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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Six years ago, the *Forgive Us Our Trespasses* enslaved persons project was launched by the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Its goal was to research the role of the historical archdiocese in the enslavement of people and to uncover the names of those held in bondage by the bishops and clergy of the historical Archdiocese of St. Louis. In that way we can bring to light the contributions and untold stories of those who were enslaved by the local Church.

The following report is the culmination of pouring over thousands of documents from research institutions all over the world. The report represents the entirety of that research and what is currently known regarding the enslavement of people by diocesan clergy and bishops within the historical boundaries of the archdiocese. The research will continue, and if new evidence is uncovered, it will be added to the report.

We present the findings within this report with penitent hearts, so that we may begin the work of healing and continue to work toward the eradication of the sin of racism.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski
Archbishop of St. Louis

Slavery in the Historic Archdiocese of St. Louis

First Edition, June 2024

Introduction

The following report presents research on the historical involvement of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. Louis and its predecessor dioceses in slavery and its use of the labor of enslaved people in the nineteenth century. In addition to compiling data about the historical involvement of the archdiocese in slavery, another equally important goal is to identify the individuals enslaved by diocesan bishops and clergy, discover their stories, and map out their families and descendants. The report utilizes both published and unpublished sources, including records from the collections of the Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Project Background and Goals

This research was self-initiated by the Archdiocese of St. Louis in 2018 to provide then Archbishop Robert Carlson with a better understanding of the use of the labor of enslaved people by the bishops and clergy of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and its predecessor dioceses.

In the fall of 2020, newly installed Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski authorized an expansion of the previous efforts. In a spirit of penitence and healing, Archbishop Rozanski tasked the expanded project with the following goals:

- 1) Promote open and honest access to the historic record of enslavement within the local Catholic Church.
- 2) Promote community engagement and encourage dialog regarding the many legacies of slavery in the local community.

Archbishop Rozanski also provided the project with its name: *Forgive Us Our Trespasses*.

The *Forgive Us Our Trespasses* committee continued its research efforts and worked to produce this report. Additionally, the committee planned community engagement activities. The first of these was the annual Maafa Prayer Service and Procession, held at the Basilica of Saint Louis, King of France (the “Old Cathedral”) on June 18, 2022.

This report was reviewed, completed, and released in conjunction with the third annual Maafa on June 22, 2024.

Overview of the Findings

Each of the first three bishops seated in St. Louis were enslavers: Bishop William Louis Valentine DuBourg, PSS (Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas), Bishop Joseph Rosati, CM (Diocese of St. Louis), and Bishop/Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick (Diocese/Archdiocese of St. Louis). The research team identified enslaved people held by these bishops as well as diocesan priests. This document presents what is currently known regarding their involvement in the slave trade and use of the labor of specific enslaved people.

The report identifies the names of 99 enslaved people enslaved by Catholic clergy. Of these, 44 were enslaved by diocesan bishops and clergy. In the context of this report, “diocesan” is defined as being priests (clergy) ministering in the geographic boundaries of the diocese under the authority of Bishops DuBourg, Rosati, or Kenrick. These numbers are not definitive – there are more people enslaved by clergy who are cited but unidentified or yet to be uncovered. Moreover, the report notes additional clergy members who were involved in the sales of enslaved people between other clergy, or who rented or had some authority over enslaved people but did not legally hold them as property.

The report finds:

- 19 people were enslaved by Bishop DuBourg. 17 of these people are identified by name.
- 23 people were identified as being enslaved by Bishop Rosati. 21 of these people are identified by name.
- 4 people were identified by name as enslaved by Archbishop Kenrick. There are up to 6 additional unidentified people who were enslaved by Kenrick.
- 20 people identified by name as being enslaved by 11 diocesan priests.

Note: some of these numbers overlap, as one person may have been enslaved by multiple bishops and priests. There remain at least 30 unidentified people who were enslaved by diocesan bishops and clergy. It is possible some of these people may be named in the report already, but no evidence has been found to match those unidentified people to the named enslaved individuals.

In addition, the report discusses enslaved people held in bondage by seven other clergy of historical interest to the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Fathers Pierre Gibault and James Maxwell missioned in Missouri and enslaved at least nine identified people before DuBourg became bishop. Two Capuchin priests, Fathers Bernard de Limpach and Bernardo de Deva, missioned in St. Louis and the greater Illinois Country. The report identifies by name four people they enslaved, and between 10-14 unidentified people. Two Dominican priests, Fathers Jean Antoine Le Dru and Gabriel Isabey, missioned in French Louisiana, which included current-day Missouri, Illinois, and Louisiana. The report identifies 10 people they enslaved. Le Dru had enslaved people while serving in Missouri. Additionally, the report identifies three people enslaved by a priest named Turgot, identified as the Vicar General of Illinois according to a secondary source.

The report explores the biography and background of each ordinary and clergy and extensively cite their exposure to, involvement in, and known views on slavery. The report also provides a biography of each individually named enslaved person held in bondage by the ordinaries and clergy based on the available research. In some documents the enslaved people were not named at all, and it is possible that they are the same as a person already discussed or a new person yet to be identified.

