

Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous and the daughters of “Miséricorde”: “It was a mutual gift.”



It was a mutual gift. From her first being anxious in responding to the invitation to be with the women of the Miséricorde, Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous was surprised at how pleasant and comfortable she felt once she was with these women. And these women of the Miséricorde, in turn, felt they were in the presence of an understanding and grace-filled woman. Marie-Thérèse embodied the spirit of the Miséricorde – mercy, compassion, and acceptance. It was a mutual gift that was shared between Marie-Thérèse and the women of the Miséricorde. Women came to the Miséricorde because there really wasn't anything left in their lives.

The war with England took the lives of so many husbands and fathers that many widows and daughters had little to survive on except to earn a meager wage on the streets. Besides that, the Revolution had lowered the moral code of society. The Miséricorde offered a home, an opportunity to learn a trade, and above all place to regain a sense of self-respect. The Miséricorde was a home where a mutual gift of grace-filled presence and acceptance was shared among these women and Marie-Thérèse.

It was a mutual gift. His trust in Providence was reenforced when Father Chaminade saw such an abundant grace flowing through Marie-Thérèse in her presence with the women in the Miséricorde. And for Marie-Thérèse, through the support of Father Chaminade, found her life-long vocation in the Miséricorde. This was a mutual gift of grace shared between Marie-Thérèse and Father Chaminade.

It is a mutual gift. The grace we receive from God is the grace we share with others; this is “grace upon grace” – such a wonderful and abundant gift flowing from God who cannot stop giving, which in turn becomes a gift that is mutually shared among others.