



Mother Henriette Delille

Henriette Delille Foundress of the Sisters of the Holy Family is regarded as a honor to her race and a strong member of the Catholic Church, especially in New Orleans. She was a woman of strong determination, kindness, compassion, generosity, faith and deep love of God.

Henriette Delille, Julietta Gaudin, and Josephine Charles, free women of color, wanted to be religious but legal and social restraints twenty years before the abolition of slavery and the Civil War prevented local communities from accepting them. They, therefore, sought to form their own.

The reply to their request from Church officials was permission to form a pious society that took no vows and whose members were free to withdraw as they wished. Marie-Jeanne Aliquot, a French immigrant, sympathized with their cause and assisted them all she could with financial and moral support. Bishop Antoine Blanc acceded to the request of Abbe Etienne Rousselon, Vicar-General and pastor of St. Augustine Church to direct them in their pursuit.

Henriette and her friends had the courage to pray and to live as Jesus and His apostles had they knew will that although they, as free people of color, lived in a relatively easy life compared to the people held in slavery, that Christ would have sought the poor, the sick, the elderly and helpless, the lonely, the uninstructed who needed care.

God smiled on their work and gave countless blessings and countless trails. Not only by their own group mocked and made fun of by the people in general, but by their own group as well. "Whoever heard of that? I wonder how far they will go with that?

They trusted in God and they grew and grew, until today many hundreds of young women have consecrated themselves to God's service as Sisters of the Holy Family. Henriette was chosen the leader, and she continuously encouraged her fellow members that like them in their new life endure and He had endured.

In 1862 when Henriette died the community had the fatherly protection of Bishop and his representatives.

Henriette Delille's canonization process was initiated by Archbishop Philip M. Hannan in April, 1988, requested by Mother Rose de Lima Hazeur, Superior General of the Sisters of the Holy Family. It was reviewed by a special commission in Rome who gave permission in June, 1988 to officially open the process.

Two miracles are needed through Henriette's intercession before canonization, one for blessed and a second for sainthood.

The decree of judicial validity was issued in the investigation into the life, virtues and reputation of sanctity of Mother Henriette Delille on November 10, 2006.

The process to sainthood has four phases: servant of God, venerable, blessed, and saint. Two of the phases, servant of God and venerable, are complete. Venerable was decreed by Pope Benedict XVI March 27, 2010.