In some instances, various clergy bought and sold enslaved people. To reduce confusion, the narrative of the individuals’ stories has been kept intact, rather than parsing out details across

multiple enslavers. If documentation for a particular enslaved person is limited, it may seem like their story abruptly begins or ends. Research into their lives is ongoing.

It should be noted that quotes used from some primary and secondary sources are from the perspective of enslavers and do not accurately reflect the lived experience or character of enslaved people. In some cases, enslavers described enslaved people as having difficult behavior; however, enslaved people would commonly make life uncomfortable or difficult for their enslavers as a form of resistance to their bondage. For example, slowing down the pace of work, forgetting or breaking tools, or spinning tales impeded the business of the enslavers and empowered enslaved people to take control of some aspects of their lives.

Often the property of diocesan bishops and clergy passed between diocesan clergy and religious orders.ⁱ Therefore, the report includes research on enslaved people who may not have been directly enslaved by diocesan bishops or clergy. In following the research trail of the life stories of individuals beyond their enslavement by diocesan clergy, the report touches on slavery practiced by religious orders who maintain a local presence. The focus of this report, however, remains on involvement by diocesan clergy and bishops. Many religious orders have conducted detailed research on people enslaved by their order within the historical boundaries of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and elsewhere. Contact them directly for more information on their findings.

The report includes all documentation on enslaved people identified so far in the Archdiocese of St. Louis Archives regardless of the geographical place it covers, with records dating as far back as the mid-1700s. Thus, it presents documentation on enslaved people who resided in regions outside of the current boundaries of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, including the present-day states of Missouri, Illinois, Louisiana, Texas, Indiana, and Kentucky.

The first evidence of people enslaved by Catholic clergy in St. Louis is found in the first day of entries in the Old Cathedral sacramental register, June 24, 1776, as discussed in the report subsection *People Enslaved by Rev. Bernard de Limpach, OFM Cap.* At that time, the Diocese of Santiago de Cuba was responsible for St. Louis, as it resided in the Spanish Louisiana Territory. As the European presence and Catholic population grew, the Vatican adjusted diocesan boundaries and created new dioceses to oversee territories. In 1787, the Diocese of San Cristobal de la Habana was formed to take over Cuba, the Louisiana Territory, and the Florida colonies from the Diocese of Santiago de Cuba. The Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas was erected on April 25, 1793. Bishop William DuBourg was appointed an apostolic delegate of the

ⁱ A religious order is a community of people who dedicate themselves to a specific religious devotion. There are religious orders of men and religious orders of women. A superior oversees a religious order, while a bishop manages a diocese. While they are under separate lines of authority, both report to the pope. Religious orders may minister anywhere in the world where they have a presence, while diocesan bishops and clergy only minister in the geographic territory of that diocese. If a religious order is ministering within a diocese, the superior and the bishop typically coordinate the religious order's activities, such as operating a hospital, teaching at a school, or running a parish.

new diocese (1812-1815) and then its first bishop (1815-1826) when he moved the seat of the diocese from New Orleans to St. Louis. On July 18, 1826, the Diocese of St. Louis was erected, initially overseeing the State of Missouri, the Arkansas Territory, territory of the Louisiana Purchase, and the western half of the State of Illinois. When the diocese was elevated to the Archdiocese of St. Louis on July 20, 1847, it comprised only the State of Missouri, and was eventually reduced to its current boundaries in 1956.

Research Challenges

The records were written in several languages, primarily French, Latin, and English, and the record creators identified enslaved people using a variety of terminology, including but not limited to:

- Slave
- Servant: A euphemistic term for an enslaved person.
- Boy or Girl: A diminutive term used to describe a person regardless of their age.
- Little: A diminutive term used to describe enslaved people, including adults, that did not specify their age.
- Black or colored
- Negro or Negress: Variations on the term include negrillon or negritte to describe a small black child, male and female respectively.
- Mulatto: A person of mixed Black and white ancestry.
- Griffe: A person with three-quarters Black and one-quarter white ancestry.
- Creole: A person of mixed Black and white ancestry. The term is especially used in the Caribbean and Louisiana and was sometimes used in Missouri.
- Chattels Personal: Term used for enslaved people being transported.

When quoted or paraphrased, the report may use the source's original word used to describe the person, but it is usually translated to the English equivalent.

Record creators might only mention an enslaved person in passing using one of these terms rather than by name, or they might use the first name only. Research required a careful eye in identifying and interpreting vaguely worded records. Looking carefully at dates, locations, and enslavers, researchers were often able to match unidentified individuals with a known person. In other cases, the records are still presented in the report noting people who are yet to be identified by name. The hope is that further research will allow us to name all the people enslaved by clergy in the Archdiocese of St. Louis and its predecessor dioceses.

Because record creators only used first names and not surnames when discussing enslaved people, another difficulty was distinguishing people who had the same name. For example, there were two women by the name of Minty. One married Henry (Harry) Nesbit sometime between 1829 and 1831 after his first wife Jenny Burch Nesbit died. The other Minty married Harry's son Charles in 1829. Context clues of dates, locations, and people helped distinguish enslaved people and their family units. Individuals were identified with surnames in the headings if the sources indicated that information.

