

# SERVANT OF THE POOR

Vol. 11 No. 1

NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF HENRIETTE DELILLE

Summer , 2009

*Because of  
Henriette . . .*

On Friday, June 22, 2007, our daughter sustained significant injuries as a result of being hit by a car on Interstate 85 in Salisbury, North Carolina. She was traveling to Raleigh, North Carolina from Atlanta, Georgia in the car of a school friend. The car got a flat tire and they pulled over to the side of I-85.

While the friend was trying to change the tire, a state trooper drove up and began to offer assistance. My daughter was walking over to the state trooper when a car that was exiting from I-85 hit her.

The state trooper estimated that the car was driving about 50 miles per hour and upon impact my daughter's body went up into the air about 10 feet and landed about 32 feet from impact.

The injuries were so significant that the state trooper called for a medical transport helicopter. The pilot of the medical transport helicopter later told me that based on what he saw, how the accident had been described and our daughter's condition upon his arrival, he did not expect her to survive.

She was transported to Carolinas Medical Center trauma unit in Charlotte. The doctors that met the helicopter also later told us that based on her condition upon arrival at the hospital, he also did not expect that she would survive.

The state trooper contacted my husband's cell phone within about seven minutes of the accident occurring and we immediately left our home in Raleigh and drove two and half hours  
See HENRIETTE'S HELP, page 3



## Mere Henriette Delille's Cause for Canonization moves forward

All nine theologians voted positively! They met to study and to vote on Henriette Delille's practice of heroic virtue on May 29, 2009. The positive result advances Henriette's Cause.

The following information regarding the Congress of Theologians on May 29, 2009 comes from a letter written June 1, 2009 to Sister Eva Regina Martin, Congregational Leader, from Dr. Andrea Ambrosi, Roman Postulator for the Cause of Mere Henriette Delille.

All of the 9 professors of theology that were to judge Mother Henriette Delille's holy life and heroic virtues not only responded affirmatively, but they also glorified the sense of profound spirituality that always pushed her to take action.

In front of this unanimous decision, both you and all of the Sisters of the Institute have to feel greatly honored for the theological judgment obtained.

This morning I (Dr. Ambrosi) handed the Congregation for the Causes of Saints the request to name the Cardinal Ponente. This Cardinal will have to defend the Servant of God's holy life and heroic virtues in front of a Congress of Cardinals.

This Congress is made up of 15 Cardinals and Archbishops and is technically called the Ordinary Congregation. They have to study the case and then gather together, most likely in the month of October so that they can express their judgments.

If it is an affirmative vote, as we all hope, the final judgment awaits the Holy Father who after having announced his decree will then promulgate Mother Henriette Delille as Venerable.

While this is all taking place I (Dr. Ambrosi) will continue to work intensely on the preparation of the Summarium for the miracle.

The first thing I (Dr. Ambrosi) did was go forward in having all of the processual acts translated; this work was just finished in the month of April. As soon as this was finished I started studying the acts and then started classifying and preparing them in accordance with the standard procedure in Canon Law.

The documentation is quite voluminous (hundreds of pages).

I still have in my heart the great joy of the latest wonderful news given to all of us from the Congregation; I send to you and all of your fellow sisters a very warm hug.

**WE AWAIT THE NEXT PHASE WITH  
PRAYERFUL ANTICIPATION!**

# Multi talented tasker Sr. Judith Therese, avid gardener

**By Sister Laura Mercier**

Sister Judith Therese Barial is a person who possesses many talents and uses them to the fullest. She is very creative and gets her students involved not only in their school work, but also many activities in and out of school. Sister is dedicated to spreading devotion to Mother Henriette Delille. She is also inspirational in getting young people to consider the call to religious life. She

is an avid gardener for over 25 years. She planted her first garden behind the convent at Holy Rosary Institute in Lafayette, LA in 1981, when a fellow teacher, Gilbert Bond, introduced her to a USL Agriculture professor, who gave her several plants of various vegetables. Seeing the plants produce so abundantly brought her much joy and delight. She was hooked. Sister Judith plants something every year, even if it's only a container garden.

other Sisters can look out and see



Her largest venture was with her students on an empty lot in Dangriga, Belize here at the Motherhouse is her most ambitious undertaking. She says that it's the place where

what's growing. She said that many of them tell her that she reminds them of their mother or grandmother when she gardened.

