

FEAST OF ST. LOUISE DE MARILLAC

May 9

Gospel: (Matthew 25: 31-46)

The King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me...I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me."

Reflection:

Louise de Marillac, (1591-1660), married Antoine LeGras and they had a son whom they named Michel, but at the age of 34 she became a widow. Vincent de Paul became her spiritual director and under his guidance she began caring for the poor and visiting the Confraternities of Charity. Vincent and Louise co-founded the Company of the Daughters of Charity, and dedicated them to serve the poor with humility, simplicity and charity. In 1960, Pope John XXIII proclaimed Louise the patron saint of all Christian social workers.

Vincentian Meditation:

Louise de Marillac said: "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." (Gibson and Kneaves, Praying with Louise, p.. 72)

Discussion: (Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence)

In what ways do you see your Conference serving the poor today in the spirit of Louise: in gentleness... loving them tenderly and respecting them deeply?

Closing Prayer:

Compassionate Christ, Louise ministered to the needs of your people,
-give us courage to walk in her footsteps.
You inspired Louise with a great love for the poor and the abandoned,
-grant us the grace to serve with the same spirit of love.
You inspired Louise with compassion for the destitute and sorrowful,
-may we love them tenderly and respect them deeply.
May the Vincentian Family continue to grow throughout the world,
-so that the poor will know God's love in a tangible way.
Amen

