

Feast Day Prayer
St. Marguerite d'Youville
October 16, 2021

Focus:

2021 marks both the Centennial anniversary of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart and the 250th anniversary of Marguerite d'Youville's death on December 23, 1771. Throughout this year we praise and thank God for the life of Marguerite and we celebrate her legacy as Grey Nuns, Grey Nun Associates, colleagues and friends. May the *Woman with a Heart in her Hand* intercede for us, as together we *Create a Compassionate World*.

Song:

Bread for the World by Bernadette Farrell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3ABJGtnZwU>

Opening Prayer:

Loving God, you gave Marguerite bread and she fed the hungry;
you gave Marguerite a compassionate heart and she consoled the lowly;
you gave Marguerite a deep understanding of her own poverty
and she reached out her hands to the needy.

O Lord, there is none like you!

Fill us with these same gifts
and help us to continue the work you began in her,
in Jesus' name we pray.

Antiphon: *Providence is wonderful; it has incomprehensible motives; it provides for everything. In it is all my trust.*



Ps. 63:1-9

O God, you are my God, I long for you;
My body seeks for you as in a dry and weary land without water.
So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
Beholding your power and your glory.

For your constant love is better than life,
My lips will sing your praises.
So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

My soul feasts on you and my mouth praises you,
As I think of you upon my bed,
And meditate on you in the watches of the night;
For you have been my help.

In the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

*Glory to you Source of all Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.*

Reading 1:

During their marriage, Marguerite's husband Francois was seldom at home; he gambled away his earnings and also his inheritance. He died after eight years of marriage, a victim of his own debauchery, leaving Marguerite, at twenty-eight, a widow, pregnant with her sixth child. She was left with two small sons to educate, her husband's unsavory reputation and his considerable debts.

How did Marguerite survive those terrible years? Forty years later she would tell of the extraordinary grace she received during this most difficult

period. When she was at an extremely low point in her life after the death of her baby daughter Louise, she shed bitter tears and questioned the very meaning of her life. In her anguish she cried out to God, who revealed himself to her as a loving, compassionate, provident Father. It was this transforming grace that empowered her to turn her life around, and to commit herself to reveal God's love to others by her own compassionate love.

By Sister Mary Karen Kelly, GNSH;
from a reflection given for the Year of Consecrated Life
at St. Norbert Abbey, Paoli, PA

Reading 2:

Like Jesus, "Who came not to be served but to serve," Marguerite meant to express her love by a life of total, selfless devotion, of service to God's children who were members of the great human family. *She would be love*, drawn from the heart of God, made tangible by the care she lavished on the poor. For in her mind, the poor person was Christ, and she intended to serve him with all the resourcefulness of her gifts and the generosity of her being.

Adapted from The Spiritual Portrait of St. Marguerite D'Youville
By Estelle Mitchell, SGM



Pause

To Live With the Spirit

To live with the Spirit of God is to be a listener.

It is to keep the vigil of mystery,
earthless and still.

One leans to catch the stirring of the Spirit,
strange as the wind's will.

The soul that walks where the wind of the Spirit blows
turns like a wandering weather-vane toward love.

It may lament like Job or Jeremiah,
echo the wounded hart, the mateless dove.
It may rejoice in the spaciousness of meadow
that emulates the freedom of the sky.
Always it walks in waylessness, unknowing;
it has cast down forever from its hand
The compass of the whither and the why.

To live with the Spirit of God is to be a lover.
It is becoming love, and like to Him
toward Whom we strain with metaphors of creatures:
fire-sweep and water-rush and the wind's whim.
The soul is all activity, all silence;
and though it surges Godward to its goal,
it holds, as moving earth holds sleeping noonday,
the peace that is the listening of the soul.

by Jessica Powers



Reflection / Sharing / Intercessions

Closing Prayer:

Provident God,
we rejoice in the gifts of love we have received from
the Heart of Jesus, your Son.

Open our hearts to share His life
with all of your people.

Continue to bless us with His love
as we minister in the spirit of St. Marguerite.

We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son,
and through the power of your spirit, Amen.

