



Strong women of the SVP

"Be kind and love."

— Blessed Rosalie Rendu



"Do all in a spirit of gentleness
and love."

— St Louise de Marillac





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.

1611



She married Antoine le Gras, secretary to the Queen Mother, in 1611. Louise travelled and socialised with royalty and rich and powerful people of France. They had a son called Michael.

St Louise de Marillac

1625 onwards



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.

1642



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.

1660

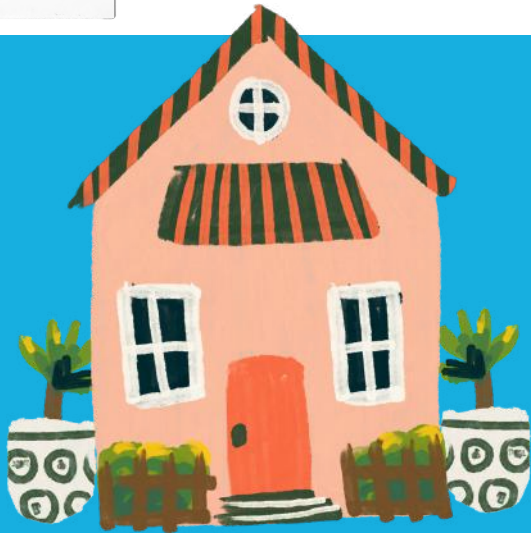


With Vincent, Louise started the Daughters of Charity in 1642. Today there are over 20,000 Daughters of Charity, who continue to help people in need. Louise died on 15th March 1660 and was made a saint on 11th March 1934. She is the patron saint of sick people, widows and orphans. Her feast day is 15th March.



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 onwards



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.



Blessed Rosalie Rendu

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

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.

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. She was beatified (made a Blessed) on 9th November 2003.