



## SAINTS

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temporarily to help disadvantaged children in two different parts of New Orleans: Mother Henriette worked in the French Quarter and Tremé, evangelizing and caring for enslaved and free people of color, while the Irish-born Haughery toiled in the city's American sector, ultimately donating more than \$600,000 from her businesses to fund New Orleans orphanages.

"Both of them were women living in a man's world in an antebellum time period – going outside of what the traditional role of women was in New Orleans – to do something good for children," Leumas observed.

► Mother Henriette, the sole New Orleanian of the saintly septet, founded the Sisters of the Holy Family – the United States' first community of African-American sisters – in 1842, well before it was legal for women of color to form such a group.

Mother Henriette's fledgling role as a spiritual advisor and catechist to enslaved and free people of color is borne out in a 1837-45 baptismal registry maintained by the Ursuline Sisters, who operated a school in the city's Holy Cross neighborhood at the time. In that document, Henriette is listed as the godmother of Marie Therese Dagon.

Henriette's name also appears in a St. Mary's Italian Church wedding registry that was specifically maintained for "people of color." Her signature documents her witnessing of the 1838 wedding of a free man of color

and an enslaved woman named Loize (the entry also includes the signature of the bride's "owner," a Mr. L. Lacour).

A photo from 1899, taken 37 years after Mother Henriette's death, shows that more than 40 Sisters of the Holy Family were serving their community's convent-school at 717 Orleans St. (the current site of the Bourbon Orleans Hotel). There currently are about 70 Sisters of the Holy Family residing in New Orleans. The community's 175-year-old legacy includes Lafon Nursing Facility, founded in 1841; St. Mary's Academy; and mission schools in Belize and Nigeria. The motherhouse fronts St. Mary's campus on Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans East.

► Haughery, whose cause for sainthood is still in the investigatory stages, was widowed and bereaved of her only child shortly after immigrating to New Orleans in 1835. Haughery was so impressed with the work of the Sisters of Charity at the Poydras Orphan Asylum, she offered her services to the sisters in exchange for room and board. She purchased a single cow to help feed the children.

"Then she buys more cows and (ultimately) owns a dairy of 40 cows. Later on, she operates a bakery," Leumas said, alluding to business receipts in the archdiocesan archives dating from the mid-19th century.

"Margaret continued to do nothing but give all of the profits and all of the food to the orphanage," Leumas said. "She lived very poor her whole life, and when she died, all of the monies

were divided among seven orphanages, with no requirement that it be Catholic."

Haughery was so beloved among New Orleanians, she was given a state funeral upon her death in 1882. A statue was erected in her honor in 1884, becoming only the second statue of a woman to be erected in the United States.

► Blessed Seelos, a Redemptorist priest born in Germany, was known as the "Cheerful Ascetic" who spent nearly all of his ordained life as a parish-based and missionary preacher in the United States. After more than 40 years of selfless service, Father Seelos was assigned to New Orleans in 1866 to serve as pastor of St. Mary's Assumption Church. Less than a year after arriving in the city, Father Seelos contracted yellow fever through his dedicated ministry to the sick. He died on Oct. 4, 1867, at age 48 and was beatified by St. John Paul II in 2000.

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Photo by Frank J. Methe | CLARION HERALD

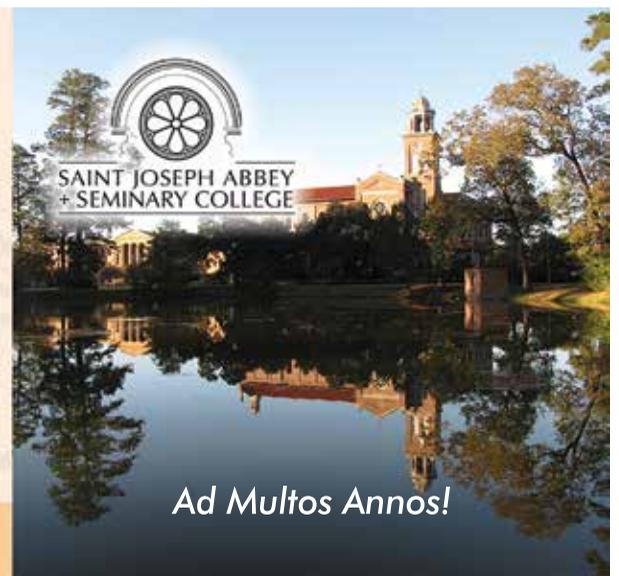


Photo | COURTESY ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

Above, "Pope John Paul II with Saints Venerated in New Orleans," a painting by Fred Villanueva, was unveiled at the New Orleans Museum of Art's 2013 exhibit on the life of now-Saint John Paul II. At left, Venerable Henriette Delille is captured in a stained-glass window in St. Louis Cathedral. Mother Delille's ministry as a catechist and caretaker of enslaved and free people of color had her visiting the cathedral as a sponsor of baptisms and marriages. She founded the Sisters of the Holy Family, the nation's first community of African-American sisters, in 1842.

Congratulations to the city of New Orleans during its Tricentennial from the Benedictine community at Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College.

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Ad Multos Annos!

Daughters of St. Paul open St. Paul Book and Media Center in Metairie, April 1.



Dr. Norman C. Francis becomes president of Xavier University of Louisiana, going on to serve 47 years as the longest-tenured college president of his era. He accepts the job on April 4, the same day Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated in Memphis.

Mary-Joseph Residence of the Little Sisters of the Poor dedicated, Dec. 17.



First class of permanent deacons ordained by Archbishop Hannan in May.



Old Ursuline Convent recognized as a Registered National Historic Landmark.

Brother Martin High School in Gentilly opens as a consolidation of St. Aloysius and Cor Jesu high schools.

U.S. Supreme Court legalizes abortion through its Roe v. Wade decision, Jan. 22.

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