

REFLECTION



Feast Day of Blessed Rosalie Rendu

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'You will never be without assistance as long as your two hands are like this.'
She would then stretch out one hand in the gesture of giving and extend the other to receive.
She then added, *'If one hand closes, it will be useless for the other to reach out.'*

Today is the feast day of Blessed Rosalie Rendu.

She has a special place in the Vincentian story. She is known to us in the Society as the woman who inspired and guided a young Frederic Ozanam.

So today as we celebrate her day, let's give a moment of reflection to those who guide us. I'd also like to reflect on her courage. She would climb up on the barricades in the streets of Paris during the uprisings of 1830 and 1848. Imagine her in a scene from Les Mis, assisting the dying from both sides of the barricades.

She is also role model for us in the Society about how we assist those in need with kindness. She called all her sisters to see the face of Christ, and the humanity in those of people who are living in poverty.

*"Let us love the Good God very much. Let us not be sparing with our duty;
let us serve the poor well, always speaking to them with great kindness.
If you do not act in this way, you will be punished: the poor will insult you.
The ruder they are; the more dignified you must be.
Remember, Our Lord hides behind those rags."*

So, on this feast day of this great woman, let's all take on Rosalie's challenge to see the lives of those we assist with a deep value and respond with kindness. **Especially** those who are rude, those who are living with drug addiction, those who might come from different backgrounds, those who seem to be 'in the system'.

I also call to mind today the great women in the world who have committed themselves to the lives of the marginalised. Rosalie, St Louise de Marillac, Mary Mckillop, Malala Yousefzai, Rosie Batty, St Monica, our sisters in the Daughters of Charity, our mothers, daughters and sisters, our female volunteers and conference members, and the wives of our volunteers and conference members, especially those in voluntary leadership positions.

In amongst all the terrible news, the drought, the bushfires, disease and impeachments, I'd like to turn our thoughts today to a spirit of gratefulness and give a prayer and thought of thanks to all those great women committed to building a more just and compassionate society.