



April 25, 2022
Volume 2, Issue 1

Sisters in the Spirit of Houston, Inc.
Founded in 2001 "To Be Christ to Others"

Sistersinthespiritofhouston@gmail.com
www.sistersinthespiritofhouston.org

The Spirited Sister

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

My SISStas,

Words cannot express the joy that I feel as our SIS Newsletter is reactivated.



In the past two years, we have all been in isolation from each other, the world, and disconnected in many ways. As we emerge to the new standards of physical distancing and sanitizing hands, we must keep in mind that our families and friends depend on us to keep them safe. We need continue the enthusiasm that we have shared since our inception as Sisters in the Spirit of Houston.

Let us continue to Pray for one another and join together safely in activities at the local parishes. Now is our time to *Reconnect* with each other and *Renew* our mission to be Christ to others. "I urge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose." 1 Corinthians 1:10.

I look forward to seeing my Sista's out spreading love and sharing the Good News of Christ by our actions, showing all that we are our SISStas' keeper "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. "John 15:12 and that we share in each other's joys, burdens, and life changes. "Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2.

The past is now behind us and as we start now, let us *Restore* the true meaning of SIS "bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do." Colossians 3:13.

When asked, "Am I my SISStas' keeper?". My answer is "Yes, I am!"



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HISTORY

SISTERS IN THE SPIRIT OF HOUSTON, INC.

The National Black Sisters Conference hosted the National Gathering for Black Catholic Women, July 27-29, 2001, in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The opportunity of a lifetime was presented to Catholic women in the then Diocese of Galveston-Houston when the Office of African American Ministries invited women from parishes with an African American presence to participate in this historic experience. Many women responded to the call, and they met at the Chancery at St. Dominic in the spring of 2001 for informational meetings. The Houston group had

The Red Scarf is a part of the formal attire and a visible symbol of being vested in the Sisters in the Spirit of Houston.

SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 2: 1 - 3

¹Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, insincerity, envy, and all slander; ²like newborn infants, long for pure spiritual milk so that through it you may grow into salvation,³for you have tasted that the Lord is good.

high energy as they made their decision to attend.

"Sisters in the Spirit" was the name chosen for the Houston group and committees were put in place to plan the trip. The majority of the women chose to travel to the conference by bus. A 28-hour bus trip to Charlotte would give the women opportunities to network, share personal stories, build relationships, and bond as Christian women. Bishop Joseph Fiorenza graciously donated funds for a charter bus; the women registered, selected workshops, ordered tee-shirts, were interviewed and photographed.

Prior to the trip, Monsignor Patrick Wells celebrated a special Mass for the Sisters in the Spirit at Warren Chapel, where he challenged the women and sent them forth to learn, network, and return and evangelize. He also encouraged the Sisters to be bold in sharing their faith experiences and become more involved in ministry.

The group grew to 53 women and they set individual goals and expectations for attending this historic event. Twenty years later, the membership of Sisters in the Spirit of Houston has grown to 175 women who are involved in ministry throughout the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

THE DELILLE PROJECT

The Sisters In the Spirit of Houston, Inc., is a lay Catholic service organization in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. The principal project of Sisters In the Spirit is the Cause for the Canonization of Mother Henriette Delille by educating and sharing the story of this remarkable woman and the Sisters of the Holy Family and praying on behalf of Mother Delille's canonization. The Sisters In the Spirit of Houston continues to prayerfully and financially support the Sisters of the Holy Family.



HENRIETTE DELILLE

Henriette Delille's canonization process was initiated in April 1988 by Archbishop Philip Hannan of New Orleans. It was reviewed by a special commission in Rome who gave permission to officially open the process in June 1988. On Saturday, March 27, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI signed a decree advancing the cause of sainthood of Henriette Delille, declaring that this exemplary woman lived a life of "heroic virtue" and declared her Venerable. Venerable Delille set aside the life expected of her as a free Black woman in the 1840s to live for God.

