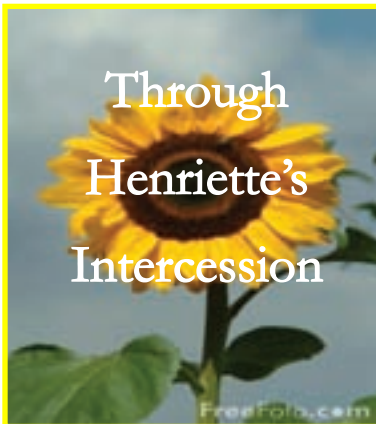


# Servant of the Poor



This is a testimony of God's blessing on our family through the intercession of Mother Henriette Delille, my fourth great grand aunt.

Our story begins December 7, 2007 when I received a call from our 19 year college student daughter, Christine, living in Arkansas. It was in the middle of the night, and she was experiencing an extreme headache. After talking with her, she decided to go to the hospital. I tried to go to sleep but a mother's worry kept me awake.

About 2 hours later we get another call, but this time it was from a doctor at the Hospital in Benton, Arkansas. He proceeded to inform me that our daughter was non responsive and was experiencing a brain aneurysm. I went into shock and didn't know what to say. The doctor

See **CHRISTINE**, p. 2

## More sites for Venerable Henriette

### *524-526 Burgundy Street*

This house belonged to Henriette's mother. It is the house where she was raised. Thomy Lafon bought it. His committee sold it. The last owner died. It was tied up with "heirs" ownership. The house was for sale a few years ago, (too expensive for us to consider buying at the time).

The exterior is the same, but the interior has been changed. We could not get a permit to put the historical marking on the house or near it. We will try again another time.

### *St. Augustine Church, 1210 Governor Nicholls Street in the Tremé District*

This is the church from which Henriette ministered. The church was built in 1841 and dedicated in 1842, the same year the Sisters of the Holy Family were founded.

Henriette and the early Sisters ministered from this church. There is a bronze plaque embedded in the Communion rail kneeler which commemorates the vow pronouncements of our Foundresses.

Our oral history tells us that the foundresses, Henriette, Juliette, and Josephine pronounced their vows at this Church on October 15, 1851. They could have made them to the Bishop at St. Mary's and again for the people at St. Augustine.

### *Mere Henriette's Tomb*

Mere Henriette's tomb is in St. Louis Cemetery # 2 located on Iberville and North

Claiborne Avenue. The tomb is midway the center aisle.

The plaque on the tomb lists the names of Mothers Henriette,

Juliette, and Josephine; however, more Sisters have been buried in that tomb.

On the side of Mere Henriette's tomb, there is listed, on bronze cards, the names of all of the deceased Sisters of the Holy Family.

### *St. Angela Merici Church "Garden of Saints" Metairie, LA*

On the side of the church, there is a garden which honors all of the saints that influenced the Evangelization of New Orleans.



Ven. Henriette Delille  
1812-1862

### SEPT. 20, UNVEILING OF PAINTING

#### NOVEMBER EVENTS

1 --- FEEDING THE POOR

15- -- ANNUAL MASS HONORING  
VENERABLE HENRIETTE DELILLE  
MOTHERHOUSE CHAPEL  
4 P.M.

17 --- ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH  
OF VENERABLE HENRIETTE

21 - -- FOUNDER'S DAY MASS, 5PM

## Favors granted through Venerable Henriette's aid

### CHRISTINE from page 1

suggested we leave New Orleans right away to come to her bed side because she would most likely not survive.

Since the hospital she was at didn't have a facility to best care for her, he requested to transfer her to a larger hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas. We quickly made arrangements to fly to Little Rock to see our daughter.

When we arrived she was already placed on life support. The doctors said they wanted to keep her alive for us to see her again before she passed. It was the hardest thing a mother and father could do is to see their baby lying in the hospital struggling to survive.

As soon as possible, we contacted the local priest to have him give her last rites. They only allowed us 15 minute visitations with her. They can only tell us it was a matter of time before she would pass. The doctors told us she had a condition called A.V.M. (arteriovenous malformation) that caused the brain aneurysm.

During our bed side vigil with her, we started contacting our families and friends requesting prayers for Christine. My family, being descendants of Mother Delille, our cousin Thomas Roque, contacted the Sisters of Holy Family to place Christine on their prayer list asking for intercession. I had with me my prayer card with Mother Delille on it. We prayed constantly.

