



Reflection for the Feast of Blessed Rosalie Rendu

7 February

John 15: 9-17

Jesus said to his disciples: “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Live on in my love. You will live in my love if you keep my commandments, even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and live in his love. All this I tell you that my joy may be yours and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

Blessed Rosalie Rendu (1786–1856) was a Daughter of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, she worked for the poor in the Mouffetard district of Paris, France. Her zeal for the poor drove her to establish the means to educate poor children; to care for infants; to support the elderly; to serve the poor in their homes; and to supervise young working girls. One of her disciples in her mission of service was Frederic Ozanam and the first members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. She gave to them her gift of insight in serving the poor when she told them, “Be kind and love, for love is your first gift to the poor, they will appreciate your kindness and your love more than all else you can bring to them. If you wish to be loved, you must love, and if you have nothing to give, give yourself.”

The secret of Rosalie’s prodigious energy and numerous works was precisely the secret that St. Vincent confided to all his followers: She saw the face of Christ in the person of the poor. One of the sisters who lived with her cites Rosalie as she encourages the community: “Let us love the Good God very much. Let us not be sparing with our duty; let us serve the poor well, always speaking to them with great kindness.” A mark of the immense respect she was held in was that when she passed away between 40,000 to 50,000 people from all strata of society flocked to her funeral

Blessed Rosalie Rendu
pray for us.