

Strong Women of the SVDP



“Be Kind and love.”

– Blessed Rosalie Rendu

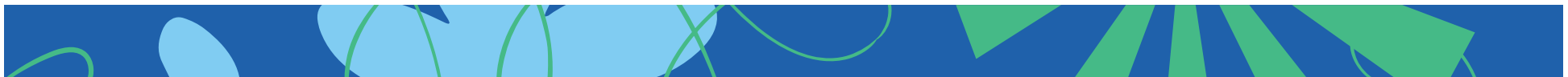
9 September 1786 – 7 February 1856



“Do all in a spirit of gentleness and love.”

– St Louise de Marillac

12 August 1591 – 15 March 1660



Timeline

St Louise de Marillac



1591

Louise did not know her mother and was raised by her father. She was born on 12th August 1591 in the Auvergne region, France.

From the time she was a small child, she was taken to the Dominican sisters, who educated her.

She went on to further education at a residence for young girls in Paris and became one of the best educated women of her time.

Louise had a desire to join a religious order, but she was not allowed to join. Her spiritual director assured her that God had “other plans” for her.

1611

She married Antoine le Gras, secretary to the Queen Mother, in 1611.

They had a son called Michael.

Along with being devoted to her family, Louise had a leading role in the Ladies of Charity, an organisation of wealthy women dedicated to assisting those suffering from poverty and disease.

1625

After her husband died in 1625, Louise met and became friends with Vincent de Paul. They worked together to bring comfort to poor people and help abandoned children on the streets. She also visited the sick men in the prison hospital.



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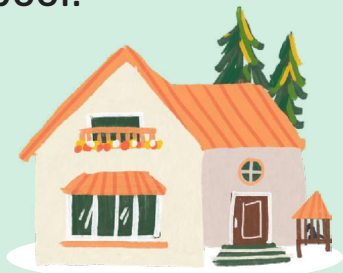
Timeline

St Louise de Marillac



1625 *onward*

She opened a house near the hospital where, each day, many women would cook food that visitors would then take to the prisoners. Throughout France, women set up centres to serve the poor.



1633

In 1633 Vincent de Paul co-founded the Daughters of Charity with Louise as their superior. Because they were neither enclosed nor called nuns, their concept pioneered in bringing women into religious service outside the cloister.

The congregation was the first noncloistered religious institute of women devoted to active charitable works.

Today there are over 20,000 Daughters of Charity, who continue to help people in need.

1660

Louise died on 15th March 1660 and was made a saint on 11th March 1934.

She is the patron saint of sick people, widows and orphans. Her feast day is 15th March.



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Timeline

Blessed Rosalie Rendu



1786



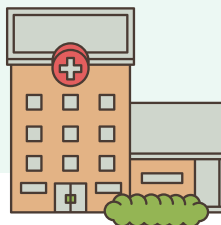
Jeanne Marie Rendu was the eldest of four girls. She was born on 9th September 1786 in Confort, France.

When she was three years old, the French Revolution broke out in France. At this time, many faithful priests were forced to run away and the Rendu family home became a place of safety for priests.

1796

After the death of her father and baby sister, Jeanne's mother sent her to a boarding school so she could get a good education.

During her two years there, Jeanne walked around the town, and one day she discovered a hospital where the Daughters of Charity cared for the sick.



1802

She spent some time at the hospital, and Jeanne soon felt called by God to become a Daughter of Charity.

Jeanne joined the Daughters of Charity in 1802 when she was nearly 17. Upon entering the community, she was given the name Rosalie.

1807

She took vows in 1807 to serve God and the poor, and spent over 50 years living out those vows.

1815

She became the Sister Servant (local religious superior). All her qualities of devotedness, natural authority, humility, compassion and her organisational abilities would be revealed.



Timeline

Blessed Rosalie Rendu



1833

She opened a free clinic, a pharmacy, a school, an orphanage, a childcare centre, a home for the elderly and a youth club for young workers.

She became known as the 'good mother of all', and helped Frédéric Ozanam and his friends to do good works, which is how the St Vincent de Paul Society started.

Her example encouraged her Sisters. She often told them:

"Be a milestone where all those who are tired have the right to lay down their load."

She was so simple, and lived so poorly, as to let the presence of God shine through her.

1852

Napoleon III decided to give her the Cross of the Legion of Honor. She was ready to refuse this individual honor but Fr. Etienne, Superior General of the Priests of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, made her accept it.

1856

Sister Rosalie never rested and continued to serve the poor until her health got worse and she became blind during the last two years of her life.

She died on 7th February 1856 after a brief acute illness. She was beatified (made a Blessed) on 9th November 2003.

