

# SERVANT OF THE POOR

NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS

OF HENRIETTE DELILLE

Vol. 10 No. 5

Spring 2008



May 17, 2006

With this letter I hope to promote the Cause of Henriette Delille's canonization.

Sr. Philomena Malveaux of the Sisters of the Holy Family visited our parish, St. Joseph Church in Raleigh, NC on January 22, 2006.

During fellowship in the community room after Mass, I asked for a blessing for my husband, Kenneth. He was to have a cardioversion for his heart within the next week.

Sister Philomena was present and Monsignor John asked her to join him in a prayer for Ken.

Two days later when being prepared for the cardioversion, the doctor looked at the heart monitor and said the procedure was not needed. His heart-beat was normal. he used the words, "prayers were answered."

As time passed Ken was still not feeling well, not being able to do much of anything without getting out of breath.

Msgr. John again asked the intercession of Henriette Delille. Then on See PRAYERS, page 5

## Positio ready for presentation, Prayer Room at Cathedral set, Bell for Henriette in Houston

The *Positio* is complete and ready for presentation to the 7 historians, the 9 theologians, the 15 Cardinals and Pope Benedict XVI.

We continue to pray and to spread devotion while we await word from Rome about venerability and beatification.

When this process is completed, the alleged miracle will be studied by medical experts in Rome. After verification by them, beatification will come.

### Prayer Room at Cathedral

A beautiful prayer room, which can be used as a chapel when Henriette Delille is canonized, has been set up in the old baptistry at St. Louis Cathedral.

The room has two refurbished stained glass windows showing Henriette baptizing an infant and the other pictures her with children.

There is also an altar, crucifix, and candles. A pedestal with a

bronze statue of Henriette is in the room.

See PRAYER ROOM, p. 5

## New Orleans African American Museum Opens SSF Exhibit April 30

"A Celebration of Faith" is the theme of the exhibit of the Sisters of the Holy Family which has been in process for over a year.

The idea, conceived by Mr. Jim Thorns, Jr., grew and grew. Many persons are involved and many activities have already taken place.

The exhibit opens April 30 and will last until August 30. We invite everyone to view the exhibit and to learn the history of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

The next issue will give a complete story of this activity.

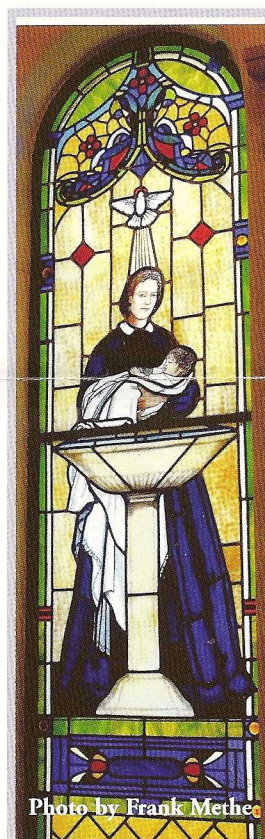


Photo by Frank Methe

### Bell named for Delille

One of the bells for Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral has Mother Henriette Delille's name on it. It was blessed December 12 by Archbishop Fiorenza.

The first line reads Mother Henriette Delille, the middle line has the donor's name, Raye and Edward White Family and See BELL for Delille, p. 5



### PLEASE JOIN US

You are invited to a Mass honoring Henriette and asking God's blessings on the exhibit, April 26, 2008 at the Motherhouse, 4 pm. Archbishop Hughes is the celebrant.



# Thanks, tributes, remember, honor SSFs

I am Ms. Evangeline R. Jones, 74 years old, a former student of St. Katherine Elementary School and Church parishioner, 1942-1946. I became a Roman Catholic in third grade.

I am enclosing this check for \$200.00 in honor of, gratitude for, and loving appreciation to the Sisters of the Holy Family. Happy 165th anniversary!

