



The Life & Spirituality of St. Julie Billiart

*What connections do you see between St. Julie's life and spirituality,
and your school today?*





Cuvilly, France Birthplace of St. Julie Billiart b. 1751- d. 1816



Mere Julie



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Billiard family home, Cuvilly, France



Born in 1751 to a family of modest means; 7th of 8 children. Father was a farmer, linen merchant and shopkeeper. Today, the house where Julie was born in Cuvilly, France is a museum.



Refugee during French Revolution

Julie grew up during a time of tremendous political unrest and lived through the French Revolution and Reign of Terror.

She remained loyal to the pope and her local clergy despite violence against the church.

After an attempt on her father's life, she became paralyzed and was unable to walk for 23 years.

There were many terrifying times when Julie had to hide from the revolutionaries and be carried from place to place as a refugee, once hidden in a haycart.





In hiding in Gournay-sur-Aronde

Because of her loyalty to the Pope, Julie was hunted by revolutionaries. Wealthy women in the area moved her to their own estates. Gournay-sur-Aronde, where Julie and her niece were taken by hay cart narrowly escaping the mob rioting against the Church.



Death to the Aristocrats 1792 scratched on the exterior wall of Julie's hiding place.

Physical and psychological trauma



Julie experienced paralysis and pain throughout much of her life, symptoms akin to MS, and required regular assistance. At times she was unable to speak.

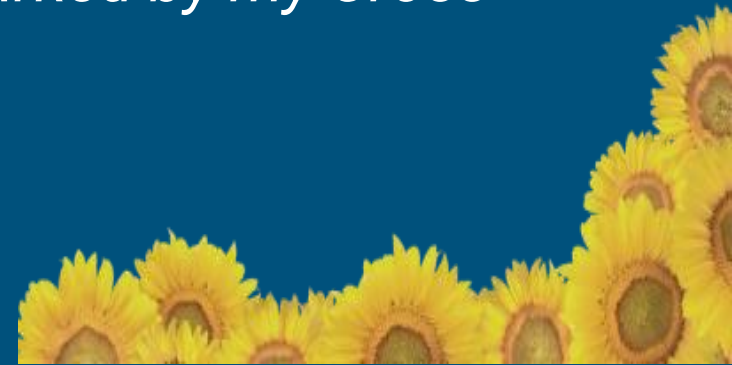


Mystical Visions



While recovering from illness in Compiègne, France, Julie experienced a vision during her prayer of a group of sisters surrounding the cross. This was the vision of her apostolic work that would be marked by the cross.

“Behold the spiritual daughters whom I give to you in the Institute which will be marked by my Cross”





Amiens, France



One of her benefactors moved her to the Blin home in Amiens where she meets Françoise Blin de Bourdon (1794).

Julie & Françoise became friends with a mutual interest in addressing the needs of the people suffering from the aftereffects of the French Revolution.

Above: Depiction of the first meeting of Françoise and Julie (by Sr. Vincent de Paul, SNDdeN)



Françoise Blin de Bourdon

Mere St. Joseph



Born in 1756, to a wealthy family of aristocrats, presented at the Court of Versailles. Raised in the area around Amiens, France.

She has the same birth year as Mozart whom she may have met when he performed for the French king.

Imprisoned with her father and brother during the Reign of Terror. Released when Robespierre fell, days before they were scheduled to be guillotined.

b. 1756 d. 1838



Early Beginnings

1804: Julie Billiart, Françoise Blin de Bourdon, and Catherine Duchatel take vows as Sisters of Notre Dame devoting themselves to the education of young girls, especially the poor, and to the formation of teachers.

They began with a school for poor girls, who were uneducated, and they took a vow to train teachers. This school thrived since they were educating girls who had no other opportunities for education.

1806: Opened a school in the Flanders section of Belgium which was Flemish speaking, their first international mission; the Sisters only spoke French. They managed after receiving women into the order who were native Flemish speakers.

1807: Opened a school in Namur, in the French part of Belgium. Françoise then spent most of her time in Namur.



Blin Home in Amiens, France



From Amiens to Namur

While Julie was staying in Amiens apart from Françoise, whose family of aristocrats were well known in Amiens, Julie was the subject of verbal abuse from members of the clergy.

