



Feast of Louise de Marillac
May 9, 2018

Louise de Marillac

Call to Worship

As we begin our prayer today we recall that God led Louise to encounter God in the persons of poor people. Louise believed in concrete service to those in need. She also stressed the manner of serving, that is, to serve all as we would Christ, so with competence, generosity, compassion and gentleness. **We pray**

All: O loving God, by reflecting on Saint Louise's message, may we grow in love of the poor, and may we consider how we perform our service today.

Louise Speaks to Us Today

Our vocation of servants of the poor calls us to practice the gentleness, humility and forbearance that we owe to others. We must respect and honor everyone: the poor because they are members of Jesus Christ and our masters; the rich so that they will provide us with the means to do good for the poor. (Writings, p.468)

Oh how true it is that souls that seek God will find Him everywhere but especially in the poor. (Writings p.431)

Above all, be very gentle and courteous toward your poor. You know that they are our masters and that we must love them tenderly and respect them deeply. It is not enough for these maxims to be in our minds; we must bear witness to them by our gentle and charitable care. (Writings pp.320- 321)

As for your conduct toward the sick, may you never take the attitude of merely getting the task done. You must show them affection; serving them from the heart; inquiring of them what they might need; speaking to them gently and compassionately. (Writings p.773)

Please greet all our sisters for me. I urge them to arise each morning with new courage to serve God and the poor well. (Writings p.225)

Please pause for quiet reflection.

Reading from *Praying with Louise de Marillac*

by: Audrey Gibson and Kieran Kneaves

Jesus identified himself so intimately with the lot of poor people that at the Last Judgment we will be judged upon whether we fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and visited the sick and prisoners. Jesus ended by saying, "In so far as you did this to the least of my sisters and brothers, you did it to me." (Adapted from Matthew 25:40). Louise took this passage completely to heart and then put it into action.

Christ does not want us only to see him when we see poor people; he wants us to take action. Louise saw a need and did what she could to alleviate it. And she never used as an excuse that the problems were so overwhelming that her efforts would be a waste. She did what she could, prayed for help, planned, and relied on God. On her deathbed, she reminded the sisters: "Take great pains to serve the poor". (Dirvin, *Louise* p. 387)

Take some time to reflect on these questions - and share your thoughts about them.

1. How did you see God's face in the poor this week?
2. Where did you see Sisters ministering in the spirit of Louise?
3. How will you challenge yourself to better serve others? What others?
4. How can you simplify your life in ways that the poor will reap the benefits?

Let us pray: (Response: Loving God, hear our prayer.)

We pray for all those whom we strive to serve in our health care ministry. We especially remember persons whose access to care is limited due to lack of insurance, immigration status, cultural or linguistic barriers and commit ourselves to advocate on their behalf. *Let us pray...*

That we continue to follow in the steps of Louise by supporting those who are poor in spirit, body, or mind *Let us pray...*

As we work toward educating the young and the old may the mission of charity shine through all who serve in the many forms of education *Let us pray...*

Compassionate God; make your loving presence felt to refugees and asylum seekers torn from home, family and everything familiar. Bless particularly those in the many detention centers in our country as they wait, sometimes months, sometimes years. Help them know that you accompany them as they hunger in boredom, in inactivity, never seeing any beauty or breathing any fresh air. Give them new hope and a new home. Open our hearts to welcome them as Louise did. *Let us pray...*

Imbued with the spirit of Louise and her exemplary zeal in pursuit of something, we ask that we mirror her courage to face ourselves squarely to overcome our insecurities and our inadequacies to band together with Christ, bringing healing and hope to our broken world. *Let us pray...*

Closing Song Suggestions

Ubi Caritas

The Cry of the Poor

Blessed are They