Henriette Delille was born in 1812, to Marie-Josèphe, free woman of color. Her mother lived with a man named Jean-Baptiste, in what was known as the plaçage system. Through the plaçage system, some women of color were able to obtain for themselves and their children a small degree of protection and even wealth by being the mistress of a wealthy white man as opposed to civil or sacramental marriages with women of color. Henriette grew up with her siblings in New Orleans' French Quarter. Her mother raised her children Roman Catholic and educated Henriette to be an accomplished young woman in preparation for her own marriage to a wealthy patron. However, Henriette had different plans for herself. She wanted to bring education to the poor girls of New Orleans and began teaching children around the city when she was still a teenager. Henriette emphatically rejected participating in this life by refusing to be someone's unrecognized wife.

Who was Henriette Delille that the Roman Catholic Church would recognize her as a woman of heroic virtue? Henriette Delille was a devout Catholic who worked fervently for the conversion of slaves (Blacks) in New Orleans and devoted herself to God. In 1836, she wrote, "I believe in God. I hope in God. I love. I want to live and die for God." She became a frequent sponsor for those being baptized, both in St. Louis Cathedral and St. Augustine Church. In addition, she was active in the St. Claude School, an establishment founded for the education of young girls of color. In 1835, Henriette's mother had a nervous breakdown, and Henriette inherited all her mother's assets. Henriette set aside enough money to continue caring for her mother and then sold all her mother's remaining property. With the proceeds of this sale and her courage and determination, Henriette started an order for women of mixed African descent in New Orleans. The order's mission to their people both free and enslaved was to nurse the sick, care for the poor and instruct the ignorant in the Catholic faith.

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OUR GOALS

- Serve
- Inspire
- Seek
- Teach
- Evangelize
- Renew
- Support
- Involve
- Nurture
- Thank
- Help
- Educate
- Sing
- Pray
- Invite
- Remember, rejoice, recognize
- Intercede
- Tolerate

Nugget of Knowledge

Rejoice **always**, pray **continually**, give thanks in **all** circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV)

How to Use Everyday Sights as Prayer Prompts

What is something you often see each day that you can use as a reminder to pray?

We used to live near a station for a helicopter ambulance. It flew over our house multiple times a day, so we would use that as a reminder to pray for first responders, for those who are sick and injured, and for healthcare workers.

Going Deeper:

1. Choose something you see frequently throughout your daily routine.

It can be something you love, something that reminds you of a need, or even something that frustrates you. Just choose something you will see often and will serve as a reminder to pray.

2. Decide a quick prayer you will say each time you see it.

This does not have to be a set prayer, just give yourself some kind of guide. Maybe you'll pray for someone on your prayer list, pray for safety and healing, pray for thankfulness, pray for strength, pray for guidance, pray for God to reveal Himself more fully in your life.

3. As you see your prompt throughout your days, just say a quick prayer.

In your mind or aloud if you want to make it a family activity. Do not worry if you forget, just try again the next time. It may take time to develop a habit, but if you keep trying it will become a habit.

Some ideas to try:

See a fire truck or ambulance... *pray for first responders and healing and strength for those they help.*

Stopped at a red light... *tell God thank you for a blessing.*

Turn on a lamp or light a candle... *ask God to reveal Himself more fully in your life.*

Hug your child... *pray for God's protection over your child.*

See a bench... *pray for the homeless and those who may have little more than a bench to sleep upon.*

Look at a favorite tree... *pray for a friend to grow in his or her relationship with God, to grow deeper roots of faith.*

Eat a favorite treat... *pray for the hungry.*

Before you get out of your car at work... *pray for your day.*

See a teacher or a boss who frustrates you... *pray for all those who give of their time and talents to teach and guide you.*

From page 3

The group of women Henriette called together was initially called the Congregation of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary from 1836-1841. After the Church accepted the order in 1842, the community became the Sisters of the Holy Family, a canonical religious community for Black women. One of the first works of charity the Sisters devoted themselves to was caring for the elderly and infirmed slaves in a nursing home, Thomy Lafon Old Folks Home, one of the oldest nursing homes in the United States (Now called Lafon Nursing Facility, it was almost destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, was refurbished and remains operational to this day).

