



# **Feast of St Louise de Marillac 9 May**

**Faith is like this: if good works do not go with it, it is quite dead (James 2:17)**

Louise de Marillac was cofounder, with Vincent de Paul, of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, a congregation of lay women dedicated to teaching and hospital work.

Louise came from a background of wealth and knew many rich people. She was a very devout and spiritual person. After her husband's death in 1625, Louise met Fr Vincent de Paul who became her spiritual adviser. They began to work together with the common purpose of liberation of the poor at both human and spiritual levels. Vincent and Louise continued to work together for over 35 years, improving the lives of all who suffered poverty, neglect and community rejection.

Louise was the 'head' person, the radical thinker, who worked at all levels with the civil and government authorities to ensure the development of the works of charity by bringing order to the establishment and maintenance of the service. Vincent on the other hand is seen as the 'heart' person dedicated to ensuring that the good works took place. He was seen as the 'furnace of charity'. Theirs was a shared mission of evangelisation and service to the poor.

Louise said that 'it is after all, only with the Lord's grace that we love and serve the most deprived'.

# **St Louise de Marillac is the Patron Saint of Social Workers**

## **Pray with us**

Loving and compassionate God, we celebrate with great joy the faith and works of St Louise de Marillac. Give us the fire of her love, the tenacity of her belief and the tenderness of her care for the most abandoned. Draw us together into the light of your presence and help us to trust in the power of your Spirit, leading us ever closer to you.

O God, through Louise, you taught us a deeper love and respect for those whom the world oppresses, and we pray that you help us to serve all with respect and dignity.

Jesus, you inspired Louise to be a person of compassion and empathy in her service of the poor, help us to grow in mercy and understanding.

Lord, we thank you for the example of the untiring service of Louise in undertaking works and of her charity so that we can aspire to emulate this in our 'good works', be following her example in our service to those in need today.

O God, through the intercession of Louise inspire others to join us in the service of our Companions so that they may have mentors who will be able to support and guide them through a 'hand up'.

Just as the charity of Christ encouraged Louise may our response to the challenges of our times bring about the vision, justice, truth, passion and peace that drove her to reach out and help all in need.

Amen