

# Louise de Marillac: the Grace of Suffering

## Lenten Prayer Service



**Call to Prayer: Leader:** “God, who has granted me so many graces, led me to understand that it was His holy will that I go to Him by way of the Cross. His goodness chose to mark me with it from my birth and He has hardly ever left me, at any age, without some occasion of suffering.”

*Spiritual Writings of Louise de Marillac*, page 711 A.29 “On Charity,” before 1633

**ALL: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Opening Prayer Leader:** Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in (our) understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**ALL: Amen.**

Collect, First Sunday of Lent

**Hymn** (Sing or recite.) “At the Cross Her Station Keeping”

At the cross her station keeping,  
Mary stood in sorrow, weeping,  
When her Son was crucified.

While she waited in her anguish,  
Seeing Christ in torment languish,  
Bitter sorrow pierced her heart.

Who, the sorrow contemplating,  
On that passion meditating,  
Would not share the Virgin’s grief.

*GATHER Comprehensive* 2004, #413 verses 1, 2, 5



**Reading 1** “On the Feast of Saint Thomas, I fell into a state of depression which lasted all day. I experienced discouragement, annihilation of myself and desertion by God. My heart was so depressed that the force of my emotions sometimes resulted in physical pain. ...

“On the following Tuesday, still experiencing the same trial, I looked upon myself as the object of divine justice. Holy Communion and all the other graces which God had bestowed upon me were to be the means of revealing His goodness. Once I had accepted this reality, I felt somewhat at peace ... the peace of God which surpasses all understanding.”

*Spiritual Writings*, pages 691-92 A.13 “An Interior Trial,” 1621

### Pause for reflection

#### Personal Reflection

When have I felt mental, emotional anguish, due to my own or another’s suffering?  
What, who helped me to live through the pain? How?



**Reading 2** “We are called upon to honor this Holy Cross by all types of suffering, after the example of Our Lord, who teaches us this by His death on the Cross and by all the other pains and sufferings which He endured during His life on earth. ... But souls chosen by God are very particularly destined to suffer, and this is such a sweet and agreeable privilege for them that they would rather die than not suffer since they consider loving and suffering as one and the same thing.”

*Louise de Marillac*

*Spiritual Writings*, pages 775 A.20 “Thoughts on the Cross”

**Pause for reflection**

**Personal Reflection**

How have I grown during times of trial?

Did blessings and graces result from my suffering and pain?      What did I learn?

**Hymn** (Sing or recite.) “At the Cross Her Station Keeping”

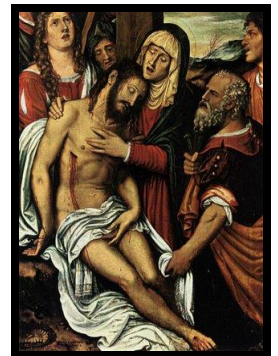
Mary, fount of love’s devotion, Let me share with true emotion  
All the sorrow you endured.

Virgin, ever interceding, Hear me in my fervent pleading:  
Fire me with your love of Christ.

Mother, may this prayer be granted:

That Christ’s love may be implanted in the depths of my poor soul.

*GATHER Comprehensive* 2004, #413 verses 8, 9, 10



**Closing Prayer**      **ALL:** By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in the same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Collect, Fifth Sunday of Lent

**Blessing Leader:** May God bless us, protect us and bring us to fullness of life, through the suffering, death and Resurrection of Jesus.      **ALL: Amen.**

**Prayer Texts**

- Philippians 2: 6 - 11      ... becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross ...
- Luke 9: 23 – 24      ... take up your cross ...
- Matthew 11: 28 - 29      Come to me ... my burden is light.