



PHILIPPINE

PHUN
PHACTS

A decorative white scrollwork border on a black background, framing the text. The border features intricate floral and vine patterns, with a central crest-like element at the top and bottom.

1769 WAS A GOOD YEAR

- ❖ Philippine was born on August 29, 1769 in Grenoble, France.
- ❖ That same year, St. Charles was founded as Les Petites Cotes ("The Little Hills") by French Canadian fur trader Louis Blanchette.

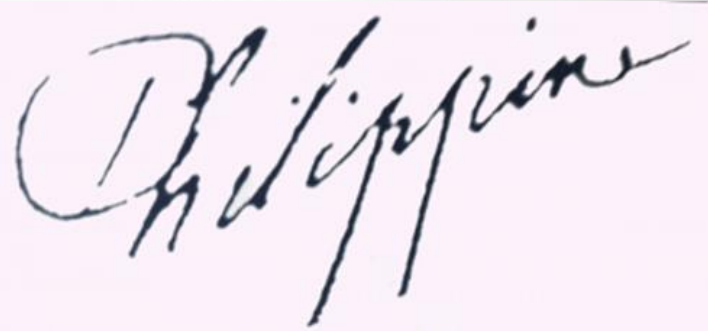
ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

❖ Why wasn't she called

ROSE—her first name?

❖ Often women of that time period were called by their middle name to avoid confusion when so many relatives were given the same names.

Philippine's mother's name was Rose, for example, and several of her sisters were named after aunts or cousins.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light pink background. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and reads "Philippine".

WHAT DOES DUCHESNE MEAN?



- ❖ “Chêne”, in French, means “oak”.
- ❖ “Du chêne” means “of oak”.

CONNECTIONS TO THE FUTURE?

❖ Philippine was baptized in the **Church of St. Louis** in Grenoble, France and received the name of Philip, the apostle, and Rose of Lima, first saint of the new continent.



THAT WAS MY PLEASURE!



❖ When Philippine was a little girl her parents used to give their children a small allowance. One day Madame Duchesne watched as her daughter reached into her pocket and pulled out her money to give to a poor beggar who came to the door seeking help. When the person had left, Philippine's mother told her daughter, "We give you that money for your pleasure." Philippine replied,

"That WAS my pleasure!"

INTERESTS

❖ As a teen, Philippine “continued private studies in foreign languages and, despite little native talent, pursued interests in drawing, music, and dance. One of her sisters remarked that Philippine worked as hard at learning dance as she did at learning algebra.”

Osiek, Carolyn RSCJ. *Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne*. St. Louis: Society of the Sacred Heart, 2017 (p. 4)



SHARED DESIRE



St. Madeleine Sophie Barat
1779-1865
Portrait sketched from picture taken after death

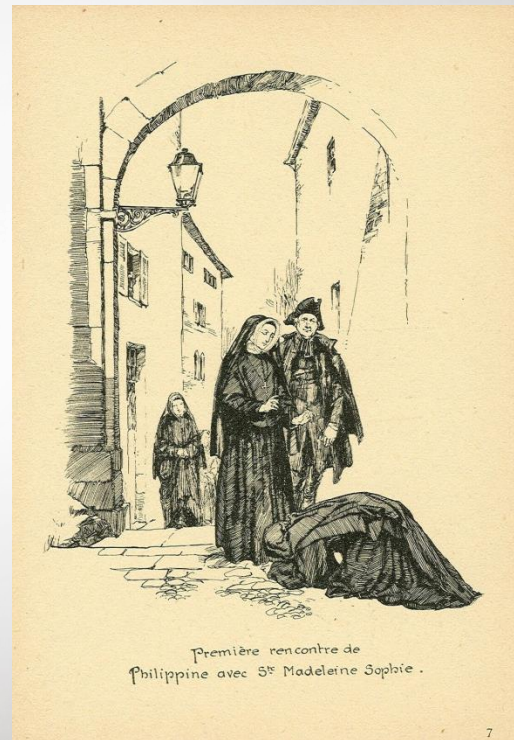


Mother Philippine Duchesne
1769-1852
Portrait sketched from picture taken after death

❖ Since the time when she heard (as a young girl) about the Native Americans and their ignorance of God, Philippine had longed to become a missionary who would go to teach them. She had confided this burning desire to Mother Barat, who told her that she too had harbored that wish but knew she could never leave France because of her responsibility to the Society that she had founded.

