**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR AIC: MARCH 14TH, 2015**

**On the occasion of the Feast of Saint Louise de Marillac and the Universal Church’s Day of Prayer**

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The day of prayer for the feast of Saint Louise de Marillac is based on the Lenten Message of Pope Francis. At the invitation of the Pope we gather together on March 14th *to pray in communion with the heavenly and the earthly Church.* Let us remember to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist on that day.

1. In his Lenten message Pope Francis tells us that Lent is a *time of grace* and *a time of renewal for the whole Church.* He also reminds us that God is concerned about every one of us and knows us by name. When we are healthy and comfortable, we forget about others and we are unconcerned with their problems and our heart, in an attitude of selfishness, becomes indifferent.

His Holiness states: *One of the most urgent challenges which I would like to address in this Message is precisely the globalization of indifference. Indifference to our neighbor and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians.*

**Let us pray together:** Saint Louise, you were never indifferent to the problems, to the injustices and to the sufferings of those men and women who were poor and dying. You exhorted the Daughters of Charity to be ever mindful about their service on behalf of poor people. We ask you to intercede with God on behalf of the 150,000 AIC volunteers who minister throughout the world. Indeed, may all the volunteers be stripped of their selfishness and remain faithful to the vocation to which they have been called. May they be clothed in the spirit of Jesus Christ and may they be instruments of peace and love as they minister in the building of a more just and equitable world.

(Pray one *Our Father, Hail Mary,* and *Gloria* and the following exclamation: *Saint Louise de Marillac, pray for us!*)

1. In his Lenten Message the Pope writes: *Lent is a favorable time for letting Christ serve us so that we, in turn, may become more like him. This happens whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. There we become what we receive: the Body of Christ.*

Louise de Marillac marveled at this extraordinary gift of the Eucharist and in that regard wrote: *The Son of God took a human body in the womb of the Blessed Virgin in a state of innocence more perfect than that of the first man … Nevertheless, this did not satisfy his great love for us. He desired an inseparable union of divine nature with human nature. He accomplished this after the Incarnation by the admirable institution of the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar in which the fullness of the divinity dwells continually in the Second Person of the most Blessed Trinity* (SWLM:784 [A-14])[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Let us pray together:** We beg you, Lord, through the intercession of Saint Louise whose anniversary in heaven we commemorate, that we, the AIC volunteers, might always be in awe at the continual presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. May we receive the Lord into our heart every day because if the Lord remains in our heart then there is no room for indifference to the suffering of our sisters and brothers who live in situations of poverty and marginalization. We prayto you, Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

(Pray one *Our Father, Hail Mary,* and *Gloria* and the following exclamation: *Saint Louise de Marillac, pray for us!*)

1. In concluding his Message the Pope states*: During this Lent, then, brothers and sisters, let us all ask the Lord:*“Fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum”: *Make our hearts like yours (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus). In this way we will receive a heart which is firm and merciful, attentive and generous, a heart which is not closed, indifferent or prey to the globalization of indifference.*

**Let us pray together:** Dear Saint Louise, pray that God might instill in our hearts the Spirit of his love so that, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, we might think and act in accord with God’s will. May we not be afraid to communicate the Word of God to those who have not had to opportunity to hear or to know said Word.

As we journey toward the 400th anniversary of our foundation may we live our charism with enthusiasm so that each day there might arise new volunteers who will comfort those who suffer! May we be courageous as we struggle together to change the unjust structures that oppress those who live in situations of poverty. Finally, following your example and that of Saint Vincent, may we always see the image of the suffering Christ in those men and women who are poor.

(Pray one *Our Father, Hail Mary,* and *Gloria* and the following exclamation: *Saint Louise de Marillac, pray for us!*)

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Translated: Charles T. Plock, CM

1. LOUISE DE MARILLAC, *Spiritual Writings of Louise de Marillac,* Edited and Translated from the French by Sister Louise Sullivan, DC, New City Press, Brooklyn, New York, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)