Lastly, it should be noted that a person's name might be spelled differently across documents, or inconsistent names applied to same person. For example, Henry and Harry were used interchangeably to discuss the same man. Particularly in the 19th century, Harry was an English nickname for Henry. Harry Nesbit's wife was always called Jenny except for her death record, where she was called Eugenia. Certainly, Jenny could have been a nickname, but it is unclear what was her given name at birth. Moreover, it is unclear whether enslaved people had a preferred name or nickname other than those used by enslavers in the documentation. For example, the name of Harry's son Clement Nesbit was often documented as "Clem," including in censuses and civil records after emancipation, indicating he may have used the shortened version.

Conducting African American Genealogy Research into Catholic Records

Visit the Genealogy webpage of the Archdiocese of St. Louis Archives to find information on how to search Catholic sacramental records, some of which are digitized and available online. Content on African American Genealogy provides helpful information on researching Catholic records. A list and map of historical African American parishes and institutions in the Archdiocese of St. Louis is also available. There are several local organizations that provide resources for genealogists: the St. Louis African American Genealogy Society, the St. Louis Genealogical Society, the St. Louis County Library, and the St. Louis Public Library Special Collections.

Avenues of Future Research

The Archdiocese of St. Louis continues to examine our own files and make periodic updates to this report as new findings are compiled and integrated. Research will continue into primary source records at a variety of institutions, including academic, diocesan, religious order, and civil archives.

The archdiocese is working with other institutions as they conduct research into their own history with slavery and in the process discover and share findings related to other dioceses and religious orders. Together we can develop individuals' stories and family trees and then broaden the collective understanding of the legacy of slavery within the Catholic Church.

Researchers and descendants of enslaved people are welcome to research the records at the Office of Archives and Records.

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Slavery in Early St. Louis

Slavery was an established practice amongst colonizers in St. Louis and the greater French Louisiana when Father Sebastian Meurin began the first sacramental register at St. Louis in 1766 in a tent, as there was no church built yet. This register is now considered that of the Basilica of St. Louis, King of France, known locally as the Old Cathedral. Due to their French Catholic heritage, St. Louisans were governed by practices in the *Code Noir*, or the “Black Code.” The governor of Louisiana enacted the *Code Noir* in 1724 based on the original proclamation of 1685 from the King of France. Among its directives, the law decreed that all enslaved people were to be instructed in Catholicism and baptized. For this reason, the early registers of parishes erected in the colonial era contain the sacraments of many people enslaved by private individuals and Catholic clergy.

Father Meurin missioned to areas in Upper Louisiana and recorded the sacraments of Catholic residents. Meurin was originally a Jesuit and became a Capuchin when the Jesuit order was suppressed beginning in 1759. In the four years he had the occasion to visit St. Louis between 1766 and 1769, he recorded 52 baptisms. Over half of the baptism recipients were enslaved. A third of the baptisms, 17, were for people of French/European ancestry. Eight were indigenous people, six of whom were enslaved. Twenty-seven were people of African descent, 26 of whom were enslaved. These records reflect the ethnic diversity of early St. Louis and stark pervasiveness of slavery in the region.

The records also provide important information about St. Louis residents, both free and enslaved. The earliest historical evidence of a free Black family living in St. Louis comes from the baptismal record of Jean Paul on September 1, 1767. Jean Paul's parents were noted as Gregoire and Janette, "négres libres," or "free Blacks." The first baptismal record of an enslaved person of African descent in St. Louis was on September 1, 1767, for Antoine, whose unidentified parents were enslaved by Pierre Laclede, considered a "founding father" of St. Louis. That same year on October 20, Meurin recorded the baptism of twelve children enslaved by Madame Marie Therese Chouteau, considered the "mother" of St. Louis. Only the first child's name is recorded in the register, Louis, son of Marie Catherine.

Bishop William Louis Valentine DuBourg, PSS

The DuBourg Family's History with Slavery

As a priest and later as bishop, William DuBourg purchased enslaved people. According to historian Michael Pasquier, "perhaps more than any other missionary priest in North America, was responsible for convincing religious and diocesan priests of the necessity of slave labor."¹ By examining DuBourg's family background, it is apparent he was no stranger to the inhuman practice of slavery prior to arriving in the U.S. DuBourg was born in 1766 in Cap-Français on the Caribbean Island of Saint-Domingueⁱⁱ on which there were forty enslaved for every one white person.² When DuBourg's mother Marguerite Armand de Vogluzan died before he was three years old, his father Pierre DuBourg decided to send his youngest children, including William, to Bordeaux, France, to stay with relatives while attending school. DuBourg only spent his first two years of life in the colony, but his family's endeavors would have long-lasting effects on his views of slavery.

Hailing from a family of the lower aristocracy, Pierre DuBourg was a ship captain and merchant. Around 1765, he moved his family from Bordeaux to the French colony of Saint-Domingue, where he expanded his family's wealth into coffee plantations.³ Saint-Domingue was France's premier financial investment primarily based on the production of sugar and coffee. Colonists like the DuBourg family brought hundreds of thousands of African enslaved people to the island to work the plantations. By 1789, the population was estimated at 32,000 European colonists, 24,000 *affranchis* (free mulattos or blacks), and astoundingly, 500,000 enslaved people.⁴ Slavery practices in the colony were known to be particularly brutal with extremely high rates of mortality and violence. The DuBourg family enslaved people to work the coffee plantations.

