

# SERVANT of the POOR

Newsletter of Friends of Henriette Delille

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Fall/Winter 2012

## THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF VENERABLE HENRIETTE DELILLE

*I am writing to inform you that I have received the Venerable Henriette Delille prayer cards and brochures... I would like to inform you that I have been handing out prayer cards and I have praise reports. A week ago, my mother could not walk. At a doctor's visit, she was diagnosed as having gout and told to stay off her feet and she had to eliminate certain carbohydrates out of her diet. I gave her Venerable Delille's prayer card and suggested she read it daily as she recovered in bed. Within 3 days, she was up and walking. The last time she was diagnosed with having gout, she was off her feet for weeks. I can say her recovery was due to her reading Venerable Delille's prayer. Monday, August 20th my grandmother (who is Baptist) complained about having pain in her left arm. It prevented her daily activity of going to the Parish's Senior Citizen Center. I handed her Venerable Delille's prayer card. After explaining to her who Venerable Delille was and a little about our Catholic faith as it related to Saints, See INTERCESSION, p.3*

## SISTERS MAKE PILGRIMAGE TO ROME: A TWO-FOLD PURPOSE EXPLAINED

Sister Eva Regina Martin, Congregational leader of the Sisters of the Holy Family accompanied by four additional Sisters made a pilgrimage to Rome in late October; the purpose of the visit was two fold.

The first reason was to attend the October 21st canonization of St. Kateri Tekakwitha. (see more on St. Kateri below)

Reason two, was to visit Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, the Vatican congregation that will make a judgment on the possible beatification of Mother Henriette Delille, foundress of the Sisters

of the Holy Family in 1842. Her purpose was to care for and educate

ening double pneumonia and bacterial infection as a 4-year old. Groves, the grand niece of Sr. Doris Goudeaux of the Sisters of the Holy Family, began to rally from her serious illness after her family prayed for her healing through the intercession of Mother Henriette. Sr. Eva Regina said that Cardinal Amato remains very interested in



Sisters Geneva James, Eva Regina Martin, Greta Jupiter, Marie de Montfort Breaux and Lucille Stelly visit with Cardinal Angelo Amato.

slaves and free people of color in pre-Civil War New Orleans.

The Vatican congregation is still reviewing the medical cure of Marilyn Groves from life threat-

the cause. A panel of medical experts has asked for more information about Grove's recovery before it can affirm that the healing has no clear medical explanation. Cardinal Amato See PILGRIMAGE, p.3

## Saint Kateri

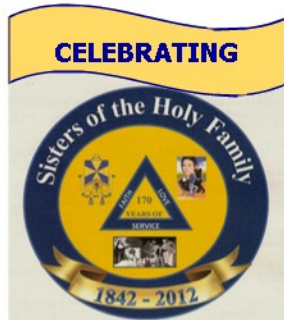


St. Kateri Tekakwitha, along with six other saints, was canonized October 21, 2012 at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. She is the first Native

American to ascend to Sainthood. This was of special interest to Sr. Eva because her great-great grandmother, who was born in St. Martinville, LA, was a native American of the Attakapas tribe. St. Tekakwitha was born in 1656 to a Christian mother in the Mohawk tribe but orphaned at age 4 and raised by an uncle. A small pox epidemic left her eyesight impaired and

acne scarred her for life. She was drawn to the faith by the teachings of missionary priests. "She reminds us that Jesus came for all people in every age, but especially for the lowly whom God loves in a special way," said Archbishop Charles Chaput, O.F.M., Cap., Chairman of the subcommittee on Native American Affairs for U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.





170 yrs. of Service & 200th Anniversary of the birth of Venerable Henriette Delille

The month of November served as a time of many activities and events commemorating the 170 years of service of the Sisters of the Holy Family and the 200th anniversary of the birth of their foundress, Venerable Henriette Delille.

On the evening of November 16th Tracie Boutte, President of the Sisters of the Holy Family's Development Board welcomed everyone to a Symposium held at St. Mary's Church, in the center of the New Orleans French Quarter, the site of Delille's baptism.

*Celebrating the Life, Spirituality, Geneology and Charism of Venerable*

The program opened with "La Chanson de Servant" (The Song of the Servant) sung totally in French by Sr. Lucia Carl; this was to commemorate the fact that Henriette was a woman of service.