About 7 days later, the doctors told us she was still unresponsive in a coma, running a high fever, her kidney shut down completely, major organ failures, and couldn't breathe on her own. She was on dialysis 4 to 5 times a week. They suggested that we remove her from life support and let her pass peacefully. They said her kidneys would never function again and if by a long shot survived she likely would be on life support in a nursing home. We refused to give up our faith in God. .

On December 18, 2007, she started to flicker her eyes. I remember the day because it's the anniversary of my father's death. The doctors stated it was just involuntary. Then Christmas Day came, I noticed a drop of urine in her catheter. The kidney doctor told us it was impossible, kidneys don't heal after they are so severely damaged. Christine had complete renal failure. The doctor stated that her kidney would never function again.

Well, more days passed and her kidney levels kept improving. By January she began to breathe on her own and improve each day. Surprising the doctors,

and on January 11, 2008, we were able to transfer her back home to a rehabilitation facility. She underwent rehabilitation and amputation of her limbs that had necrosis. She lost her whole right hand, some fingers on the left hand, and toes.

Through all of this she continues to improve. Christine couldn't eat, talk, or walk. Slowly over the next four months she began to speak, walk, and eventually eat on her own. Her eyesight also improved.

As of today, she is back in college at Holy Cross, driving, and living independently. Her neurosurgeon that took care of her while she was in the hospital calls her the walking dead. We call her a walking miracle. A.L.M., LA

Dear Sisters,

I was riding with my wife to my granddaughter's First Communion when another driver cut us off. I was very angry (sorry, but I was cursing) and reached over from my passenger seat to hit the horn.

I felt a very sharp pain in my upper arm that got worse and worse all day and night. I could barely move my arm without pain. That night I prayed for Mother Henriette's help. The next morning my arm was fine with only a little sore spot that is now gone.

I attribute this healing to Mother Henriette's help and intercession for me with God. A. H. LA

Hello to Henriette Delille Commission Office,

I do not know if this is a favor, but I need to report that since I have picked up Henriette Delille prayer card I have a feeling of closeness to her and a calmness I have not felt before.

I thought that I had misplaced her prayer card and I was at a loss. When I pray I always recite her prayer that she prayed and a feeling of contentment fills my heart.

I am compelled to write this to you because I know I should. To know that a black lady was able to accomplish the things she has done since 1836 is amazing.

I realize that in my life I can accomplish something and live my life day by day and make an honest contribution to someone else just by having a positive attitude. D.M., Email

Presenting . . .



Sisters Judithmarie, Mary Francis, and Marie Elizabeth

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## Introducing our Leadership Team



Right to left, Sister Greta Jupiter, Congregational Leader, Sister Leona Bruner, Assistant Congregational Leader, General Councilors: Sister Clare of Assisi Pierre, Sister Alicia Costa, Councilor and Treasurer General, Sister Geneva James, Sister Angela Smith, Sister Richard Francis Daigle, and Sister Theresa Sue Joseph, Secretary General. See more installation pixs on SSF web site: [www.sistersofthehollyfamily.com](http://www.sistersofthehollyfamily.com).

We, Sisters of the Holy Family, thank God for our leaders. We pledge them our prayers, support, and love.

### *“A Servant of the Slaves”*

The following poem was written by an Ohio prison inmate who was on death row. He mailed a letter and the poem not long after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The letter was sent first to New Orleans then to Shreveport, Louisiana where many of the Sisters of the Holy Family lived before returning to New Orleans. Mysteriously, it did not reach the hands of the Director of the Delille Office until July 2014.

The author explained how he had read Venerable Henriette’s life story and was moved and inspired by her virtues and all she had done during her brief 50 years.

The Office has tried to contact him by letter, but we’re still waiting for an answer from him. We did find out why he was incarcerated. He said it would be a miracle if his poem were published - well, here goes.



I’m sure that her life  
was much more than they told.  
even if she died at only fifty years old.

By the chosen who  
watched and observed it  
unfold

in the devil’s abode!  
Patience showed.  
Trumpets embraced.  
And then . . . “bowed.”  
Calling to thy Lord  
May He lighten thy load  
of the yoke.  
The shackle, the whip,  
the gun-smoke  
of the European noose  
on the African throat  
in A.M.E.R.I.C.A.

Down in the swamps where  
moths grow,  
Sister Henriette Delille  
stood confronting her foes.  
Poverty and hunger and abuse  
of the slaves.  
Voodoo all night, what it caused  
most days, anyways.  
She fought until her battle was  
through departed on November  
17, 1862.