Aside from enslaving people, Pierre DuBourg also played a major role in the cross-Atlantic slave trade as a ship captain. Records show that he transported West African enslaved people to Saint-Domingue on at least four occasions from 1766 to 1777. See the chart below. The journey across the Atlantic was fraught with danger, and the conditions in which enslaved people were kept were even more deadly. Of the 1,393 enslaved people brought on to Pierre's ships, only 1,171 disembarked in Saint-Domingue for a life of further hardship.⁵

ⁱⁱ Cap-Français, Saint-Domingue is now Cap-Haitien, Haiti.

Ship Voyages Made by Pierre DuBourg in Transporting Enslaved People⁶

West African Port of Origin of Enslaved People	Where Enslaved Disembarked in Saint-Domingue	Year Arrived	Number of Enslaved at Outset of Voyage	Number of Enslaved Who Disembarked	Vessel Name
Calabar	Les Cayes	1767	270	157	Arrada
Loango	Cap-Français	1772	348	317	Angola
Whydah	Cap-Français	1774	367	313	Comte de Saint Germain
Saint-Marc	Saint-Marc	1777	408	384	Baron de Montmorency

In the early 1790s, the Haitian Revolution violently unfolded as enslaved people took control of the island, eventually leading to the founding of the Republic of Haiti where slavery was outlawed. The DuBourg family fled Saint-Domingue in the summer of 1793 when their home burned down along with most of Cap-Français. The majority of the DuBourg family arrived in Baltimore, Maryland.⁷ While his family was scattered across the Europe and the Americas, then-Father William DuBourg was a refugee in Spain, having been exiled from France during the French Revolution. He would reunite with his family in Baltimore in 1795, where they continued to enslave people.

Bishop DuBourg's brother Pierre-François DuBourg was among the many Saint-Domingue refugees who eventually made their way to New Orleans. He continued his father's business of transporting enslaved people.

On March 26, 1804, after gaining control of the Louisiana Purchase, the U.S. Congress passed an act forbidding the importation of enslaved people into the Louisiana Territory. Months later, Pierre-François requested permission to deliver enslaved people to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In a letter of October 28 from Louisiana Governor William C. C. Claiborne to President James Madison, he described that "Mr. DuBourg, a respectable merchant of this City" had an expected ship enter the Mississippi River at New Orleans and asked that "the Negroes might be permitted to land." The ship had been severely delayed by bad weather. Claiborne stated that DuBourg presented a document of "permission from the Spanish Governor (*Grand Pré*) to introduce into the Settlement of Baton Rouge, Sixty Negroes...I permitted him to land the Negroes upon giving me on oath their names, and number, and satisfactory assurances, that they should be forthcoming on the arrival of the judge."⁸

In 1812, Pierre-François's daughter Aglae married Michael Doradou Bringier, with whom Bishop DuBourg exchanged an enslaved man named Jesse in 1826.ⁱⁱⁱ

In 1828, the French government awarded indemnities to French residents in Saint-Domingue who had lost property during the Haitian revolution. Three heirs of Pierre DuBourg were among those entitled to receive compensation, namely Pierre-François de Sainte-Colombe, Louis-Joseph and [Bishop] Louis-Guillaume-Valentine for their house and coffee plantation.

ⁱⁱⁱ Read more about Jesse Nesbit and the legal arrangement in the section "Persons Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg."

However, the indemnities did not amount to what DuBourg had expected or needed to pay off his debts, a topic that is discussed later in his use of enslaved people as financial collateral. In a letter to Rosati in 1829, he wrote, "I had counted on my savings, to gradually wipe out my debt. But I am still not free of debts that I had foolishly contracted ... The indemnity that I had hoped to (receive) from our loss in St. Domingue appears to be reduced to nothing."⁹

DuBourg in Baltimore

William DuBourg was ordained as a priest of the Society of Saint Sulpice (PSS) on March 20, 1790 in Paris, France. In 1792, then-Father DuBourg fled with other priests from France to Spain during the French Revolution's Reign of Terror. In 1794, Dubourg sailed from Spain to Baltimore, Maryland.¹⁰

In Baltimore, there were many white refugees from the Haitian Revolution at Saint-Domingue who had brought enslaved people with them. On July 3, 1796, DuBourg began a catechism class on Sunday afternoons for people of color:¹¹

In the basement of [the Baltimore Sulpician] seminary known as 'Chapelle Basse' a catechism class was organized for colored adults. Dubourg, afterwards Bishop of New Orleans, was the teacher. When Dubourg left Baltimore, [Jean-Marie] Tessier took over the class and continued it for thirty years.¹²

In the late 1820s, under the direction of [James] Joubert, PSS, it became "the origin of the present religious institute of females of color, the Oblates and their school."¹³ The Oblate Sisters of Providence was the first religious order to be founded for Black Catholic sisters in the U.S. The order was initially primarily comprised by refugees of color displaced by the Haitian Revolution.