One priest set the local bishop against her by insisting that he should be in charge of our sisters and that he should oversee Françoise's money. They were told if they didn't accept that condition, they had to leave Amiens. On January 12, 1809, they received a letter of dismissal from the bishop of Amiens.



SISTERS OF
NOTRE DAME
DE NAMUR



From Amiens to Namur: *With Hearts as Wide as the World*

1809: The Bishop of Namur, Msgr. Pisani de la Gaude, invited the Sisters to make Namur Belgium their Motherhouse.

The Notre Dame school still thrives there, more than 225 years later!





Namur, Belgium

1816: Julie dies.

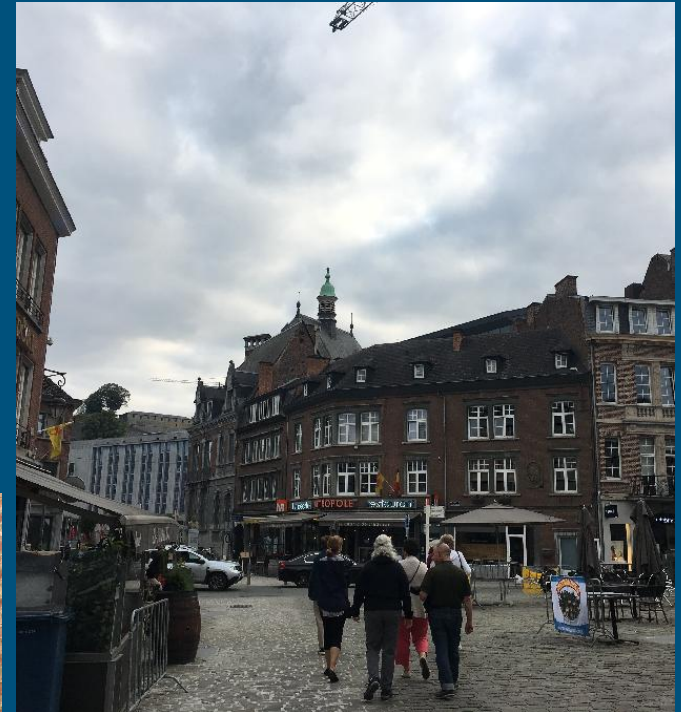
Françoise assumes leadership of the congregation.

Congregation expands through Europe, then to North, South and Central America, Africa and Asia.





Notre Dame Heritage Centre Namur, Belgium



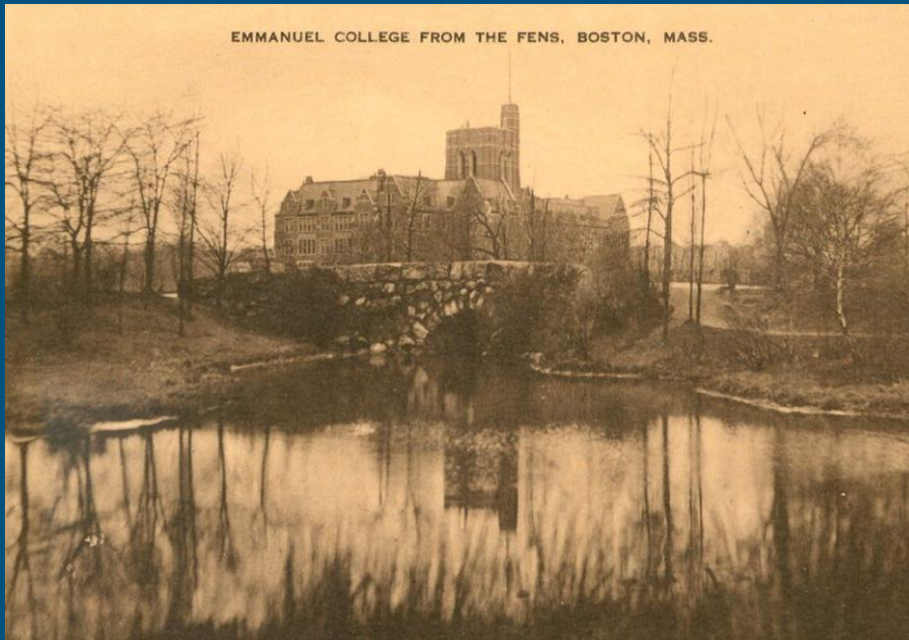
Graves of Julie & Françoise at
the Notre Dame Heritage
Centre