A survivor who made it fifty  
years to see  
Only faith in God alone  
Can set  
The slave free.  
**J.M.D.**

### **SR. MARY JOSEPH CHARLES,** the



eldest child of the late Joseph Antoine Charles and Marie Matilda Lazare entered eternal life on September 5, 2014 at the age of 67. She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family September 8, 1965,

professed First Vows on August 15, 1968 and Perpetual vows August 15, 1973.

Sister Joseph ministered in Belize, Central America, in Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas as teacher and/or principal. Sister was very fondly called “Sister Joyful.” She served her religious community as local leader and later became the Community’s Development Director.

Her gift for lifting a downcast spirit, lighting up a room, and bringing joy wherever she was by her laugh, sense of humor, use of nicknames, and a sincere interest in the other person will be sorely missed.

## More ways and more people Promoting Venerable Henriette's Cause

**Acknowledgements and thanks** go to the following persons who have taken on Venerable Henriette Delille's Cause as a part of their ministries.

- We re-acknowledge and thank those mentioned in the last edition of *Servant of the Poor* because you continue to promote devotion and knowledge of Venerable Henriette Delille.
- **Sister Joseph Ann Gillette** who has designed and made the third class relics of cloth that touched Henriette's writing.
- **Mrs. Sandra Regis** via **Sister Jennie Jones** at St. Mary's Academy for the use of their laminating machine.
- **Mrs. Paula Dupre Moore** for a presentation on Venerable Henriette Delille at St. Agatha Church in Los Angeles. Prayer cards and brochures were distributed and books about Henriette were sold.
- **Mrs. Michelle Olinger Jolly** for the portrait of Mere Henriette, painted by Alex Adams. Also for her diligent sales of Henriette's books.
- **Pedro Pablo Rinaldi-Jovet** of Puerto Rico for the wood-carving of Venerable Henriette Delille. And to his daughter for bringing it to us.
- **Mr. Roger Claudel**, the artist who painted two beautiful pictures of Venerable Henriette Delille, died earlier this year. We extend our sympathy and prayers to his wife.
- Those **Unsung Heroes** whose names we do not know, who are working behind the scene making Henriette known and loved.
- **Sister Sylvia Thibodeaux** who has officially joined the Delille Office as Assistant Director. Happy to have you.
- **Alethea Braggs** of *Destiny Productions* who graciously, competently, and lovingly continues to update our web site: [www.sistersoftheholymfamily.com](http://www.sistersoftheholymfamily.com)
- **Sister Laura Mercier** for her work in the Delille Office. She kept it going for over a year; gave talks about Mere Henriette and the Congregation; and sold hundreds of books. God bless you in your new ministry.

## What do you know about Venerable Henriette Delille?

1. **Where was Henriette born?**
  - a. Natchitoches, LA
  - b. New Orleans, LA
  - c. Baton Rouge, LA
  - d. Biloxi, MS
2. **What religious congregation did she found?**
  - a. Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine
  - b. Oblate Sisters of Providence
  - c. Sisters of the Holy Family
  - d. Franciscan Handmaids of Mary
3. **What do you think was Henriette's reason for the life she chose?**
  - a. She wanted to give her life to God.
  - b. She wanted to care for the sick, the slaves, and the poor.
  - c. She wanted to teach others about Jesus.
  - d. All of the above.
4. **What is her special prayer?**
  - a. "Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid."
  - b. "The peace of God which surpasses all understanding guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
  - c. "I believe in God. I hope in God. I love. I want to live and die for God."
  - d. "I can do all things in God who strengthens me."
5. **In which phase of sainthood is Henriette?**
  - a. Blessed
  - b. Venerable
  - c. Servant of God
  - d. Saint
6. **Name another African American seeking sainthood?**
  - a. Bishop Harold R. Perry
  - b. Fr. Augustus Tolton
  - c. Daniel Rudd
  - d. Bishop Moses B. Anderson
7. **The life of Henriette Delille is portrayed in a movie called "The Courage to Love" starring which actress?**
  - a. Angela Bassett
  - b. Kerry Washington
  - c. Deidre Carroll
  - d. Vanessa Williams
8. **Where is a permanent prayer room dedicated to Henriette Delille located?**
  - a. St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans
  - b. St. Augustine Church in New Orleans
  - c. The second floor of the Motherhouse
  - d. St. Augustine Church in Isle Brevelle

## SSFs celebrate 50, 60, 70 and 75 years jubilees



Sr. Joseph Angela Parker



Sr. de Ricci Egby



Sr. Marie Antonia Rideau



Sr. Henrietta Lazare



Sr. M. Leona Bruner



Sr. Richard Francis Daigle



Sr. Rita Darenbourg



Sr. Carmen Marie Bertrand

Last June, eight Sisters of the Holy Family celebrated jubilees at St. Maria Goretti Church in New Orleans.