DuBourg served as the third president of Georgetown College in Washington, DC from 1796 to 1798, which later became Georgetown University. In 1799 along with two Sulpician priests, DuBourg founded St. Mary's College and became its first president.¹⁴ The college, also called the "French Academy," was a lay school for boys within the St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore. There were enslaved people held at both Georgetown and St. Mary's.

Although Tessier was the superior of the Sulpician community in Baltimore, Dubourg had seven enslaved people listed under his name in the 1810 U.S. Census for Baltimore. Records do not provide information as to whether they worked at the college or the community house.¹⁵

At the suggestion of Dubourg, Father John Dubois founded Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Frederick, Maryland, in 1808. DuBourg made many decisions about obtaining the property for the seminary without first consulting DuBois. According to historian Kevin Starr's research, "DuBourg had persuaded Arnold Elder and his wife to donate their farm and its slaves to the seminary in exchange for an annuity of eight hundred dollars a year."¹⁶ In a letter in 1812, Dubois described Dubourg's choices in detail, including Dubourg's rationale for taking Elder's property:

[DuBourg] observed that he had all the negroes, horses and other animals, except for one negro and a little negro, two horses and two cows, and what

animals they would have to kill for food until the plantation would be handed over to us. It was in vain that I represented to him ... that the negroes altogether were not worth \$1500; that there were two of them that would be a charge rather than a profit;¹⁷

Later in the same letter, DuBois described a situation in which Tessier and DuBourg recommended that DuBois send an enslaved man to Baltimore to be sold, but DuBois did not know whether he had been sold yet. ¹⁸

DuBois explained how in some cases, parents of students would loan enslaved people to the seminary in lieu of tuition for their sons:

There are two other boys who have paid by giving us a negro apiece, one for three years and the other for five." DuBois is more specific when he names two of the boys "LAWRENCE JAMISON: His father gave us an excellent negro laborer, faithful and full of piety, in return for the board of his son or for one of his brothers after him for five years.... JAMES TANEY: Destined for the ecclesiastical state; His father has given us a young negro for three years for his education and board; ...¹⁹

DuBourg in St. Louis

DuBourg was appointed as apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas in 1812. In 1815, he traveled to Europe to recruit clergy and raise money for the diocese. While visiting Rome, Pope Pius VII appointed DuBourg as the Bishop of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas. DuBourg was consecrated on September 24, 1815. While in Europe from 1815 to early 1817, DuBourg secured missionaries from the Vincentians and the Society of the Sacred Heart, who would follow him to Missouri in 1818.

Bishop DuBourg had encountered resistance to his authority at the diocesan seat of New Orleans when he resided there as the apostolic administrator. To avoid further contention in New Orleans, he declared the fledgling town of St. Louis his new episcopal seat instead. Selecting St. Louis was an unusual choice as the town contained far fewer residents and did not have the established religious institutions of New Orleans.

DuBourg arrived in St. Louis on January 5, 1818, and was promptly installed as Bishop in the run-down log cathedral. Only two days after his arrival, DuBourg met with parishioners and received pledges to build a new church. The church was an important community landmark, and both Catholic and non-Catholic St. Louisans pledged money for its construction. DuBourg's financial ledger records the donation of at least one free person of color, a woman named Flora, for \$1.²⁰ Due to financial issues brought on by an economic recession, the church was never actually completed. Even so, Bishop DuBourg blessed the incomplete cathedral on January 9, 1820.

Slavery at St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary

The Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians) arrived in Perry County, Missouri, in October 1818 where they established St. Mary of the Barrens Seminary as the diocesan seminary and

plantation. Then-Father Joseph Rosati, CM, was among the first priests to establish the seminary. The records of numerous people held in bondage at the seminary are documented in the book, *Church and Slave in Perry County, Missouri 1818-1865*, written by Fathers Stafford Poole, CM, and Douglas J. Slawson, CM They establish Dubourg's responsibility for introducing slavery to the Vincentians:

Slaveholding at the seminary originated with Bishop DuBourg. The first slaves were sent there by him, not purchased by the Vincentians. The bishop owned the seminary and was ultimately responsible for the entire support. Although it had been incorporated, the title rested with him. There was no distinction between the Bishop's property and the seminary's, and this included slaves.²¹

As the superior of the Vincentian community and seminary at St. Mary of the Barrens, then-Father Joseph Rosati, CM, had the authority to purchase or sell enslaved people. In 1820 there were two enslaved people at the seminary. By 1830, the U.S. census reported twenty-seven, the highest numbers of such people, "a figure that made Saint Mary's the largest slaveholder in [Perry] county."²² It was not until June 1833, six years after becoming bishop, that Rosati officially transferred the title of the seminary from the bishopric to the Vincentians.²³ Because Rosati was a Vincentian and the diocesan bishop, the enslavement of people by him and the Vincentians was fluid. Enslaved people were often passed back and forth between the cathedral in St. Louis, the St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville, and St. Vincent's College in Cape Girardeau. In 1840 there were fifteen people enslaved at the Barrens, and by 1860, only two older enslaved people were reported.