Delille directed the Sisters to evangelize the city's slaves and the poor. Her love of God and her fellow man led her to share her faith with the poor and enslaved and to establish an orphanage and school (Saint Mary's Academy) for the Black children of New Orleans. The Orphanage operated from 1881 to 1964. The school, St. Mary's Academy, is a private Catholic K-12 school in New Orleans, Louisiana, run by the Sisters of the Holy Family. Founded in 1867, it is one of the oldest Black Catholic schools in the country. St. Mary's admits girls and boys until grade 7, and admits only girls for grades 8-12. Mother Delille and her sisters often gave their food to the poor and lived through many hardships and trials. She remained undeterred, despite illness, neglect from the official Church and intolerance in the community. Mother Delille died of tuberculosis in her convent on November 16, 1862, during the civil war.

The road to sainthood is slow and costly. Venerable Henriette Delille is the first United States born African American whose cause for canonization has been officially opened by the Catholic Church. Much research and inquiry have been conducted into her virtues and reputation of sanctity. Presently, there are two miracles attributed to the intercession of Mother Delille that are being study by the Church. The first miracle attributed to Mother Delille's intercession took place in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. The cure of a four-year-old Houston girl in 1998 from an overwhelming pulmonary infection. The second took place in Little Rock in 2007 when a young woman suffering from a brain aneurism slipped into a coma and she came out of the coma completely healed. When one miracle is authenticated, Mother Delille will be declared Blessed. When a second miracle has been authenticated, Mother Delille will be declared a Saint.

The Archdiocese of Galveston Houston was home to several missions served by the Sisters of the Holy Family. Their service to the Archdiocese began in Galveston when they assumed the teaching of students and providing for orphans at Holy Rosary Parish. The Sisters faithfully served on the island from 1898 until the closing of the school in 1979. The first African American parish in Houston, St. Nicholas, was the site of the school where the Sisters educated many members of the African American Catholic community from 1905 through 1971. Our Mother of Mercy School in Houston was staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Family from 1930 through 2009. The late Joe Sample and Texas Representative Harold Dutton are among the alumni of Our Mother of Mercy School.

The Archdiocese's connection to Mother Delille continues today. One of the bells in the new Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart was named for Henriette Delille. The first line reads, Mother Henriette Delille; the second line has the donors' names, Raye and Edward White Family; and the last line reads: "To the Honor and Glory of God."

For more information: <https://www.henrietedelille.com>

Save the date!
Sisters in the Spirit Retreat
St. Dominic Center Auditorium
Saturday, October 15, 2022
From 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

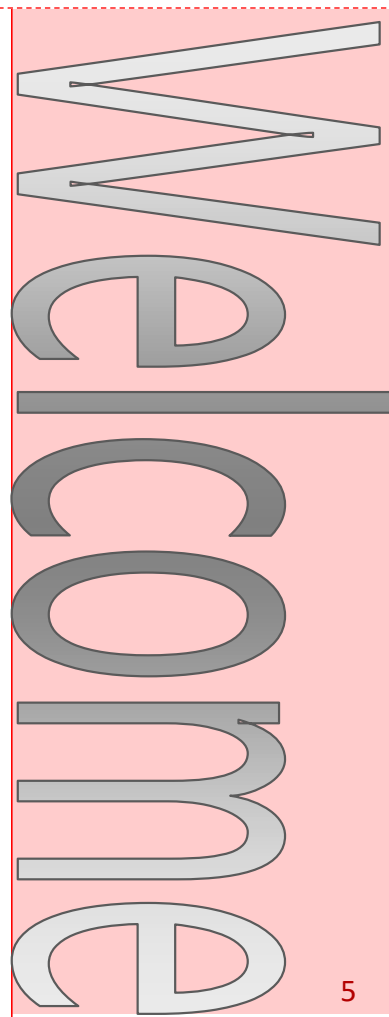


The Red Rose is the organization's official flower. It represents sacrifice, immortal love, health, memorial and passion. The most common interpretation is that the rose symbolizes an immortal love or a union that will never fade, even through time or death.

