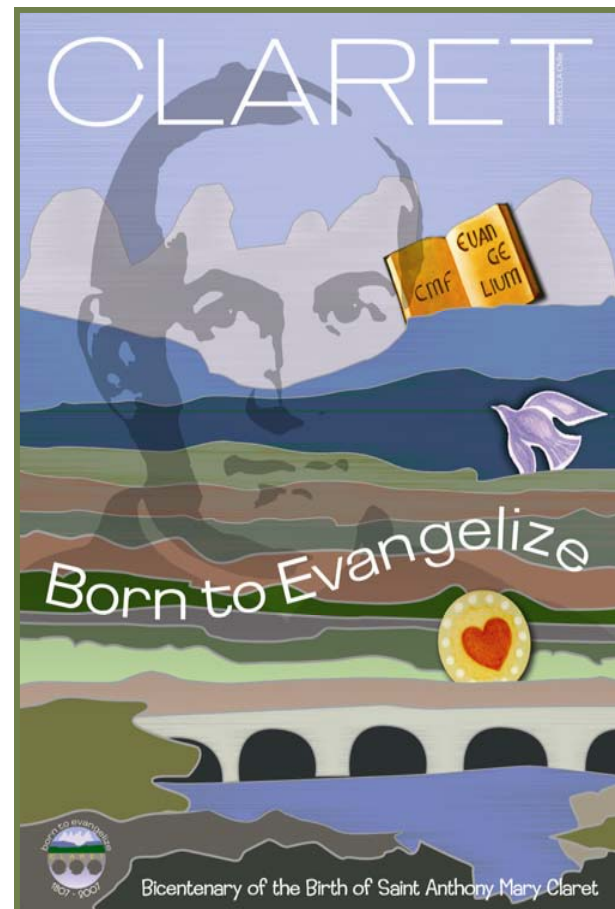
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SAINT ANTHONY MARY CLARET BICENTENNIAL NOVENA

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar
May He be loved and praised by all