

Basilica of Santa Chiara

The Basilica of Santa Chiara stands on the site of the former San Giorgio parish church. It was here that Francis received his elementary education and the basic teachings of the faith. San Giorgio was where Francis first preached.



Francis was buried in San Giorgio from 1226-1230. Clare was also buried initially at San Giorgio and later in her crypt in the basilica after it was completed in 1260.

After Clare died, a few Poor Clares came to San Giorgio to stay with Clare's body. Those who remained at San Damiano along with those at San Giorgio united as one community with residence at the protomonastery built on the south side of the new basilica. In 1260, the basilica was complete and Clare's body was placed in a safe burial spot beneath the high altar. In 1850 Clare's body was exhumed and put in a glass

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coffin beneath the main altar.



We are privileged to celebrate Eucharist at the tomb.

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The original San Damiano crucifix was brought by the sisters to the protomonastery when they came from San Damiano. It is now in a side chapel. Behind the crucifix is sacred space that was part of the church of San Giorgio.

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The basilica

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The reliquary. An Alb made by Clare.



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Clare's habits, hair (Clare was blond: a mixture of honey and ash), and cincture.



On the right in one of Francis' habits, cincture, and most importantly his breviary with an introduction probably written by Leo.

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Part of the grill behind which Clare and the sisters heard mass and received communion 7 times a year.

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On the right you see part of the rough undergarments or shirts that Clare wore.

Santa Chiara symbolized the end of one era and the beginning of another. With Clare's death, both of the founders were gone. Moving the sisters from the simplicity of San Damiano to Santa Chiara begins a new chapter. It is the task of the current generation of Franciscans to make the Franciscan dreams come alive for our time.

The San Damiano crucifix was instrumental in Francis beginning his journey. For Clare, it became her life as she gazed upon it every day, considered it and contemplated its mystery until she became what she gazed upon.