Requirements for becoming a member of Sisters in the Spirit of Houston, Inc. are:

Applicants must:

1. be a Roman Catholic woman of African descent.
2. be 18 years of age or older.
3. be active in your local church and/or are involved in a ministry.
4. present two (2) letters of support for membership from the following:
 - ⇒ Active Sister in the Spirit of Houston
 - ⇒ Parish Pastor



May 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Scheduled Events for 2022

May 16, 2022 - SIS Business Meeting

September 19, 2022— SIS Business Meeting

October 15, 2022— SIS Retreat

October 17, 2022— Prayer Service

November 21, 2022— SIS Business Meeting

December 4, 2022— Annual Christmas Celebration



DR. ESTELLA CONWILL MAJOZO

An Evening with SIS Estella Conwill Majozo, author, playwright, and performance artist was presented as a culminating event for Women's History Month by the SIS Professional Development and Learning Events committee at 6:30 pm, Thursday, March 31, 2022.

The host, Helen Gobert, opened the evening by welcoming everyone and Carol Tyson followed the welcome with prayer. Evelyn Wagner-Wright, who introduced Estella Majozo, spoke of how she first met Estella in 2001 at the first National Gathering of Black Catholic Women in Charlotte, NC. She went on to say that Estella is a native of Louisville, Kentucky, and that she looks at history, fights against oppression and when challenges are presented, she turns them into triumphs.

Helen stated that Dr. Majozo has been away from Houston for a while now, but she is back. The group was truly fortunate to have her share "Her Story."

Estella presented her story through the photos of family members and commentaries on her nurtured family life. Her mother was widowed at an early age and she went on to rear Estella and her five brothers who led lives of service to all humanity. Participants had an opportunity to ask many questions and offer comments.

The many books Estella has written serve as evidence of her dedication to making a powerful difference in this world. Her 1994 book, *Ringshout: A National Rite of Passage*, is now a movie. Click the link to view the movie trailer: <https://youtu.be/Cku12MSh7kc> .

To learn more about Estella, Click the link to listen to the October 2020 interview on WFPL (NPR): https://soundcloud.com/wfplnews/extended-interview-with-estella-conwill-majozo?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing.

Lenten Reflection

How was your Lenten journey? Did it end as it started? Were you able to keep your Lenten promise?

Lent is a season of change, and a time to grow. We grow from what we are (on Ash Wednesday) to where we want to be (on Easter Sunday). If you left a few things undone or if you did not quite complete your Lenten journey as you hope to, know that it is never too late to give, to pray, and to serve.

By Carol Tyson

MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Membership and Communication Joint Committee report to the Vice President, Evelyn Wagner Wright.

The Membership and Communication Committee include Parish Contacts, Sisters who represent each of the 24 parish communities in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston represented in the organization. (Parishes with 1 or 2 members or Sisters who reside out of state may be invited to connect with other parishes within the Archdiocese.) This joint committee is responsible for implementing the application and installation process of new members and supporting Sisters In the Spirit of Houston through consistent and thorough communication with the membership to ensure that all members remain connected, informed of current information an activities and aware of spiritual and social needs of the organization.

At the March meeting of the Committee, roles and responsibilities of the parish contacts were shared, updated, and prepared for approval to be included in the SIS Red Binder, which serves as the organization's information, policies and procedures manual.

One action which was requested by the committee and approved by the Board and the membership was to update the New Member Application and Installation Process. As a result, the application process will begin in September 2022 with online applications being made available in October to our membership to share with women interested in joining Sisters In the Spirit of Houston, Inc. The step of the process will remain the same, however, will be expanded over a longer period of time so as not to rush the process. New members discern and are installed every two years. The next installation is scheduled for June 2023.

Parish Contacts serving for 2022-2024 include Lucille Ford, Barbara Brandyberg, Mary Trahan, Penelope Montgomery, Linda Davis, Bonita Taylor, Helen Gobert, Gwen Reed-LaMothe, Jennifer Gumbs, Harriett Thomas, Juanita Thierry, Morgan Garvey, Carol Tyson, Sandra Hayden, Mary Helen Rideaux and the Vice President.

For additional information, please contact Evelyn Wagner Wright, Vice President at ewagnerw@gmail.com or by phone at 713-385-6607

Sisters in the Spirit of Houston, Inc.

E-mail:
sistersinthespiritofhouston@gmail.com



The official logo of the organization is a white dove descending signifying the presence of the Holy Spirit and its descent upon us, in a red circle representing never-ending love of the sisterhood. The name of the organization in white expanding the circumference of the red circle. The color Red represents the fire of the Holy Spirit; the color White represents Purity and Sanctity, the color Black represents Service.