"YOUR PERMISSION, MOTHER!"

- ❖ When Bishop William DuBourg came to France in 1817, seeking religious who would open schools in his new Louisiana diocese, Philippine was sure that her opportunity had come.
- ❖ When he came back Philippine's hopes were high; but she could tell by the expressions on the faces of Mother Barat and the bishop himself that the superior's decision was negative--that it was too soon and she could not spare any of the nuns in her still-new order.
- ❖ As the bishop was leaving, Philippine threw herself on her knees at Mother Barat's feet and begged: "Your permission, Mother! Grant your permission!" The startled superior reached down and clasped Philippine and said, "Yes, Philippine, I grant my permission. And I will begin to choose other religious who will be suitable to go with you."

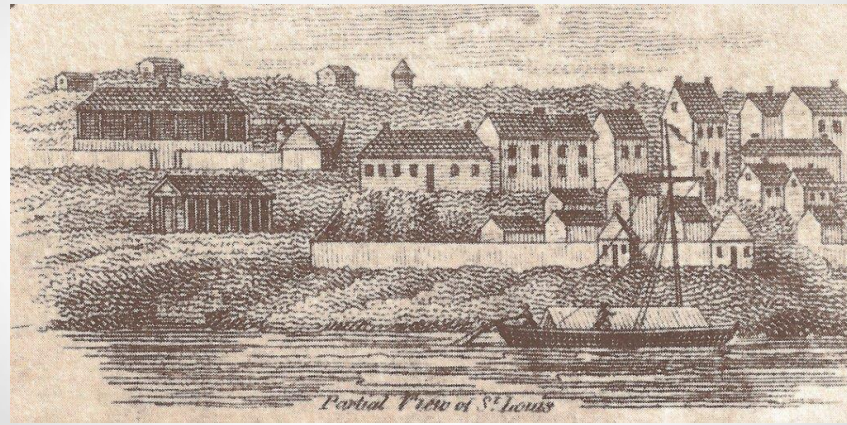


SET FOOT ON AMERICAN SOIL

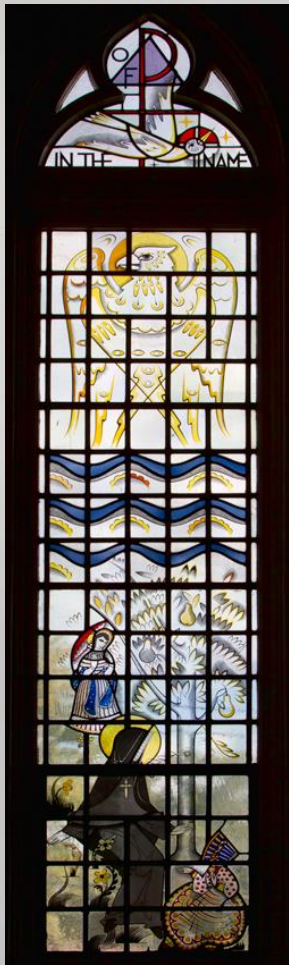


❖ After the long (70-day) voyage from France to Louisiana, the Rebecca pulled into port. The nuns climbed carefully down the gangplank and set foot on the American soil. Without a minute's hesitation, Philippine knelt and kissed the ground. Then she turned to her four companions and said, "You do it too! No one is looking!"

HUMBLE BEGINNING IN ST. LOUIS



❖ When Philippine and her companions arrived in St. Louis they found three mud paths parallel to the Mississippi River. Bishop DuBourg's "episcopal palace resembles a little barn in France, and his church a wooden structure that is falling into ruins," Mother Duchesne reported back to her superior in France.



❖ It seems that Philippine was not a very good cook. Mother Shannon said that they always tried to give her other tasks rather than letting her prepare the food. She was a good gardener (witness her grafting of the pear tree) so they would encourage her to work outside instead of fixing dinner!