Moderated by Dr. Emilie Leumas, Archivist for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, the program included Most Rev. Gregory Aymond, Archbishop of New Orleans who expressed his gratitude for Mere Henriette and the Sisters for their ministry, presence, love and courageous work. He indicated that the Archdiocese thinks highly of Venerable Henriette, as her name is recited weekly in the Family Prayer at the close of each Mass.

For many who feel that Delille's canonization is long overdue, Bishop Fabre, Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans, explained that canonization is now determined by the Pope but before her death, Causes for canonization were determined by bishops. In 1989, when the Sisters brought forth Delille's Cause for canonization, it had been placed in the hands of the Pope; this makes for a much more lengthy process. It has been 23 years and the Sisters continue to pray that she will be raised to sainthood.

A relative of Henriette Delille, Phil Latiolait, presented the genealogical connections of the Vincents', Latiolait's, and DeCuir's thereby tracing the families journey from France in the 1600s to America and New Orleans in particular. He discussed the families that came to Louisiana from Senegal, the Ivory Coast of Africa, Italy and those that came via Canada. He traced roots of the family that migrated to

areas of Opelousas, and Church Point in Louisiana and Vera Cruz, Mexico. He and another relative Barbara Trevigne, LSCW-BCD, talked about the multicultural lineage that Delille came from.

Three archivists, Sr. Mary Blish, RSCJ (Sacred Heart Sisters of New Orleans); Sr. Louise Grundish, SC (Sisters of Charity of Greensburg, PA) and Dr. Joan Gaulene (Jesuit Archives) shared the inter-relatedness of the Sisters of the Holy Family with their respective orders.

The topic "A Continuance of the Charism: The Sisters of the Holy Family in Dangriga, Belize" was thoroughly discussed by Dr. Edward T. Brett, Professor of History at LaRoche College in Pittsburg, PA. It was fascinating to learn that his research found that the Sisters of the Holy Family were the first African Missionaries in history. He had available that night, his recently published work: The New Orleans Sisters of the Holy Family: African American Missionaries to the Garifuna of Belize. This very intriguing work details the profound ministry of the Sisters in British Honduras, now Belize.

The Symposium was indeed an educational and enlightening evening, providing much insight into the life and times of Venerable Henriette Delille. The challenges and struggles that she faced as well as those of the Sisters in the ensuing years were clearly presented. Choirs from St. Augustine and St. Katharine Drexel Churches provided music for this outstanding affair.

## MASS OF THANKSGIVING

On Sunday, November 18, 2012 at Cathedral-Basilica of St. Louis, King of France the Sisters, friends, supporters, visitors and parishioners attended the annual Mass of Thanksgiving celebrating the 170 Years of Service and the 200th Anniversary of the birth of foundress Venerable Henriette Delille. Principal Celebrant and Homilist was Archbishop Aymond. The solemnity of this televised 11:00 A.M. Liturgy filled the hearts of all in attendance as well as the sick and shut-in who were able to view it.





**MORE CELEBRATORY SCENES**



**PILGRIMAGE From p. 1**

said, "the process of the case is still in good shape, but right now it rests with seven doctors. That's where everything is right now. There are some questions that need to be answered and once they pass that, that should be the greatest hurdle." Joining Sr. Eva at that meeting were Sister Greta Jupiter, Assistant Congregational Leader, Sisters Marie de Montfort, Geneva James and Lucille Stelly. The cardinal urged the sisters to

continue promoting Venerable's story to as many people as possible. "Our challenge is to make her known—to put her name out there and tell the world about her so that people can pray to her and call on her name. Sr. Eva said, "He told us we need to pray and make sacrifices to make sure the case is brought forth. It all depends on prayer and sacrifice." She indicated that she does not know how long the pro-

*"Our job is to pray this thing through"*

cess will take from this point but the original doctors have been asking for more information on the healing. "Our job is to pray this thing through," Sr. Eva said. "When it's going to occur, I don't know. It's kind of like a mystical experience of faith."



Basilica St. Peter in Rome.