The garden is organic, no pesticides. It is fed with a compost made of all of the weeds taken from the garden and peels and egg shells from the kitchen. The Sisters help by donating their banana peels. Sr. Judith has fed the Sisters collard greens, mustard greens, cabbage, Swiss chard, okra, yellow squash, zucchini squash, carrots, beets and sweet potatoes. This summer Sister is trying her hand at corn, kale and cantaloupe as

does not believe in saying "I can't." If you ask Sister Judith to help you with something, she never refuses, even though she's very busy. Sister is an excellent teacher, mentor, and a lover of people - a person who loves her God deeply as shown in the way she loves and cares for others.

she prays and sorts out problems. She usually doesn't want anyone out there with her, probably because she talks out loud to herself and God.

well as the usual veggies.

Although home gardening is on the rise because of the state of the economy, Sr. Judith Therese has been an

Sr. Judith says she is glad that Sr. Eva Regina allowed her to make the garden between the chapel and the dining room, because the



Thank you Sr. Judith for choosing us as your sisters.

## Review of M. Shaw Copeland's *Subversive Power of Love, The Vision of Henriette Delille*

By Sister Judith Therese Barial, SSF

*The Subversive Power of Love, The Vision of Henriette Delille* by M. Shawn Copeland is a scholarly study of the milieu of Henriette Delille, Foundress of the Sisters of the Holy Family. Copeland's description of Henriette Delille from her only extant picture is remarkable. She has done in

words what so many have attempted to do in art.

This work looks at slavery as the "deconstruction and desecration of black women's bodies." Copeland says that in "making available to black women a life of chastity ... , in the context of chattel slavery and placage, Henriette had a

fundamental grasp of the meaning of bodily integrity and the power of the eros as holy. She realized this by choosing to love."

Copeland called this 'The subversive power of love' which she defines as defying social convention and cultural custom, rejecting the tepid religiosity of so

many and incarnating extraordinary moral audacity and spiritual courage.

*The Subversive Power of Love The Vision of Henriette Delille* adds flavor and seasoning to the Cyprian Davis's historical work, *Henriette Delille, Servant of Slaves, Witness to the Poor.*

# Thank you for your donations, prayers toward Cause

By Barbara Duhe

As we send up our prayers of thanksgiving for this wonderful and long awaited great news, we thank you so much for your prayers. Without your prayers the process may not have been moving along at such a pace.

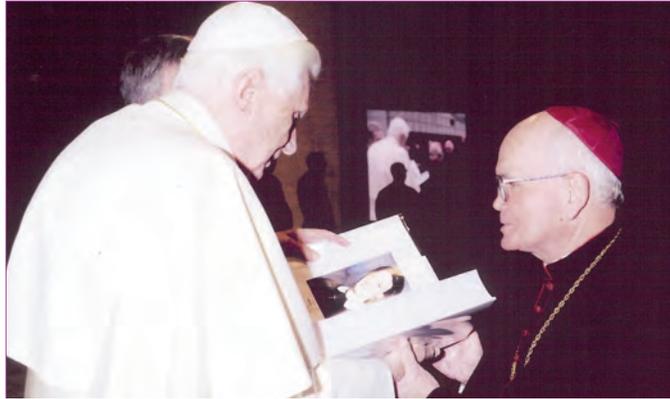
Many of you have encouraged others to pray as well. As a child I can remember my father always saying, "Prayers can move mountains." I couldn't fathom it then, but over the years I began to understand the authenticity of his words. This event is another affirmation to the power of prayer.

In addition to prayers, many have helped financially. In the short span of my service in this office we have received small, from the heart offerings, children's class collections, large corporate donations, "in lieu of gifts" from birthday and wedding celebrants, "in memory of" bequests, contributions from church parishes, presentations, chapters of Friends of Henriette Delille, the Sisters of the Holy Family, and general donations from charitable individuals.

Every gift is cherished because of the sincerity with which it is given and the assistance it renders toward the costly canonization process. In the past, the Commission Office had not actively solicited monies; however, we have begun to consider the

use of contribution envelopes for those who wish to provide monetary help to foster the Cause of beatification and canonization of Mother Henriette Delille.

There is an annual Gala fund raiser



Archbishop Alfred Hughes presents Mere Henriette Delille's *Positioto* Pope Benedict XVI during the Archbishops's December visit. We also thank Archbishop Hughes for all of his help with Mere Henriette Delille's Cause.

in New Orleans for financial purposes. In other areas around the state and country where the Sisters of the Holy Family are located, fund raising events are planned. Additionally, memorabilia in the form of lapel pins, writing pens, coin purses, key chains and polo shirts are sold. The funds are used to prepare the materials associated with the Cause.

You have heard us speak about the *Positio* of Mother Henriette. To translate 1,106 page volumes from English to Italian was \$17,000.00.