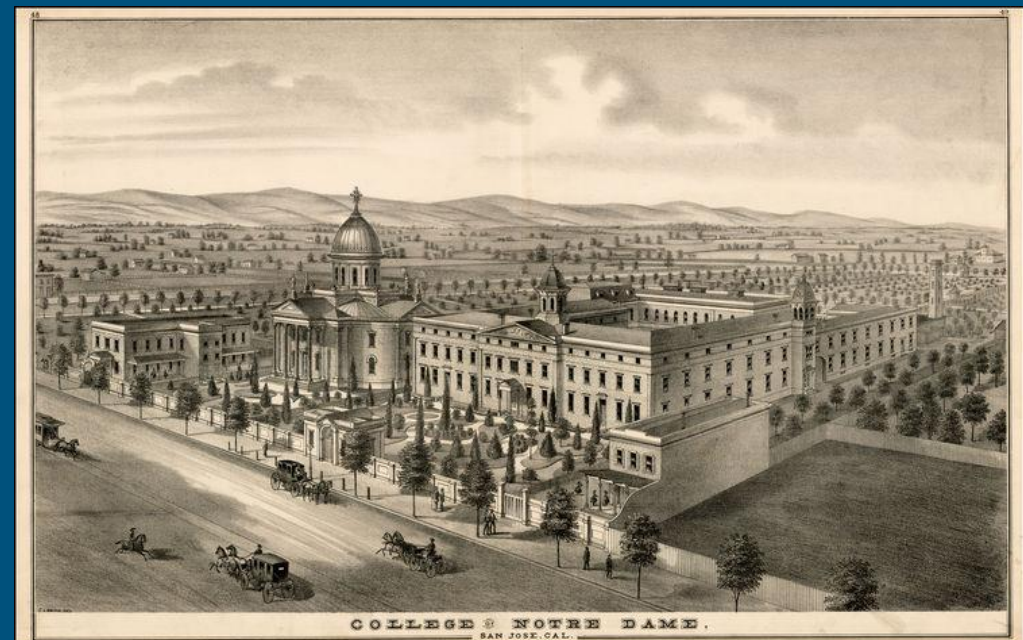


From Namur to the US

- Sisters came to US in 1840 (Ohio), 1847 (Oregon), 1849 (Boston's North End), 1851 (California), 1853 (Lowell), 1856 (Philadelphia)
- Boston Academy of Notre Dame opened in 1854 in Roxbury. First Catholic school for girls in New England.
- College of Notre Dame in California founded in 1868. First in the state of California to grant college degrees to women.



Emmanuel College Boston, Mass., circa 1919



College of Notre Dame, San Jose, Calif., circa 1876



Notre Dame de Namur Ministries in the US Today

CALIFORNIA:

Moreland Notre Dame Elementary – Watsonville
Notre Dame de Namur University – Belmont
Notre Dame Elementary School – Belmont
Notre Dame High School – Belmont
Notre Dame High School – San Jose

CONNECTICUT:

Julie House – Windsor

MARYLAND/DC:

Maryvale Prep – Lutherville
Sisters Academy – Baltimore
Trinity Elementary School – Ellicott City
Notre Dame Mission Volunteers/ Americorps
Trinity University – Washington, DC

PENNSYLVANIA

Academy of Notre Dame de Namur, Villanova

MASSACHUSETTS:

Academy of Notre Dame – Tyngsboro
Cuvilly Earth Education Center – Ipswich
Emmanuel College – Boston
Notre Dame Academy – Hingham
Notre Dame Academy - Worcester
Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School – Methuen
Notre Dame Education Center – Lawrence
Notre Dame Health Care Center – Worcester
Notre Dame Virtual School
St. Julie Billiart Residential Care Center – Ipswich
St. Patrick School and Educational Center – Lowell

