

A remarkable lady!



Archbishop
Alfred C.
HUGHES

Do you all know the story of Margaret Haughery? I did not until I read a summary of her life in "Imagine Louisiana." The one-page article is by Arthur Smith and is entitled "The Bread Woman: Margaret Haughery – Let the Light Shine Through."

Margaret Haughery came to New Orleans in 1830 with her husband and baby daughter. She was an immigrant from Ireland. Her husband and daughter died shortly after they arrived in this country. Margaret found herself alone in a strange city

at 22 years of age.

Margaret's first job was as a laundress at the Police Orphan Asylum. This introduced her to the great needs of orphaned children. She reached out to them in a wonderfully caring way. She lived a very simple life and saved what she could. Eventually, she was able to buy a few cows and began a dairy.

This enterprise was her first experiment in the business world. She was very successful and was able to put enough money away to buy a small bakery. These efforts thrived. From the

On the Web:
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profits from her business, she was able to support seven orphanages serving people of all backgrounds and to establish three Roman Catholic institutions – St. Theresa's Asylum, St. Vincent Asylum and St. Louis Asylum.

Margaret led a very simple life. People claim that she had just two dresses – one that she used for work and the other for special occasions.

When Margaret died at 69

years of age after a difficult illness, both church and wider community leaders participated in her funeral. Archbishop Napoleon Perché spoke at her funeral and reported how many people had asked him whether he thought she was a saint. He indicated that, of course, it was not his to make any such formal proclamation. But he wondered if the response that he heard from a little boy might not be helpful. When this boy was asked in catechism class to define a saint, he thought of the stained glass windows in his

church where various saints were depicted, and he said: "A saint is one who lets the light shine through."

Margaret left all that she had to charity. She provided an extraordinary witness to the admonition of the Lord Jesus: "Let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

I am convinced that the most effective way to preach the Gospel message is by the witness of our lives. Margaret Haughery has provided a powerful witness!

Archdiocese to tackle racial issues with workshop



Peter
FINNEY JR
CLARION HERALD

First, the good news. In mid-December, the One Community Initiative, a collaborative of local print, broadcast, cable and electronic media, released the results of a benchmark survey of race relations and attitudes in the greater New Orleans area.

One of the surprising results, at least to University of New Orleans Survey Research Center director Dr. Robert Sims, was that race relations actually ended up in last place among problems "people consider to be significant" in this region.

Of course, the survey of 525 Caucasian, African-American, Asian and Hispanic people in Orleans, Jefferson and surrounding civil parishes was taken in early October when gas prices were still hovering above \$3 a gallon and the nation was finally awakening to the gathering global financial storm.

When given a list of items to evaluate, more than half the respondents indicated that race relations were either "somewhat" or "a great deal" of a problem.

"Nonetheless, there were many other problems considered a greater problem than race relations," Sims said. "At least in terms of public perception, race relations are fairly good here relative to other parts of the country, and racial groups are not necessarily looking at each other in the community with particular animosity."

While that result might seem to be comforting on one level, the media collaborative is committed to following up the survey on a yearly basis to see if there are any significant changes. Randall Feldman, president and general manager of WYES-TV, said the issue of race relations and racial attitudes in New Orleans was "brought to the fore by the national media during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina," which is why the survey targeted race in order to get some benchmark figures.

"It is only natural that the local media should want to work toward ways of improving the situation," Feldman said. "The first step is to find out where we are. ... Our organizations have agreed not to walk away (from the issue) because the road may be hazardous."

Among the many steps the Archdiocese of New Orleans has taken to combat racial tension has been the impor-

tant pastoral letter on racial harmony written by Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes and released in December 2006. Archbishop Hughes traced the landmark pastoral on racism by Archbishop Joseph Rummel, who in 1956 called for the desegregation of Catholic schools. Archbishop Hughes pledged the archdiocese to do more to heal the divide that still exists among the races.

Among the initiatives the pastoral letter called for were continuing educational opportunities that would allow people of all races to learn from and with each other. One such forum will take place Jan. 10 when Missionaries of the Precious Blood Father Clarence Williams will offer a "Racial Sobriety" workshop, which is open to all parishioners in the archdiocese.

Father Williams is director of the Office for Black Catholic Ministries in the Archdiocese of Detroit and has offered his insights on race relations for the last 35 years. Why did he choose the word "sobriety" to describe his work?

"It's a definition," Father Williams said. "Sobriety is a commitment to seeing each person as my brother or sister. That's what racial sobriety is – a commitment. It's seeing others as being entitled to respect. Racial sobriety is


a commitment each day to intervene on our 'stinking thinking' on race relations."

Father Williams can speak from personal experience about the power of racial sin. When he was growing up in Cleveland, he had the desire to study for the diocesan priesthood but was denied entry into the local seminary because he was black. He wound up studying for his religious order.

"That was the policy in Cleveland at the time, and as I grew in formation I realized religious priests were given the black parishes," Father Williams said. "It saddened me but it didn't discourage me. This was at a time when black people were feeling discrimination in the legal profession and medical profession, and it saddened me that it was in my own religion. I think over the last four decades there has been a change in moral commitment. Yes, it still is a chronic disease, but the treatment program that we're taking has helped us do better."

The Racial Sobriety Workshop will be held Jan. 10 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Schulte Auditorium, Notre Dame Seminary. Cost is \$15. Call the Office of Racial Harmony at (504) 861-6272 for more information.

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