

Vinspiration

BLESSED ROSALIE RENDU

Jeanne Marie Rendu was born on September 9, 1786 at Confort, a district of Gex in the Jura Mountains, France. She was the eldest of four girls. Her parents were simple, deeply pious, mountain-folk owning a small property. Jeanne Marie was three years old when the French Revolution broke out. Her parents stood firm in their faith, even giving shelter to priests on the run from the revolutionary government.

Her father died in 1796, and during the same year her youngest sister also died. Jeanne Marie took on the responsibility of caring for her mother and younger sisters. As the revolution calmed down and life resumed its normality Jeanne Marie was sent to the Ursuline sisters in Gex to be educated. During her walks in the town she discovered the Daughters of Charity working in a hospital caring for the sick. This inspired Jeanne Marie to join the Daughters of Charity after her mother gave her consent.

On May 25, 1802, Jeanne Marie arrived at the Mother House of the Daughters of Charity, rue du Vieux Colombier, in Paris. The re-opening of the Seminary (suppressed by the Revolution) took place in December 1800.

In 1807 Jeanne Marie made vows for the first time and was given the name Rosalie. A thirst for action, devotion and service that burned within Rosalie could not have found a better place than the Mouffetard District in Paris. This was her first mission, a district famous as the hovel of the poor, and Rosalie threw herself heart and soul into the service of the poor. The sisters with Rosalie assisted the sick and suffering people by opening up a free clinic, a school, an orphanage, a child care centre, a club for young workers, and a home for the elderly.



BEATIFICATION
9 November, 2003

FEAST DAY
9 November

DEATH
7 February 1856

Rosalie...the woman...

Writings ...

"I serve God. It is from God that I await my recompense."

"Let us accept all that comes our way. God will send us enough money and enough goods, provided we use them well."

"Sisters, ... we are milestones. All have the right to lay their burden upon us without our having the right to complain about it."

"A Daughter of Charity must be like a milestone on street corner where all those who pass by can rest and lay down their heavy burdens."

"All of us are working for the glory of God."

"Let us support one another on the way of the Cross and let us walk in the footsteps of our Divine Master. Following His example, let us carry our Cross with courage and confidence in His infinite Mercy."

"...study their abilities, their level of instruction and try to get them work to help them out of their difficulties."

Teacher

Compassionate
Nurse Networker

Faithful Servant
Fearless Tender

Respectful
Practical Strong

Social Worker
Courageous Kind

Friend Mentor

Listener Heroic

BLESSED ROSALIE RENDU

ROSALIE ON MISSION

In her 54 years in the Mouffetard District Rosalie was a nurse, a justice of the peace, a catechist for the street children, and at the same time at the risk of her life she came between revolutionaries. Rosalie was the 'good mother of all' without distinction between religion, political persuasion, or social status. With one hand she received from the rich, with the other she gave to the poor.

Every day, in all kinds of weather, Rosalie crisscrossed the streets and alleyways with her rosary in her hand and a heavy basket on her arm. She walked with hurried steps for she knew that the poor were waiting for her.

Rosalie died on 7 February, 1856, and was buried with all the trappings of a state funeral from the church of Saint-Medard on February 9, 1856. To this day many leave flowers or small plaques expressing gratitude.

ROSALIE AND FREDERIC

In the days following the Revolution of 1830 the agitation of the people was great: anxiety, a thirst for a more just world, a desire for change in society and the commitment of Catholics.

Emmanuel Bailly presented Frederic Ozanam and his group with a guide in Rosalie. She taught them how to visit the poor. She would give them advice on the Christian way to go to them, to respect them and to consider them as brothers and sisters, rich in humaneness. With her they learned to see Christ in the poor. During the days of rioting by a violently angry working class in 1830 and 1848, barricades and bloody battles were the marks of opposition to the powerful. Rosalie was deeply grieved, and she herself climbed barricades to try and help the wounded fighters irrespective of the side they were fighting on.

Something to think about ... Reflect on the questions below ... share your thoughts with others ... or take some time to write down your thoughts and offer them to God.

Do I really pay attention to Jesus' presence in hungry people, street children, in homeless people?

How can I let my love be inventive?

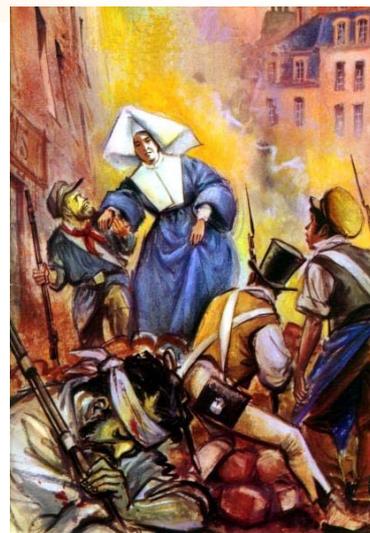
Have I sometimes held on to comfortable ways of serving other people when newer ways would have been more helpful?

What have I actually done with the inner promptings to do something beautiful for God?

How much of a compass is the person of Jesus for orienting my choices in life?

Have I ever felt the strength of God flowing through me when I needed to speak a costly truth?

To what extent does my desire to love and serve stay only in the realm of intention?



Let us pray...

O God, as we recall the life and virtues of Blessed Rosalie grant that we may continue her work of bringing good news to the poor. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Bibliography

Sr Rosalie Rendu: A Daughter of Charity on Fire With Love for the Poor, Sr Louise Sullivan DC, Vincentian Studies Institute, Chicago, 2006

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Web Resources

www.famvin.org
www.filles-de-la-charite.org
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