

Sister Clara Hounsell, SSND - 75 Year Jubilee!



Throughout her life, Sister Clara Hounsell has been steadfast in her great love and deepening understanding of the Eucharist. This has been reflected in her published articles in Sisters Today and Emmanuel and certainly in this beautiful reflection she wrote while at the Jesuit Retreat House in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

“Father, you illumine the night and bring the dawn to scatter darkness.” – Psalm Prayer

I hurried through the breaking light over to one of my favorite rock spots where I would have an orchestra seat at the symphonic marvel that was soon to take place. I sat watching, asking for oneness with the Lord of it all so that I could perceive it well.

The sky was now flooded with hues of myriad colors, it seemed, and I could see the spot on the horizon where Brother Sun would break forth, for already it seemed to mirror itself, to tantalize the watcher and dare her take her eyes away. The waves at times built up excitement, splashing noisily against the rocks, as if to say, “It’s almost time!”

The gulls from Brace Rock soared, restlessly moving from spot to spot, awaiting the majestic moment. Their screeches seemed to say THE SUN, THE SUN, SOON, SOON!! And then, although I’d waited – watching – it happened almost unexpectedly. I cried - Oh there it is! And revered the Lord who made it BE.

A touch of red above the horizon. It seemed to peek to see if there were any spectators of the color symphony it was about to play. But I became aware of another dimension to the scene. The sun, like a host raised itself higher and higher on the table of the ocean and simultaneously spilled the wine of gorgeous color across the morning sky.

It was a liturgy, truly, which had taken place. This exquisite liturgy of the bread of light and the wine of color is but a dim, natural reflection of the true glory that is yours, O Lord. But how magnificent it was, and thus, what must your glory be! Grace me with the joy of never losing the memory of this liturgy on the rocks of the Gloucester shore.

Sister Clara Hounsell, one of six siblings of parents Philip Francis from England and Sarah Anne from Ireland, was born in Boston, Mass. on March 8, 1925. She professed first vows in Baltimore in 1945. She was a teacher for 30 years in Catholic schools in Pennsylvania, N.Y., N.J., and Connecticut. For the following 30 years she served as an occupational therapist aide, in pastoral ministry, staff development, as a program director and for 15 years at Villa Notre Dame in community service. She currently resides in Bayside, New York and ministers in prayer and presence.