My fondest memories of the Sisters of the Holy Family were shaped by my

excellent teachers whom I loved, still love, and admire. They were Sister Margaret Mary, Principal, third grade, 1942; Sisters Mary deSales and Mary Thaddeus, fourth grade, 1943; Sister Mary Adrian, fifth grade and eighth grade, 1944 and 1946; and Sister Mary Reginald, sixth grade, 1945

May Almighty God through our own Savior Jesus Christ continue to bless, guide, and protect you always!

Forty-five SSFs live at the Motherhouse in New Orleans. They will be featured in this paper.

## Students Honor Henriette

Annually our schools celebrate our Foundress, Henriette Delille but this year three schools did it on the same day, February 29.

In Lafayette,



Left, standing, Sisters Judith, Sylvia Vallet, Eva Regina, Congregational Leader and Jennie; seated, Patricia Hardy. Inserted, Sister Clare of Assisi, Assistant Congregational Leader

Immaculate Heart of Mary and Holy Family; in Baton Rouge, St. Francis Xavier.

St. Mary's Academy dedicates March

to Henriette. Her life's story was presented under the direction of Sr. Judith Barial. We are grateful.



Standing, left, Sisters Andria, Daniel, Maria Consilia, Marie Fidelia, Marie Antoinette, Catherine Henrietta; seated, Sisters Bertha and dePazzi. Inserted, Sister Thecla

## Remembering Sister Mary Justin

I first met Sister Mary Justin through my children George III, Karen and Paul who were students at Immaculate Heart of Mary School. Sister Justin taught some twenty or twenty-one years at Immaculate Heart of Mary School.

She was a dynamic teacher and pushed the children to learn as she taught reading, writing and arithmetic. She was also artistic as she taught crocheting, tap dancing and directed

many students in her yearly plays given in the gym.

I loved the fact as a fourth grade teacher the children under her knew their multiplication tables from one to twelve.

She had benefactors in the city who gave her things that she made use of. I know, for many times I was called by her to go and pick up the items. Sometimes she would accompany me to the place of business and

## Thanks, Sisters of the Holy Family

My name is Cynthia Price Skidmore. I'm a Maryite from the class of 1967. I am also a radiologist technician at East Jefferson Hospital.

Last month (December), one of my patients asked me where did I live. At that time I informed her that I lived across the lake in Slidell, Louisiana.

My patient asked me how could I make that long trip across the lake to work everyday.

I informed my patient, only with the prayers of Sister Tekakwitha Vega, affectionately known as Sister Tec, who prays for me, my family, and all my friends.

At that time the patient brought up the conversation telling me about one of the Holy Family nuns, Sister Philip Neri, who befriended her father who owned a drug store in the neighborhood where the convent was located on

Orleans Street. The drug store owner would always help Sister with the cost of her medicine. Sister would tell the owner that she didn't know how she could repay him. In turn, the owner would tell Sister if she would keep him and his family in her prayers he would be grateful.

Later, when the owner of the drug store was being robbed at gun point, the robber was holding a gun to his head. Suddenly a siren from either an ambulance or a police car could be heard throughout the whole store.

When the robber heard the siren, he ran out of the store. The drug store owner knew that it was Sister's prayers that saved his life.

Thanks, Sisters of the Holy Family and God bless all the Sisters in His loving arms.

Cynthia Price Skidmore





## The violet, flower of SSFs

The violet is the emblem of the Congregation. It does not lift its head in haughtiness; its leaves extend upon the ground; it seems to lend itself to being trod upon and has no thorns to protect itself against aggression.

It needs no glass enclosure to protect it from the cold for it endures the most cruel frost and and terrible heat.

It grows in all climates; it is difficult for the wind to tear it up and hurricanes do not break it because it is so lowly.

This clipping was found in a notebook used by the Sisters of the Holy family in the 1920s. Organizations, religious and otherwise, often choose a flower as significant of their aims, so the Sisters have chosen a violet.



Standing, left, Sisters Concetta, Maria, Judith, Maddalena Marie, Jennie, Cabrini, and Joan; seated, left, Sisters Canisius, Canice, Jean  
Inserted, Sister Charlotte

### Over 6,000 on growing mail list

We thank those of you who have submitted names of persons who were part of our former readership or who wish to receive our newsletter.