*Every gift, spiritual and/or financial, we receive is very truly appreciated.*

Since June, 2005 until November 2008 the process totaled

\$138,290.00. Recent fees, not in the above total, included having all medical records from Houston scanned and electronically sent to us and then to Rome in a manner that could be transcribed by them.

Preparation for the Theological Congress was in the neighborhood of \$30,000.00.

As we move to the next step in the canonization process, more volumes of translation have to be done on the preparation of the *Summarium* for the miracle. That too is a hefty amount, \$25,000.00.

Therefore, you can see that every gift we receive is very truly appreciated.

Other funds are used in the mailing of prayer cards as well as brochures so that we can create an awareness of Mere Henriette and encourage others to pray to her and for her.

Monies are needed to keep our readership updated as to the progress of the Cause by way of this quarterly newsletter and to share with all, how Mother Henriette Delille intercedes in the lives of the faithful.

Our materials are sent to every diocese and archdiocese in the U.S and some have been sent abroad. Because of your generosity, spiritually and financially, we can do these things.

That is why you are a part of us, a part of the canonization process. We say thank you and may God's graces always be with you.

## Through Mere Henriette's intercession from page 1

to Charlotte, not knowing that she had been hit by a car while crossing the exit ramp on I-85.

As we drove, I talked to God in my mind and God's response to me was that our

daughter would survive. I felt calm and peace in those two and a half hours because of what I knew God had said and believed would be the result.

Very early on the next

morning, I called my mother to advise her about what had happened and the tenuous nature of the situation.

I also called a friend and parishioner who advised our pastor, Monsignor John

Williams, about the situation. **Monsignor John began the parish prayer network and invoked the**

See HENRIETTE, page 6

# D. C. Metropolitan Area Friends of Henriette Delille observe Ninth Annual Celebration

April 18 was the date of the ninth annual Mass and luncheon honoring

of the *Catholic Standard*.

Musical selections were rendered by Christine Wilson and the guest speaker was Sister Doris Goudeaux, the Director of the Delille Commission Office.

Brunch was prepared and served by Mrs. Geralyn Trish and her committee from St.

Members of the Planning Committee of the *Friends of Henriette Delille*, headed by President Millicent Hawkins, Vivian



Left, Rev. Ray Lelii, Bishop Olivier, Rev. Michael Kelly and Deacon . Photo by Annie Jones

Mere Henriette Delille at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church in Washington, DC. The celebrant was Bishop Leonard Olivier, SVD. Music was provided by Holy Redeemer Choir directed by Ms. Loretta Jackson.

The Annual Fundraiser followed in the hall. The master of ceremony, introduced by Father Raymond Lelii, SJ, was Mr. Mark Zimmerman, editor

Martin of Tours.

The Gloria Nahid Award was presented to Mrs. Elizabeth Shokunbi.



Ms. Elizabeth Shokunbi receives award from Sr. Philomena Malveaux and Mark Zimmerman

Rouson, Rev. Ray Lelii, SJ, Emelda August, Annie Jones, Gloria Payne, Marjorie Brooks, Elizabeth Shokunbi, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Phillips, and the Sisters of the Holy Family thank everyone for their participation.

Photos, courtesy of Annie Jones.

## SSF Associates treat Sisters to an ice cream parlor visit

By **Joycelyn M. Hyman**

A group of 23 Sisters, Associates and Mrs. Pierre visited the Creole Creamery Ice Cream Parlor on Saturday, June 20, for our first summer outing.

Some of the Associates wore their Mother Delille pins, and the Sisters in their beautiful habits created much inquiry from other customers. Many stared and some approached the Sisters to ask questions. Others were moved to see a group of nuns who still look like those of their childhood.

Everyone had a wonderful time selecting sugar cones, waffle cones, sundaes, milk shakes, floats and their favorite flavor of ice cream or an exciting new one.

It was so nice to spend time togeth-

er talking and sharing. We also took some of the delicious ice cream back to the Motherhouse for the Sisters who had requested it and were anxiously awaiting our arrival.

When it was time to pay our bill, we were told that an anonymous donor had taken care of it. His generosity and kindness really topped off our day.

Sr. Clare of Assisi said, "we were evangelizing by our presence" and she was right.

The Associates are in the planning stages for our next summer outing in July.

**Note:** Joycelyn sent this story to the *Times Picayune*. She hopes the anonymous donor sees how much his gift is appreciated.

## Prayers to Mere Henriette answered

Dear Sisters of the Holy Family,

I am writing to let you know that again my prayers have been answered.

I prayed to Mere Henriette Delille. She helped me and my family through some personal matters and difficult times.

By praying to her, we were helped. Please continue to pray for me and my family.

