



# Feast of Louise de Marillac

9 May

## St Louise's Words

'I beg them to renew themselves in the spirit of fervour, humility and cordial gentleness, and in a very simple and true obedience. O my dear Sisters, it is not enough to be engaged in the service of the poor in a hospital, although this is a blessing which you will never be able to esteem enough. What is necessary is to have the true and solid virtues which you know are essential in order to carry out well the work in which you are so happy to be employed.

...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.'

## Reflection

These words of St Louise remind us of the qualities needed to be a true servant of the poor. We need to have the right attitude towards those that we are serving. This attitude involves the utmost respect for these people. Louise even went so far as to call them our masters. This calls for a true humility which allows us to be forgetful of ourselves and to create space for the other. This space enables us to listen to what the person we are serving is saying and what may be underneath their words. In creating this space, we can look beyond the surface and see deep into the reality of that person and their true value as a human being.

**How do you show humility, respect and gentleness in your service of people in need?**