Additionally, we continue to send our informational material about Henriette Delille to Bishops, dioceses, and parishes throughout the United States.

Please be an ambassador for us. If your parish has not received our packet, please send us the name and

address of your church. We always love to receive news from our Associates and Friends of Henriette Delille.

Please keep in touch and help us to spread the word about Henriette and the progress of her Cause.

Phone, write, fax, or email us in regard to any address change.

Sisters at the Motherhouse not pictured in this issue are Sisters Carolyn, Timothy, and Ann Michelle.



Insert, left, Sisters Ben jamin and Henrietta; Sisters Joseph Ellen, Angela, deChantal. ; seated, Sister Rose de Lima; insert Sister Tekakwitha

### Justin from page 2

sometimes she would call and say go to the place and pick up the goodies. One of her benefactors was a local distributor of fruits and vegetables who gave her bags of fruits and vegetables.

Tribune Printing Press was another benefactor. There I was given boxes of cut paper (light and heavy weigh) in many colors. This she would use in her classroom in various ways.

The material Department of Heyman Store would give her pieces and partial bolts of material. This was used to make costumes for the plays. This also meant that mothers and ladies in the church parish got busy sewing costumes for the children. The costumes were beautiful. Always from the benefactors were the words, "Sister, pray for us."

She also taught some of the girls to tap dance. One day as I arrived to pick up my daughter I poked my head into the classroom window. I was able to do this for the windows were opened and the shades drawn. There was no air conditioning at that time in

the school. There she was making a correction as to how she wanted a step done. In her shyness she said to me, "You caught me"

... She never strayed from the old nun habit: the wimple, long black skirt, long sleeves, black stockings and shoes and the large rosary around her waist.

One day we stopped in Opelousas at a grocery store on the way to Belleview. I was approached by a young white woman with her daughter who was about four or five years old and she asked was it all right for Sister Justin just to speak to her daughter. Her daughter had never seen a black nun dressed in the old fashion. habit. By the way they were Protestants and the mother was familiar with the old habits.

One day after looking at Sister Justin's worn out shoes I gave her money to purchase new ones. When I inquired later about the shoes she smiled and said I bought crochet thread, needles and things for art. One lesson she taught well was not to have idle hands.

See JUSTIN, page 5



# Delille honored by relatives in Gutierrez Zamoa, Mexico



The Vincent family, direct descendents of Henriette, gathered after a Mass honoring her. The first Vincents came to Mexico around 1900. See story, next columns.

The weekend of November 9, spent in Mexico with Henriette's relatives was most rewarding. Her family and friends were welcoming, hospitable, and happy. They were eager to hear more about their relative who will one day be recognized as a saint.

From the moment of our arrival there until our departure, events were planned to make Henriette better known

and to make our trip enjoyable. Among these were scheduled a Mass, at which Sister Gloria Lewis, addressed the group in Spanish, parties, visiting and tours.

Among the group that welcomed us were those who had roots in Louisiana. Some of their names are Vincent, Decuir, Olivier, Pinta, and Latiolais.



Other relatives who have their roots in Louisiana, Sisters Gloria and Doris.

Governor Benito Juarez invited the free people of color to come to Mexico to seek a better life. Some of Henriette's rela-

tives went to Mexico.

Henriette Delille had a brother, Jean Delille. He married Amelia Olivier, and from this union was born a daughter, Judith. Judith married Jules Vincent. From this union came Bernard, one of her 13 children.

The relatives in Mexico are from Bernard. They possess a document in which Bernard recorded his marriage and the births of all his children.

Three of Henriette's nieces visited the Sisters in 1999 and invited us to visit with them. Our major contacts/hostesses are Celeste Gomez de Castillo, Martha Gomez de Riano, and Adriana Gomez de Casasa.

## LeBoeuf pledges to make known Henriette's Cause across Richmond, VA Diocese

Mr. Edward J. LeBoeuf, Sr. has done very much to make the people of Richmond aware of the works of Henriette Delille and her Cause for canonization.

This Cause is sacred to Mr. LeBoeuf because of his close association to the Sisters of the Holy Family. This is part of his story.