With love and prayers,  
Agnes L. D. Brumfield, St., Rose, LA

*"I believe in God.  
I hope in God.  
I love.  
I want to live and die for God."  
Mere Henriette's prayer*

"Jesus, our Joy and our Song" was the theme of the jubilee Mass for 13 Sisters of the Holy Family on June 13, 2009.

The Mass was celebrated at St. Maria Goretti Church.

Bishop Shelton Farbe was the celebrant and Father Maurice Nutt, CSSR, homilist.

Music was under the direction of Dwight and Connie Fitch with St. Raymond - St. Leo the Great Choir and the Sisters of the Holy Family. Many relatives and friends joined the jubilarians at Mass and at

# CONGRATULATIONS JUBILARIANS!

*From Destiny Productions*



**Pictured, bottom row, left: Sister Thecla Bonner and Sister Catherine Henrietta Ferguson, celebrating 75 years; Sister M. Joseph Angela Parker, 70 years; Sisters Doris Goudeaux, M. Charlotte Rubit, and Josita Marie Ogaldez, celebrating 60 years; middle row, left, Sisters Hortensia Maria, Joan Flores, Francis Therese Remi, Eva Regina Martin, Congregational Leader; M. Sarah Cecile James, 50 years; top row, left, Sisters Veronica Ruth Lambey and M. Rebecca Carlos Castillo, 50 years.**

the reception. The Jubilarians enjoyed their celebration. They wish to thank everyone for your participation.

It is interesting to note that in this group of jubilarians, 13 in number, there are two celebrating 75 years, one 70 years, three sixty years, and seven for 50 years. Six of the jubilarians are from Central America.

We send special wishes to our Congregational Leader, Sister Eva Regina Martin.

## **Congratulations to the OBLATE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE, the oldest order of African American Sisters, as they celebrate their 180th anniversary!**

### **Tribute from Mrs. LaBee**

Mere Henriette Delille is an ornament of the Holy Family. She is a beacon of light and a mirror of patience and compassion.

The Sisters of the Holy Family are dedicated, loving, caring, sharing, generous and kind.

I was a widow at an early age. My husband died young from cancer. I was left with three small children to rear.

It was the Sisters of the Holy Family acting through Mother Henriette

Delille, who came to our aid.

As a result, my oldest son, Reverend Irving Davis, was ordained a priest. He served as a priest for many years. He died from cancer.

Until his death, he was cared for by the Sisters of the Holy Family in their facilities.

My children were reared and educated. They have successful lives. We are grateful for the help of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

My family and I are continuing to pray for the canonization of Mere Henriette, which is long over due.

May God continue to bless all involved.

Mrs. Sedonia Davis LaBee

**We appreciate hearing about the many favors from prayers to Mere Henriette Delille. However, we thank you for putting them in writing.**



## **A special welcome and congratulations to Archbishop Gregory Aymond**

The Sisters of the Holy Family and the Friends of Henriette Delille look forward to working with you and supporting you in all your endeavors.

We also ask God's blessings on you.



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 -Henriette Delille*

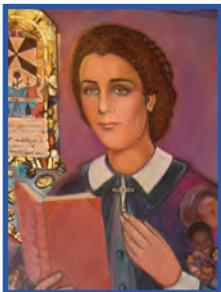
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## Through Henriette's intercession from page 3

**loving assistance of  
 Henriette Delille.**

**Our daughter's condition swiftly and significantly moved to a state of accelerated healing.** Two days after the accident, she was moved out of intensive care and stabilized. The pilot of the medical transport helicopter came by her room and said he had asked the trauma staff about her, expecting to hear that she had not survived, and was amazed to learn that not only had she survived, but was out of intensive care and well on a road to recovery.

She stayed in the hospital in Charlotte for a week and then was transported by ambulance to a rehabilitation hospital near our home in

Raleigh for two additional weeks.

The neurological doctors assured us that there were no concerns of any cognitive or brain impairment.

The orthopedic surgeons worked miracles in situating her bones such that they would heal perfectly. She fractured her pelvic bone but has no lasting problems from it.

The orthopedic doctors said they expected her recovery to be six to nine months based on the extent of injuries and type of accident.

Four months after the accident, our daughter was fully recovered and boarded an airplane to Morocco to accept a Fulbright Fellowship to study in

Morocco for a year. She wrote her first novel while she was in Morocco and is now working to get it published.

She has a few physical scars on her left arm and leg but otherwise anyone meeting her today would not see anything that could be evidence of that incident.

Last month, on Mother's Day, May 10, 2009, she was married to a wonderful young man that she met in Morocco. They now reside in Atlanta.

Miracles do happen, in fact they happen all the time when we let our hearts and eyes feel the presence of God. All is well.

**JR, NC**