Even though Philippine Duchesne may not have been a great cook, she was a proficient seamstress. (She had grown up in a well-to-do family in France where, surely, there was always at least one cook in the home; but young ladies were always taught to sew beautifully.) When she came to America, Mother Duchesne devoted much of her talent to making vestments for the priests, habits for the new nuns who were joining the order, and banners and altar cloths for the chapel or church. But at least one time we know that she used some of the smaller, leftover scraps of red velvet to make some doll furniture for a little girl in the infirmary who was very sick.

RUNAWAY COW

❖ When the nuns moved to Florissant from St. Charles (after having spent just one year there) they took all their possessions with them--even the chickens and the cow (which was very important to them for the milk it provided for the nuns and especially for the children in the school). When the ferry boat crossed the Missouri River and reached the other side, the cow bolted and began to run away. Mother Duchesne was panicked that they might lose such a precious animal, and so she tried to coax it back. She took some of the cabbages they had brought with them from their garden in St. Charles, placed them in her apron and tried to lure the cow back. Happily it DID return with her.



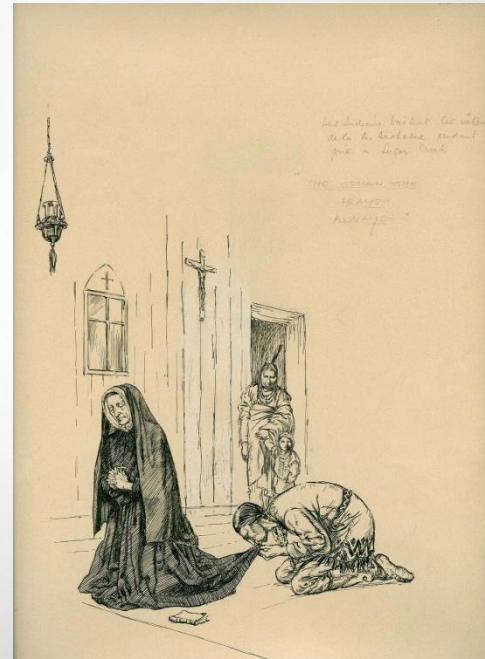
SUNDAY GOÛTER




❖ When Philippine was superior of the school in Florissant there were boarders who stayed at the school for months without going home (even if their home was in St. Louis). A special treat on Sundays for these girls was *goûter*. Since the nuns (and the whole school) were very poor, the treats were very simple. One of the favorites was for each girls to take a large pickle out of the wooden pickle barrel that was kept in the convent.

THE WOMAN WHO PRAYS ALWAYS

❖ As a member of the Jesuit mission with the Potawatomi Indians at Sugar Creek, Kansas, Philippine, unable to learn their language, spent many hours in prayer. The Indian children would drop leaves and pebbles onto Philippine's skirt while she was praying. Hours later, the leaves and pebbles were still in place. Even though she thought she had not been able to teach the Indians, she had indeed taught them a very important lesson about prayer.





THE RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART ARCHIVES
HAVE 338 LETTERS WRITTEN BETWEEN ST. MADELEINE
SOPHIE BARAT AND ST. PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE.

IMAGINE WHAT PHILIPPINE WOULD HAVE
THOUGHT OF THE TEXTING, TWEETING
TECHNOLOGY OF TODAY!



HUMBLE

When she was an old lady Mother Duchesne made herself a pair of patchwork mittens out of various scraps of fabric she had. These were not meant to keep her hands warm. She made them because her hands were so rough, red, and chapped that people often commented on how unsightly they were. She did not want to call attention to their ugliness (and to the hard work that had caused the unpleasant sight). The mittens served to hide this offensive sight.

A UNIQUE GIFT



In 1812, 116 North Main Street in St. Charles became the office of Dr. Henry Behrens, physician to Mother Duchesne in her later years. Dr. Behrens lived at Lewis and North Main Streets in St. Charles, a block east of the Academy of the Sacred Heart. This needle point and raccoon fur foot warmer was made by the nuns for Dr. Behrens in gratitude for his professional services.



Merci Beaucoup

WITH GRATITUDE TO SISTER MARGARET MUNCH
AND MRS. JANE CANNON FOR SHARING THEIR
EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF PHILIPPINE WITH US.