

CLARE

GALLERY

at the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry

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Exhibition, *Begging Bowls and Offering Bowls*, Opens at Clare Gallery

Hartford, CT — The Clare Gallery is pleased to present *Begging Bowls and Offering Bowls*, by artist Ann Grasso, from March 14 – May 5, 2019. The exhibition was inspired by a trip to Vienna. While walking through the city and studying its architecture, Grasso noticed that gold was used abundantly on buildings and in artwork. Juxtaposed with these cultural symbols of wealth were street beggars (dressed as monks), who quietly and anonymously asked for money. Reflecting on that day, Grasso was struck by the contrasts and similarities of both the beggars and those who gave to them. Grasso's second inspiration for the work came as she had the privilege of slowing down to care for a parent. This experience gave her the time to offer help and also to research patterns of living.

There will be a **reception and panel discussion on Thursday, April 11 from 5:30 – 7: 30 pm**. The panelists will be Ann Grasso, the artist; Joan Linley, Program Director, Mercy by the Sea in Madison, Connecticut; and James Demetriades, Esq., Town Councilman, Cromwell, CT. **The panel discussion will begin at 6 p.m.** Additionally, as it has over the past two years, the **Clare Gallery will participate in Slow Art Day on Saturday, April 6, with Grasso facilitating from 11 a.m. – noon.**

[Visit Slow Art Day 2019 for more details on this world event.](#)

The contrast between rich and poor is seen in our culture's numerous inequities. There are many "beggars," from people who do not make a living wage to the homeless, as well as nonprofit institutions that help the poor to wealthy institutions that ask for donations. Much of the time we see these people and institutions as anonymous—we might know of them, but we do not really *know* them. Additionally, we acknowledge the great work of people and institutions—their generous offerings—by news reports, social media posts, or public announcements and monuments. Furthermore, many acts of kindness are offered freely and go unpublicized.

This exhibition presents works of art from two of Grasso's series, *Begging Bowls* and *Offering Bowls*. The series are both complex in meaning, yet simple in form. The works create many intimate moments where the viewer needs to lean in "to get to know" the work better. Grasso hopes viewers will notice details in each work, hopefully offering them something new they did not see before, such as unusual visual shapes; unique titles; familiar and unfamiliar cultural symbols; and the use of repetition, pattern, texture, and color in her compositions. When both series are seen together, viewers are asked to reflect on the meaning of both begging and offering in their own lives and the lives of others.

Grasso has a degree in philosophy, studied psychology, and believes the liberal arts sharpened her creative skills. She practiced architecture and studied book arts at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts with Daniel Kelm. She regularly collaborates with many other artists on social justice exhibitions she curates. More information on her interest in patterns can be found at anngrassopatternart.com. Her artistic website is anngrasso.com.

The Clare Gallery primarily features exhibitions that emphasize world religions or interfaith themes, as well as social justice themes, on either a global or local level. The Gallery is housed in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at 285 Church Street, Hartford, CT. The Center is part of St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church, a vibrant and active downtown faith community.

The Clare Gallery's hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays; Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The Gallery and all related events are open to the public. Free parking is available directly across from the church, and the facility is handicapped accessible. More information may be found at www.spsact.org/clare2.