When he was seven years old his mother died. He and three brothers were placed in Lafon Boys Home and his four sisters in St. John Berchmans Orphanage. These were operated by the Sisters of the Holy Family.

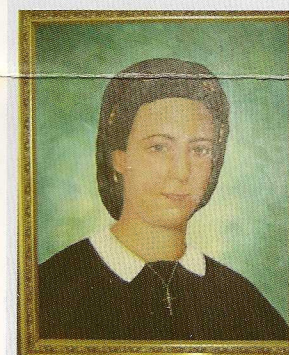
He spent 10 years at the home. LeBoeuf remembers his daily routine of chores—milking cows and feeding chickens before school—more chores in the afternoon, studying and bedtime.

He adds that the Sisters also taught the boys to sew, iron, and do laundry. He says, "The Sisters not only taught them how to pray, but how to take care of one another. And the Sisters taught us to give to the poor."

His father remarried and came to take his children home. LeBoeuf tells about

his goodbye; how Sister Mary Cyrilla Eaglin prayed with him; how she gave him a little bag of coins; how she took off the crucifix she wore around her neck and put it in his hand and finally her words to him, "Remember, my boy, be life as it may, whatever the path you pursue, wherever you roam, your mothers at home will be waiting and praying for you."

Mr. LeBoeuf, his wife and family, continue to support the Sisters by promoting the Cause and also financially. The Sisters love and appreciate him as the son he is to them.



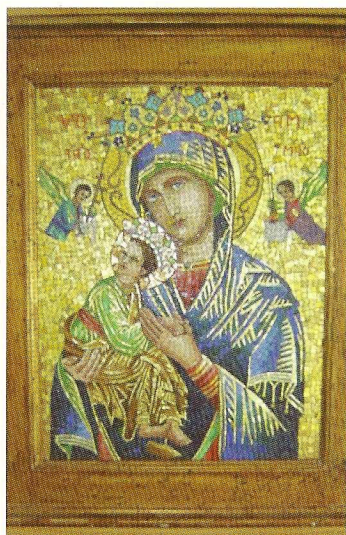
The above is a portrait by Anne Corrado, a professional artist from Manhawkin, New Jersey. She was commissioned by parishioners of St. Mary's Parish in Barnegat, New Jersey to painted the portrait.

The activity was planned and completed through the work of Fr. Ken Tuzeneu, Fr. Cassain Yuhaus, Bernie, Dot, and friends of the SSE.

An evening featuring interest in Mere Henriette Delille and the Sisters of the Holy Family. The speakers were Sisters Sylvia Thibodeaux and Carmen Marie Bertrand.



## Moasic: gift from Archbishop Hannan



### Bell for Henriette from page 1

the last line is: to the honor and glory of God.

There were four very large bells named for the four founders of religious orders that first served in the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese.

The Sisters of the Holy Family began their service in this diocese in 1898 at Holy Rosary in Galveston. We continue to serve at Our Mother of Mercy, but have also ministered at St. Nicholas, and St. Philip Neri.

It is also noteworthy that the alleged miracle attributed to Mother Henriette Delille, took place in this diocese. The trial was held at the Galveston-Houston Tribunal. The miracle awaits approval from Rome.

The Sisters are proud and happy that Mother Delille will be remembered so frequently, and grateful to the Archdiocese.

A beautiful mosaic, laden in gold, of Our Mother of Perpetual Help was given to the Sisters by Archbishop Philip Hannan.

It is displayed, on a special easel, in the Chapel. The Sisters will remember to pray for Archbishop Philip Hannan every time they admire the beauty and workmanship of the mosaic.

The Sisters relish this gift and express their great gratitude to the Archbishop.

### JUSTIN from p. 5

Sister Justin was loved by the children that she taught and admired by their parents. She was truly a wonderful nun,

By Wilma Roy Bowles

### Prayers Answered from page 1

**March 21**, it was time for a check of his pacemaker. The regular nurse was on maternity leave and the clinician of Medtronic Company analyzed the readings and made a slight change in the pacemaker's setting.