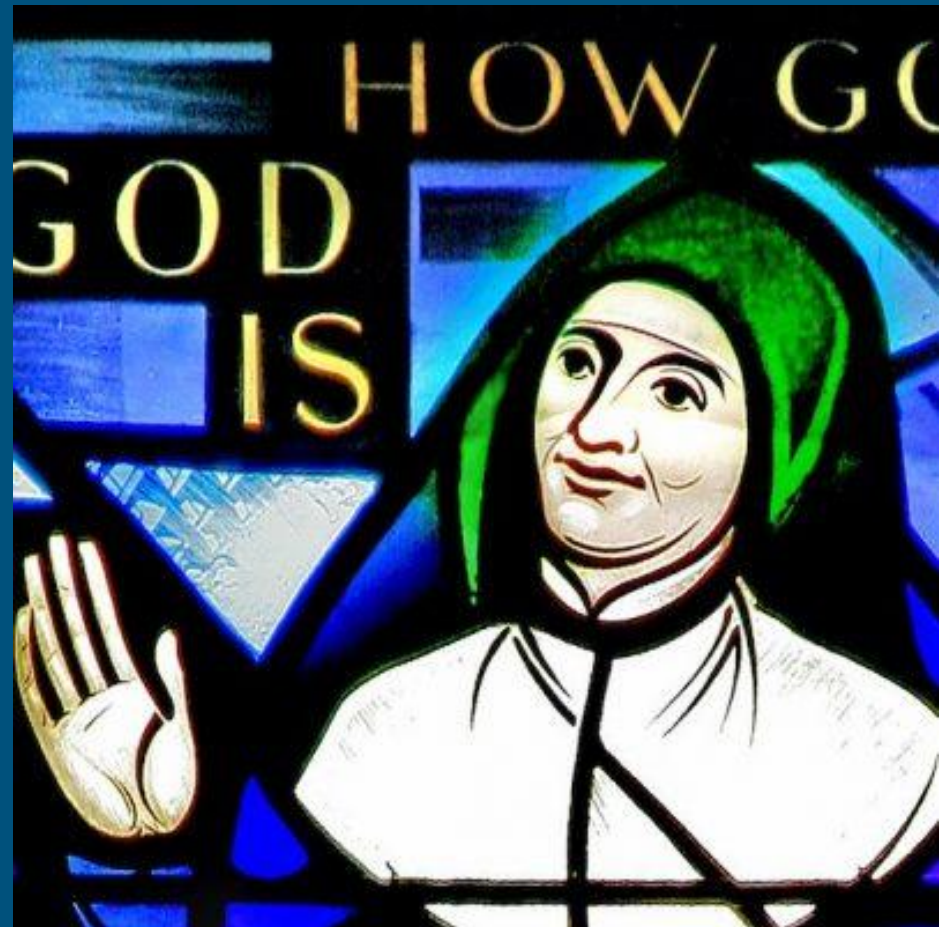
OHIO:

Chaminade Julianne High School - Dayton
Mount Notre Dame Health Center - Cincinnati
Mount Notre Dame High School – Cincinnati
Summit Country Day School – Cincinnati
Stephen T. Badin High School - Hamilton



St. Julie Billiard's Spirituality

- ❖ At the core of Notre Dame spirituality is Julie's belief and experiences that "God is good! How good is the good God!"
- ❖ The aim of her life was to love and bring others to love this God whom she knew to be good.
- ❖ Spirituality of goodness grounded in tumultuous life experiences.





Symbols of St. Julie's Spirituality



Cross: *Behold the spiritual daughters whom I give to you in the Institute which will be marked by my Cross. **Ah! Qu'il est bon le bon Dieu!** How good is the Good God!*

Bell: *Julie announced through the streets of Amiens announcing a new free school for girls.*

Sunflower: *Turn toward God always as a sunflower turns toward the sun.*

Crystals: *Represent inner clarity and simplicity; a soul reflects God's love and goodness.*

Resources:

**EMBRACING THE
MISSION**
MAKING KNOWN GOD'S GOODNESS
— A RESOURCE GUIDE —



SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR
U.S. East-West Province

A Mission Forward

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Partners in Mission Resource Site