Sister Joseph Angela Parker celebrated 75 years. Sisters de Ricci Egby and Marie Antonia Rideau 70 years. Sister Henrietta Lazare 60 years.

Four golden jubilarians were Sisters Leona Bruner, Richard Francis Daigle, Rita Darenbourg, and Carmen Marie Bertrand.

## Loving memories revisited

By Sister Tekakwitha Vega

In 1962 ten Sisters of the Holy Family arrived in Los Angeles, California to staff two schools in Compton, a predominantly African American suburb of Los Angeles. At the train station to meet the Sisters were Mrs. Ella Randolph and Mrs. Myrna DeJean, two lay staff members of St. Albert the Great School.



Sisters Clare of Assisi Pierre and Tekakwitha Vega with the Randolph Family: parents, children, and grandchildren

In meeting them, all our anxieties and concerns vanished in the greetings and welcoming they so freely shared with us. These two staff members became Sister de Chantal's secretaries. Over the years they helped us in staffing St. Albert the Great and Regina Caeli High school.

We were fortunate to have Mrs. Ella Randolph's daughter, Richel Randolph, as a student at Regina Caeli among the second graduating class of 1970. Richel was outstanding and very involved in all the school activities. She was a tremendous support to the high school in its infant stage.

After 44 years, Mrs. Randolph, her husband, two kids and other family members decided to take an ancestral trek to seven cities, towns in Louisiana and one in Texas. Mrs. Randall and Richel would not and could not pass up the opportunity to visit their religious family in New Orleans. They stopped by to see old friends

While visiting the Sisters, the children heard music coming from the dining room down the hall. They couldn't resist and without invitation, they rushed to investigate, dads in hot pursuit. It didn't take long before Sisters, dads, and children were all second lining to the beat.

Yes, it was a lovely visit, short, meaningful, and joyful, filled with pleasant memories for years to come.

Sisters of the Holy Family  
Henriette Delille Commission Office  
6901 Chef Menteur Blvd.  
New Orleans, LA 70126-5290

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*"I believe in God.*

*I hope in God.*

*I love.*

*I want to live and  
die for God."*

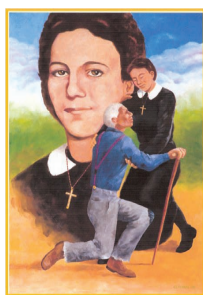
*Venerable Henriette Delille*

### Inside:

- ~ Sites & favors - Venerable Henriette, pp. 1-2
- ~ Presenting the Leadership Team, p. 3
- ~ 2014 Jubilations, p. 5

### *Servant of the Poor*

Published by the  
Sisters of the Holy Family  
and  
Friends of Henriette Delille  
Imprinti Potest  
Sister Greta Jupiter  
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Roger Claudel

### *Staff*

Sister Doris Goudeaux  
Ms. Barbara Duhé  
Sister Judith Therese Barial  
Sister Sylvia Thibodeaux  
Mrs. Elizabeth Malone  
Mrs. Carolyn Washington

### Our readers write . . .

Dear Sisters,

I have read this beautiful book. And instead of storing it away, I would like to pass it on to the Sisters. It is too beautiful not to have someone else read it.

Sister Henriette has been in my prayers for many years and I have met Sister Sylvia Thibodeaux some time ago. I know she will not remember me.

Please accept this beautiful book.

M.L.M.

(The book is *Henriette Delille* by Dr. Virginia Meacham Gould, 2012). We have them for sale from the Delille Office.

Sisters of the Holy Family,  
I received a prayer card

from an acquaintance a few years ago. She was a native of New Orleans and had a great devotion to Mother Henriette. For some reason I kept the card.

This year I have had many challenges in my life. I saw the card on my stand and started praying to her. Praying to her became very personal to me.

I feel I have received favors because of her intercession. Both of importance to me. I pray that I will continue to receive the strength, courage and wisdom that I need in my life.

As you continue her work, I would like to donate to offset the cost of printing the cards.

I would like to have

another card if they are available. I have received blessings for which I am grateful and feel they are a result of her intercession.

Thank you. N.G., CA

### *Servant of the Poor*

We have been striving for accuracy with our newsletter mailing list. Please let us know if there are any errors on your mailing label or if you are receiving duplicate newsletters at one or more addresses.

To cut cost, beginning with this issue, we will send the newsletter via email. If you have received both by email and postal mail, let us know so adjustments can be made. Also, if you wish to receive the email version, send your email address to :

delillecomoff@yahoo.com