Since then there has been an over all improvement in Ken's health. He is able to do many jobs again around the house and yard. There is also an improvement in his sleep pattern. He has had sleep apnea for years.

When Dr. Cheely saw Ken again and heard the news, he said the word, "miracle."

We are so happy and thankful for these blessings-



Left, last row, Sisters Janet, Sheila Marie, Theresa Sue, Marian, Eva Regina, and Lucia; second row, Sisters Agnes Marie, Bertille, Angela Merici, and Elma; first row, Sisters Cynthia Marie, Cornelia, Esther Marie, and de Ricci

### Prayer Room from page 1

The idea for the prayer room for Henriette Delille, located in the old baptistry, at the St. Louis Cathedral was conceived by Monsignor Crosby W. Kern, Rector of the Cathedral.

Permission was granted by Archbishop Hughes and

soon the project was ready. It was supported by many Friends of Henriette Delille and supporters of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

It is very fitting that this beautiful prayer room honors Henriette Delille because her name is in the sacramental register numerous times. She was god-mother to slaves and free people -to men, women, and children in the mid nineteenth century.

An ornate iron gate beckons visitors. Inside one sees the stained glass windows which captures the spirit of Henriette Delille. One window pictures her standing at the baptismal font and the other with children. The colors are gorgeous.

The altar has a restored crucifix and candles. A pedestal holds the bronze statue, carved by Judith Nolan, and the kneeler adds the finishing touch.

We await word from Rome.

at this time. We are in our eighties and I know that the end of life is closer for us.

But now we can be a little more sure of spending at least part of the summer with the rest of our family 1,000 miles away in Wisconsin.

I started this letter on May 16, while waiting for Ken's dental procedure to be finished. I dedicated this time to Henriette Delille.

The dentist had to extract a piece of bone from his jaw. There was very little bleeding and virtually no pain. God is good. We are overwhelmed.

See PRAYERS, page 6





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"I believe in  
God.  
I hope in God.  
I love.  
I want to live  
and die for God."  
-Henriette Delille

## Inside . . .

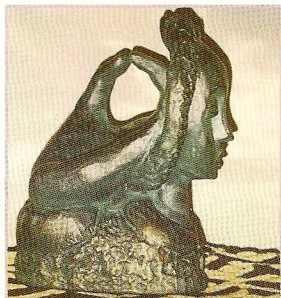
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## Prayers Answered from page 5

March 6, 2008

Ken did have a by-pass surgery May 6, 2003. He will be 87 years old May 21. We are thankful for our time together. He is again having difficulty getting things done.

Thank you for your concern and prayers.

Evelyn B, NC

Msgr Williams writes, "Whether the blessings conferred upon my parishoner designated a 'wonder' or a 'miracle,' I can attest that the intercession of Sister Henriette, under God, has been regarded as decisive on the part of his family, other witnesses and me... I had a clear conviction that this was the time to invoke Henriette's intercession....

Family and parishioners had watched this godly man's continual decline over

the months. He appeared to physicians and all, on an irrevocable course downward.

The blessings of healing were recognized soon after the prayer and it is our happy duty to give witness to what we regard as the unmistakable role of Henriette Delille.

It is appropriate that this grace came within a parish family in the South, which has, from its inception in the turbulent 1968, committed itself to what was then called "interracial justice."

We recognize the healing as a favor granted for the glory of God and His servant. and humbly submit these pages for the judgment of those responsible. **Monsignor. John Williams, PhD., S.T.D.** Pastor of St.

Joseph's Catholic Church, NC

"After starting praying for Henriette's beatification, I am enabled a lot in my ministry." **Fr. M. E. India**

In the next edition we will tell Chantal James' story, also from Raleigh, NC.

"Chantal James, injured in an accident last weekend, is making extraordinary and hopeful progress. Keep up the prayers and keep asking the intercession of Servant of God Henriette Delille."

**St. Joseph Church Bulletin**

Masses for the Cause of the canonization of Mother Henriette Delille will be held throughout the year at St. Paul the Apostle in Manhattan requested by Faye Powell and the New York Friends of Henriette Delille.