

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne arrives at St. Louis Walk of Fame

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After 28 years, the walk of fame for the city named after a saint will have a saint among its honorees.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne will be inducted to the [St. Louis Walk of Fame](#) [2] in a ceremony at 11:30 a.m. Friday, June 23, in the Delmar Loop of University City. Her star — and the ceremony — will be at 6241 Delmar on the street's north sidewalk near the intersection with Eastgate Avenue.

After opening remarks by Joe Edwards, founder of the Walk of Fame in 1989, two Society of the Sacred Heart sisters will speak on behalf of St. Philippine: Sister Sheila Hammond, provincial leader of the United States-Canada Province of the Society of the Sacred Heart; and Sister Maureen Glavin, RSCJ, head of the Academy of the Sacred Heart school.

The Walk of Fame honor is a wonderful tribute," Sister Glavin said. "It's acknowledging not just musicians and artists, but it's acknowledging a really good, holy, prayerful person who helped make this city the city that it is."

About 20 sisters from the community will attend the ceremony, as well as alumni from the Academy in St. Charles and Villa Duchesne High School in Frontenac.

European cities or towns have numerous saints and relics — "here, there and everywhere," Sister Glavin said — but the U.S. has only 10 saints, with eight more — the North America Martyrs — from Canada. St. Rose Philippine Duchesne is the only saint who had worked in St. Louis, and she's one of the Archdiocese of St. Louis' patron saints, along with St. Louis and St. Vincent de Paul. Her namesake parish is in Florissant.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne led a group of five Society of the Sacred Heart sisters who traveled to the fledgling river town of St. Louis almost 200 years ago in 1818, 54 years after Pierre Laclede and Auguste Chouteau founded the city. Recruited by Bishop William DuBourg, the sisters sailed from France to New Orleans, then up the Mississippi River in a steamship.

"In the archdiocese, U.S. and North America, she's one of the least known saints; she's been sort of under the radar a little bit," Sister Glavin said. "This is an opportunity not just for Catholics in the archdiocese but for people in general ... to be aware to this holy, prayerful person who lived here, suffered here, loved here and is buried here."

Coincidentally, the sisters arrived at New Orleans on the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, which happens to be the feast day on the date of the induction, June 23.

Born Aug. 29, 1769, St. Philippine will rank as the third-oldest person enshrined among famous St. Louis actors, musicians, entertainers, sports figures, politicians and other celebrities. Only Laclede (Nov. 22, 1729) and Chouteau (Sept. 7, 1749) predate her.

Pope St. John Paul II canonized St. Rose Philippine Duchesne in 1988, 79 years after she was beatified. The cause for her sainthood commenced in 1895, 43 years after her death in 1852 at age 83. She's buried in a shrine on the Academy's grounds.

>> Biography, as it appears on the plaque for the Walk of Fame

ST. PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE, RSCJ

BORN: AUGUST 29, 1769

Born in Grenoble, France, Rose Philippine Duchesne was drawn to a life of religious service. She led a mission of five nuns to the St. Louis area in 1818, settling in the then frontier town of St. Charles, where Duchesne opened the Academy of the Sacred Heart, the first free school west of the Mississippi. A woman of boundless energy, she also opened convents, schools and orphanages in Florissant and St. Louis. At the age of 72, she travelled to Kansas to help establish a school for the Potawatomi tribe, and her piety inspired the name "Woman Who Prays Always." Canonized by the Roman Catholic Church in 1988, the remains of St. Philippine Duchesne lie enshrined in St. Charles on the campus of the Academy of the Sacred Heart.

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