

LENT 2019

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED

Pray with us for suffering Christians around the world

WEEK 1 - EGYPT

PRAYER INTENTIONS:

Mariam Habib and her family

For Nabil Habib and all those killed in suicide bombs

For an end to terrorism



Victims of the bomb attack on 11.12.16 at St Peter's & St Paul's Coptic Church Egypt

"Do not be afraid" (Luke 12:4)

"Be with me, O Lord, in my distress" (Psalm 90)

God is great and I ask everyone to pray for all people facing violence and hatred; we must pray for peace around the world." (Mariam Habib)

ST. LOUISE DE MARILLAC

This week, St Louise de Marillac's feast day is on the 15th March. Speaking of the comforting presence of Christ to those suffering the loss of a loved one, she said: *"I know the difficulties that you are all experiencing, but I also know...that it is the yoke of the Lord, and that He Himself has the goodness to render it gentle and sweet for those who bear it for His love."*



For more information and resources:

www.acnuk.org

Nabil Habib worked as a security guard at St Peter and St Paul's Coptic Church in Cairo. The father of three was among 29 people killed in the suicide bomb attack on the 11th December 2016. His daughter, Marian, was a 13 years old when she held him in her arms as he died.

The first Sunday readings this Lenten season includes the plea: **"Be with me, O Lord, in my distress" (Psalm 90)**. Describing how her faith and the kindness shown by Church members helped during her mourning, Marian said: "Losing my dad put me in a state of shock for more than a month and a psychiatrist visited me. Finally, it was God's mercy, his consolation, which helped me recover. I feel great comfort from God and I also got support from the Church, my friends, and many people around us... people from other countries and international bodies."

Still missing her father, Marian spoke of her hopes for the future despite violence in Egypt. She said: "I do not feel scared now, but I still long for my father and my little brother needs his hugs, we miss him very much. I do not want to leave my country and the place where my father served and lived his whole life. All my memories of my father are here. Despite the pain, my life has changed for better. I feel stronger than before and I care more about my studies than ever before – the future no longer frightens me."

Describing the strength of her Christian faith, Marian said: "I have joined the church choir, which gives me inner peace, because it is one of the things that bring me closer to God. **My message to all those who suffer, and who might read my words – do not be afraid.** God is great and I ask everyone to pray for all people facing violence and hatred; we must pray for peace around the world."

All of the four Gospels note that Christ told his followers many times "do not be afraid", but to have faith in God. St Louise de Marillac spoke of the hope for Christians to be found in the Resurrection – by each of us carrying our cross in daily life we can hope to embrace Christ's eternal promise. The saint said: "I did not want to lose the opportunity to assure all of you that physical separation does not prevent spiritual presence among persons whom Our Lord has united by the bonds of His holy love. **The stronger this love grows within us, the closer it binds us together.**"

ACN supports the Church in Egypt by funding programmes for young Catholics as well as the formation of seminarians and priests.



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