In Appendix IV of their book, Poole and Slawson provide "Timon's^{iv} Listing of Slaves in 1836" at the Barrens, referring to it in the footnote as an "undated report on seminary property." They further admit that "the ages of some of the slave children, however, would argue for a later date."²⁴ Examining the dates of births, marriages, ages, and letters regarding the names on the list, the list may have been recorded as late as 1840.

DuBourg decided to move to New Orleans in 1822, writing several letters during his travels from St. Louis. When he learned that Rosati could receive \$4,000 from the Vatican, DuBourg suggested that Rosati spend \$1,000 and use \$3,000 to buy "negroes" because they would be more productive.²⁵ In a second letter, he noted that Rosati could buy three families of "negroes" with that amount of money.²⁶ It does not appear that Dubourg nor Rosati ever received this money.

In a long letter from New Orleans in 1825, DuBourg wrote Rosati about a possibility for using some of the enslaved people. Mrs. Mary S. Smith had donated land to Dubourg in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, including some of the people she enslaved. DuBourg suggested that Rosati could draw at least ten times more advantage by putting most of the enslaved people at the proposed seminary in Lafourche, Louisiana, rather than using five or six of them to raise corn at

^{iv} Father John Timon, CM, studied at St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary in Perry County, Missouri, and was ordained by Bishop Rosati in 1825. After teaching at the seminary, he engaged in missionary activity, becoming provincial superior of the Vincentian congregation in 1825, and the first bishop of Buffalo, New York, in 1847.

the Barrens in Missouri, and recommended selling the rest.²⁷ The plans for the seminary and plantation did not materialize.

DuBourg's Resignation

After consecrating Joseph Rosati, CM, as co-adjutor bishop in 1824, DuBourg reluctantly returned to New Orleans from St. Louis in to face continued opposition from many directions. There was a situation with a priest and lay trustees at a church near New Orleans, the opposition to his episcopal appointment by a priest and the Cathedral Marguilliers^v in New Orleans, the failure to establish a seminary at Lafourche, and the financial debt of the diocese. All these weighed upon him and contributed to his decision to resign as bishop of the diocese. Despite his obsession in finding the best economical use of the labor of enslaved people, Dubourg was an excessive spender, borrowing money and leveraging the people he enslaved until his last days in the U.S. From his days in Maryland, Dubourg incurred debts without seemingly have a concern about where the money might come from. In New Orleans, he spent around \$30,000 on two large building projects.

In March of 1826, Dubourg leveraged two enslaved people named Anthony and Rachel to borrow money from his nephew-in-law to pay for his travels. Read more about the transaction of Anthony in the section *People Enslaved by Bishop William Dubourg*.

DuBourg's resignation, which was sent to Rome in February, was accepted by the Holy Father on July 2, the day that his ship entered the port of Havre. Soon after he arrived in France, he was named the Bishop of Montauban, France, followed by becoming Archbishop of Besançon, France on February 15, 1833, only to die in less than a year on December 12, 1833.

Ecclesiastical Issues Related to Slavery

Besides mention of enslaved people, several other ecclesiastical issues regarding slavery are found in the correspondence of Bishops William DuBourg and Joseph Rosati. These letters demonstrate the bishops' difficulties in reconciling the institution of slavery and its practices with the laws of the Catholic Church.

Documents in Rome show that DuBourg asked the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith^{vi} at the Vatican:

...if it was wise to 'disturb the consciences' of masters in matters related to the possession of slaves when civil laws protected the property rights of white citizens. He also expressed equivocation in his characterization of, on the one hand, the unfortunate necessity for slaves to work on the Sabbath in order to make money and grow crops for their own sustenance and, on the other, the preservation of public order by limiting the leisure time of 'the lowest class of

^v Marguilliers were trustees or church wardens, usually a group of male parishioners who made decisions about the local church, including who would be the pastor.

^{vi} The Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith was an administrative body within the Vatican that oversaw and supported "missionary" regions of the world, or areas where the Catholic Church was still establishing itself.

men.'

The footnote to this quote reads that "DuBourg demonstrated this frustration in his attempt to marry enslaved people when slaveholders refused to give their consent. Without the consent of masters and without adequate sacramental records, priests were unsure of how to canonically validate the marriages of enslaved people."²⁸

An 1831 letter from Bishop Leo-Raymond de Neckere to Rosati written from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, deals with similar ecclesiastical concerns related to slavery. One was about the marriage of enslaved men and women. De Neckere related how he

...is often presented with cases of negroes and negresses who wish to live as Christians and to be married, and that the masters often oppose it. I had an occasion to speak with several priests here, and one of them said that you received a response from Rome which would say to regard these marriages as natural and valid.

Another issue was whether enslaved people should work on Sunday:

I had the occasion to speak with Fr. Richard relative to the negroes, their working on Sunday and other things of the kind, he told me that he got from Bishop DuBourg that a council of Toledo (perhaps it ought to be the council of Lima) had decided that the negroes (I think in the Spanish colonies) are not bound to observe the laws of the Church, would you kindly verify this, by consulting the council books of Father Labbe that you have? And let me know the results.