**INTERCESSION from p.1**

*I suggested she read the prayer card daily. I would like to report that August 23rd, my grandmother woke up pain free and was able to go out and fellowship with her friends at the Senior Citizens' Center. I too have experienced the miracle of the working power of Venerable Delille's prayer. I had a bill on which I prayed. I did not know how it would be paid, all the while praying for my sister who had surgery.... I would like to report after praying Venerable Delille's prayer,*

*my bill is paid and my sister's recovery is going well and quicker than expected... S . S , L A*  
*I have not been well. Since January I am recovering from a slip and fall accident on the ice. I broke my ankle and shattered the bone. I had four surgeries; the last one was 14 hours long—could not walk for 6 months and was in the hospital and nursing home for a total of four months. The surgeons said I was lucky not to have loss my right foot. Thanks be to God I prayed to Mother Henriette Delille and I believe through her*

*intercession I was healed. My ankle is deformed but I do not need a wheelchair or a walker anymore, and am now walking with a cane that I hope will be gone soon. I go for physical therapy twice a week in the hospital. ...F.B.P.,*



N Y



## CONGREGATIONAL BLESSINGS

The presence of the Sisters of the Holy Family and their services continue to flourish after 170 years. Not only New Orleans but neighboring cities of Lafayette, Baton Rouge, Alexandria and Opelousas, enjoy the rich legacy the Sisters offer. This year the community was richly blessed with the entrance of two young ladies, Ernestine Bard (candidate) and Damekia Jerry (aspirant). Ernestine is from Owensboro, Kentucky and Damekia is from Covington, Louisiana.

Ernestine shares that what first attracted her to the religious life was her meeting a young Roman Catholic nun of another order and questioning her about her life style. Additionally, she shared that her

unique encounters with the Sisters of the Holy Family and their charism, all were the stepping stones to her decision-making process, and they still are.

Damekia on the other hand, had a wonderful mentor, Sr. Theresa Burlyn, to guide her to where she is today. These



Ernestine Bard (left) and Damekia "Dee" Jerry

Blessings don't just appear they are sent by God to be listened to and learned from.

Both young women are different in personalities, unique in talents

but both are strongly committed to being used by God in service to His people. Ernestine is currently a candidate who is studying the day to day living of the congregation and observing its commitment to the consecrated life. In a few months she will enter the novitiate and become a novice, at which time she will study the vows, consecrated life, prayer, Christian doctrine, theology, etc.

Damekia, an aspirant, is looking at the community and discerning her interest in entering the congregation. At the same time, the community is observing and nurturing her development.

Both Ernestine and Damekia, "Dee" reside at St. John Berchman's Formation House, 2710 Gentilly Blvd. across from Dillard University. Let us pray for them on their journey and See Blessings, p. 6

## Sisters in Ministry

### FEEDING OF THE POOR

On November 10, 2012 the Annual Feeding of the Poor took place at Ozanam Inn. Assisting the Sisters in this activity were friends and supporters. In addition to the meal prepared by KLM Caterers, there were toiletries, and T-Shirts compliments of Mr. & Mrs. Sciortino.

### HUMAN TRAFFICKING...

... is the recruitment, transportation

or harboring of persons by means of threat, force or abduction for the purpose of exploitation. This includes the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor, slavery or similar practices. Sr. Greta Jupiter, SSF is co-chair of the efforts of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious Region V to bring about a greater awareness of this issue of vulnerability and its possibility of escalation in New Orleans during Super Bowl XLVII, the Mardi Gras festivities and beyond. With the support of the

Archbishop and law enforcement agencies strategies were established to dialogue with the hotel industry in an effort to curb and hopefully eradicate this violation against humans. Other activities included a request to the churches to say the prayer to St. Josephine Bakhita during the month of January. St. Bakhita from Sudan was herself a victim of human trafficking. On National Human Trafficking Awareness day, January 11th a prayer service was held for the public. We applaud Sr. Greta in her social justice endeavors.

## Msgr. Crosby Kern Leaves a Legacy at St. Louis Cathedral

Msgr. Crosby Kern, rector of St. Louis Cathedral for the past 9 years and local postulator for the Cause of Venerable Henriette Delille died November 30 at the age of 73,



six weeks after being diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer. The homilist at his December 6th funeral shared that " Msgr. Kern received the news of the

seriousness of his illness with the expected fear that anyone would but in a matter of days, he came to accept God's will and embrace the cross he was being asked to carry. He was at peace; he was ready." Msgr. Kern, a native of New Orleans, was described as a person with the gift of a deep and abiding faith; his gift of faith motivated his life. During his tenure at the Cathedral, he oversaw the restoration of the 6,000-pipe organ, restored the St. Anthony Garden behind the cathedral, established the Catholic Cultural Heritage

Center at the Old Ursuline Convent and St. Mary's Church and set up a prayer room in the cathedral in honor of Venerable Henriette Delille. He is survived by his 94 year old mother and a sister. Archbishop Aymond said that in Msgr. Kern's final weeks he told him that he was offering all that he was going through for his brother priests, future priests and anyone



Stained glass window's in the cathedral's Henriette Delille Prayer Room  
Artist, Ruth Golivas



## Parties for the Children and the Elderly Sisters

The Sisters of the Holy Family hosted a Christmas party for the very worthy 'Cornerstone' children who are frequently overlooked. Also remembered during the holiday season were the elderly Sisters at the Lafon Nursing Home. We will let the photos and smiles do the talking. However, see if you can recognize Santa Claus who has appeared elsewhere in this news-letter.



