

ST. JULIE BILLIART - NOVENA DAY 9

JULIE'S SURRENDER

Take a moment to center yourself and enter into that sacred space deep within
"Be still for the presence of the Lord the Holy One is here"



JULIE'S VOICE

"There must be a little cross everywhere. Let us follow after our good Jesus in carrying it. A short time hence and we shall no longer be. Let us work at bearing fruit worthy of eternal life"

PRAYER

Slowly pray the psalm
and let it take you into that quiet place
where you can rest in God's presence
and let his light shine on your joys and sorrows.
Open your heart to trust.

Lord, I praise your infinite wisdom.
Your words are my guide by day.
At night I ponder on their meaning,
keeping them close to my heart.
I have no fear for
your words are my strength.
They promise me life everlasting.

Even though my body should die,
you have conquered death and
you will bring me into everlasting life
where I shall rejoice for ever in your infinite goodness.

Adapted from Psalm 15

JULIE'S STORY

Julie's one aim in life was to bring others to love the good God and it was for this that she spent herself tirelessly in God's service. Eventually it affected her health. On 14th January at the age of 64 Julie injured herself badly when she fell on the stairs. Although well looked after she began to suffer from headaches and colds and found moving painful and eating almost impossible. As well as this physical pain Julie had to endure complaints against her and the absence of Francoise who was also ill at this time. When she was able to visit Julie, Francoise would read her favorite passages from the Imitation of Christ. One Julie particularly liked was "If you carry the cross of Jesus, it will lead you to the longed-for goal where you will find an end to sufferings which in this life have no end." Julie's illness lasted almost four months. On the evening of Palm Sunday, her condition became much worse and the sisters gathered to kneel in prayer at her bedside. As they knelt there they heard a gentle voice quietly singing the Magnificat. She never spoke again. On the next day, 8 April 1816, Julie died in Namur. She had a public funeral presided over by the Bishop and years later, on 13th May 1969, she was declared a saint by Pope Paul VI, recognizing her charism as a gift to the universal Church.

REFLECTION

Life is a series of death and resurrection moments. We are all aware of them. To a lesser extent every one of us has known a kind of death in our own lives, not just the physical death of someone we love but a personal death when we have been ignored, passed over for someone else, or have been judged unjustly.

Take time to reflect on those moments of death in your life. How difficult was it to let go? Did it lead to new life, new opportunities, new understandings? What sustained you in those moments?

Hold those moments in your heart, surrender them in prayer as you say, 'Into your hands I commend my being.' For all of us these moments of letting go are preparation for the great letting go in death. Like Julie let us trust in God's goodness that we will be brought to new life and freedom through our surrender to God's goodness.

What crosses do you carry in your life? What do they teach you about God's love and presence? How can you honor and remember the lives of the residents and patients who have died over the last few months?



REVIEW OF SESSION

What has touched you about this time of prayer?