In the same letter he asked if Rosati knew

...whether Rome had decided anything relative to the baptism of the newly arrived negroes from Africa in the colonies and elsewhere if one could confer baptism immediately without any previous instruction and consider them as children before the [age] of reason.^{vii 29}

People Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg

Bob

Bob is one of the first known people enslaved by DuBourg beginning in 1808, evidenced in a record from the time that DuBourg was at St. Mary's College in Baltimore, Maryland:

On the twelfth day of May one thousand eight hundred and eight Archibald McDonnell resident in Baltimore city has sold and delivered to Rev. Wm DuBourg a Negro Boy called Bob, about seven years old, son of Jeffery both belonging to Mr. Charles LeCompte of Dorchester County in the State of Maryland - the child had been bought by my uncle late Daniel McDonald, and devolved on me at his death – all which details & declare to be true, and in case there arose any

^{vii} In this instance, "age of reason" refers to the cognitive developmental stage at which children are capable of rational thought and decision-making.

difficulty on the lawfulness and validity of the present state I obligate myself, my heirs, executors and assign to refund to said Wm DuBourg the purchase money viz: one hundred and fifty dollars which I acknowledge to have received. The above obligation being, in my default, assumed by the witness John Liggatt who has signed with the present instrument on the [illegible script] above.

In presence of

Andrew [surname illegible]

Arch. MDonald

J. Liggat³⁰

DuBourg may have sold Bob before he left Baltimore for Louisiana in 1812 for there are no records that he brought any such person with him.

Polly

A document from the Ursuline Archives in New Orleans, Louisiana, shows that DuBourg purchased a young woman of color named Polly from James Timon of St. Louis who was the father of Father John Timon, CM, one of the Vincentian priests in Missouri. Evidently, he brought Polly with him when he travelled to New Orleans and sold her to the Ursuline sisters. The sale is dated June 4, 1822, and witnessed by Father Louis Sibourd, DuBourg's vicar general in New Orleans. He named two Ursulines as the buyers, Sister Saint Joseph and Sister Saint André Madier.³¹

Harry and Jenny Nesbit's Family

Note that records interchangeably use Henry and Harry to refer to the same man. The family surname Nesbit has many spelling variations in the records, including Nebbit, Nibbitt, Nabbit, and Nebits. In Sarah Anne Nesbit's 1872 application to the Freedman's Bank in New Orleans, her surname was recorded as Nabbit, and her parents' names as Henry Nobbet and Jenny Burch.³² The citations in this report use the spelling found in the source itself.

The Purchase and Sale of the Nesbit Family by DuBourg

DuBourg purchased Harry and Jenny Nesbit's family in 1822. When DuBourg sold the family to Rosati in 1829, the contract listed the family members as:

a Negro named Henry, aged about 46 years; together with his wife, his children namely: Charles, age 21 years, Mary age 20 years, Eliza age 15 years, Clément age 14 years, Dory age 13 years, Sarah Ann age 11 years, William age 9 years, Peter aged 8 years, Andrew age 6 years, Elizabeth age 2 years and John age 6 months, bought from Mr. Macfuer, as is shown by an act of sale done 7 October 1822.³³

The name of the seller is spelled MacFuir in the final document of sale from the New Orleans Notarial Archives.³⁴ The enslaver's full identity is yet to be determined. Note that DuBourg had given Eliza to Mother Rose Philippine Duchesne, RSCJ in 1828, so the document did not accurately reflect the family that DuBourg sold to Rosati in 1829.

DuBourg intended to send the Nesbit family to Florissant to serve the Jesuits. In 1818 and 1819, DuBourg purchased two pieces of property of about two hundred and twelve acres in the

common fields of St. Ferdinand, now known as Florissant, Missouri. "In acquiring the property, which came to be known as the Bishop's Farm, DuBourg had hoped that its cultivation would prove a source of some little revenue to the diocese."³⁵ The Religious of the Sacred Heart stayed there for about four months before going to a new convent in Florissant. The property was sold to the Jesuits in 1823 for \$5000 and became their novitiate St. Francis Regis Seminary, and then St. Stanislaus Seminary.

As he was preparing to visit Louisiana in May of 1823, DuBourg was concerned about the terrible condition of his farm in Florissant when he wrote to then-Father Joseph Rosati at St. Mary of the Barrens in Perry County, Missouri, that Rosati would not receive enslaved people at this time. "I believe I must in conscience put my Negroes there [at the farm in Florissant] for the conservation of the property and the advantage of Religion."³⁶

DuBourg changed his mind a month later and diverted the Nesbit family to the Vincentians in Perryville. He asked Father Francis Niel in St. Louis to send them to St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary as soon as the Jesuits arrived.³⁷ According to Poole and Slawson, this was supposed to be a temporary arrangement of the family staying "at the seminary only until they could be replaced. However, they soon became part of the institution and substitutes were never found."³⁸ Rosati took responsibility for the Nesbits when they arrived at the seminary.