Santa is Ernestine Bard.

## 'The Courage to Love': Introducing Henriette to

Phyllis Beech, a wonderful "Friend of Delille", has shared with us how she will introduce Venerable Henriette Delille's story to thousands. Phyllis is the creator and Associate producer of 'The Courage to Love' which originally aired on Lifetime T.V in 2000; it starred Vanessa Williams as Henriette and Diahann Carroll portraying her mother. It is the story of the Sisters of the Holy Family, oldest order of Black nuns in

New Orleans. Her plans include showing this film February 10, 2013 at the Jackie Robinson Center in Pasadena, CA as a part of the Centennial celebration of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. The Pasadena Chapter of the Delta's is sponsoring the event. They will also serve as host to those in attendance during their centennial year. The sorority has a membership of 250,000 African American college-educated

women worldwide. Phyllis is hopeful that Ms. Diahann Carroll will be a participant in the celebration because of her role in this historic story. Phyllis realizes the importance of the possibility of Mere Henriette becoming the first African American born woman saint in Roman Catholicism. Thank you, Phyllis for helping us to make Henriette known.

## BOOK SALES GOING WELL

Sales of the latest publications on the life of Henriette Delille are doing very well. They have been well received with complimentary remarks about the beauty of the illustrations and thoroughness of the content. Sisters have been visiting local parishes to show the books. It is not too late to order your copy. The chil-



dren's book is \$5 and the hard-cover book by Virginia M. Gould sells for \$15.00. with S&H is about \$3.00. They would make wonderful gifts and can be ordered from: Henriette Delille Commission Office; 6901 Chef Menteur Blvd.; New Orleans,

LA 70126-5290.

Dr. Edward Tracy Brett's publication, The New Orleans Sisters of the Holy Family: African American Missionaries to the Garifuna of Belize, mentioned on page 2 makes for thoroughly fascinating reading and is available at Amazon.com.

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“ I believe in God.  
I hope in God.  
I love.  
I want to live and  
die for God.”  
  
Venerable  
Henriette Delille

**Inside:**  
~ Pilgrimage to Rome, p.1  
~ Celebrating 170 Years of Service, p. 2  
~ Congregational Blessings, p. 4

**BLESSING, from p.4** our journey with them as they discern their future life in our community of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

As we count blessings, let us also remember Sr. Nebechi Chukuw, a transitional sister from the Sisters of the Holy Spirit of Pittsburgh, PA. Sister is from Nigeria and is currently ministering at St. Francis Xavier School in Baton Rouge, LA. Sr. Nebechi is applying to be a member of the Sisters of the Holy Family. The process takes three years. After three years Sister can pronounce her vows with us or return to her community. God be with you Sr. Nebechi! *By Sr. John Mary Jackson, SSF, Formation Directress*



Please join us as we say daily the

### Prayer for Vocations

*Jesus, Son of the eternal Father and Mary Immaculate, grant to our boys and girls, the generosity necessary to follow your call, and the courage required to overcome all obstacles to their vocation. Give to parents, that faith, love and spirit of sacrifice, which will inspire them to offer their children to God's service, and cause them to rejoice exceedingly, whenever one of their children is called to the priesthood or religious life. Let your example and that of your Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, encourage both children and parents, and let your grace sustain them. Amen.*

### Update on Sr. Doris

Sr. Doris continues to show signs of improvement as a result of prayers, ongoing therapy and the loving care of her sister, nieces and nephews in Texas. She is expecting to return to the Motherhouse after Easter and is very appreciative of all the prayers, cards, notes and well wishes.

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**THE LATEST PORTRAIT OF VENERABLE HENRIETTE DELILLE**



arrived in time for the celebration in November. It was painted by Charles Chaisson, nephew of Sr. Marian Perpetua. It graces the lobby of the Motherhouse.