On August 16, 1823, Rosati shared some news with DuBourg's brother in Bordeaux, France, "Monseigneur has sent us a negro family, who with some of the [Vincentian] brothers, cultivate the land."³⁹ DuBourg wrote to Rosati:

You ought to have received the negros that I charged Fr. Niel to send to you. If he has not done this yet, demand it. I think that the general interest requires that this family should be with you. I regard it, and you should always regard it, as the property of the bishop; but I see in some time to come though the marriage of the children, that this would provide prolific descendants to provide enough workers for the estate of the Bishop of St. Louis and for the seminary. In the meanwhile, it seems better that this property stays undeveloped, since there is no plan yet for the bishop of this property, and that probably would not be for some years; for the Propaganda finally recognizes it would be premature to divide the diocese and draw part of the workers for the seminary where they are so necessary.⁴⁰

DuBourg was likely adopting a common practice among plantation owners to increase their financial gain. By holding whole families in bondage, enslavers would gain more enslaved people as families grew.

After consecrating Joseph Rosati, CM, as co-adjutor bishop in 1824, DuBourg wrote to the Cathedral Marguilliers^{viii} in St. Louis that "I leave to Mgr. Rosati my Coadjutor ... 9 servants (*domestiques*) large or small..."⁴¹ At least a portion of the people DuBourg gave Rosati were members of the Nesbit family.

^{viii} Marguilliers were trustees or church wardens, usually a group of male parishioners who made decisions about the local church, including who would be the pastor.

When DuBourg left Missouri in 1826, he wanted to sell all his properties and belongings to Bishop Rosati. DuBourg had attempted to initiate the sale when he returned to France, but mail traveled slowly and complicated the transaction, which was completed over three years later. DuBourg's initial letter dated September 19, 1826, didn't reach Rosati until December 29 – three months later:

Send your power of attorney to France and I will send a gift to settle all the family along with nearly all I left in New Orleans and St. Louis. I keep the following objects that I have already indicated to Fr. Jeanjean.⁴²

Rosati gave his power of attorney to Rev. Louis Sibourd to represent him in France in the presence of DuBourg.⁴³ DuBourg had appointed Sibourd as vicar general of the Diocese of Montauban. Their letters crossed in transit as DuBourg repeated his instructions to Rosati in a letter of April 22, 1827, which Rosati did not receive until January 2, 1828:

I will agree to your condition for all that I left, Negroes, books, etc. Send your general power of attorney (with power of substitution) to Mr Desages the honorable canon and secretary of the bishop of Montauban.⁴⁴

In August 1828, DuBourg wrote Rosati that he did not know the property laws concerning the transfer of the title but to “send me a contract and I will sign it. The names should be indicated.”⁴⁵ Months later in a lengthy explanation of almost two pages, DuBourg presented Rosati with reasons for the delay on his part, saying:

You are surprised, my dear brother, that I have not yet made the sale that your power of attorney authorized for the objects that I left in Louisiana. Without hesitation I will give you the reasons. The reason is because I did not believe I had not yet removed from the property of the aforesaid land, Harry's family, my books and the rest of my movables. If you agree to this proposal, send Fr. Sibourd your notes, and the acts of sale in French.⁴⁶

Rosati expressed impatience about the matter to others as seen in a letter in March 1829: “I am angry over not knowing more about the matter you asked about. I only know that Fr. [Aristides] Anduze took the papers to France. He is in Paris and will return in the Fall.”⁴⁷

In April 1829, Rosati inquired with Sibourd about the matter, “I want to know if you have received my power of attorney.”⁴⁸ In July, Rosati sent four bank notes to DuBourg with an accompanying letter.⁴⁹ Another letter on the same date went to Sibourd, “I ask you to accept and sign according to the powers [of attorney] that I have already sent for the sale that Bishop DuBourg gives me the properties, which you will find here the list, and to give him the four notes.”⁵⁰

In September, DuBourg wrote to Rosati, “Your notes have not reached me. I am hurrying to execute the sale, that would close the list. I will send you the original, and the duplicate will follow.”⁵¹ Finally on October 9, 1829, Sibourd confirmed that he'd received the four bank notes of 5,000 francs each.⁵²

The final document of sale in the New Orleans Notarial Archives was signed by Joseph Rosati, and Fathers Auguste Jeanjean, Constantine Maenhaut, Louis Moni, and Philippe Borgna, in the

presence of two notaries, indicating that each of the priests were in New Orleans at the time of the signing of the document on June 26, 1830.⁵³

Henry (Harry) Nesbit

Records interchangeably used Henry and Harry to refer to the same person. This report primarily uses “Harry.” According to the sale of his family from DuBourg to Rosati in 1829, Harry Nesbit was born around 1783.⁵⁴ He and his family were sent from St. Louis to the Vincentians at St. Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville in 1823.⁵⁵ After his wife Jenny died in 1829, he remarried a woman named Minty and had a daughter Juliana, both of whom are discussed in a later section. The Vincentians moved Harry and Minty Nesbit’s family to Cape Girardeau in 1836.⁵⁶

On November 27, 1850, a tornado struck Cape Girardeau, killing Harry:

Old Henry, a servant of the college (a coloured man), was found dead in the garden, being struck by a beam in the fall of the brick quarters for the negroes. His wife and daughter, Julianna, were in the same room but not hurt.⁵⁷

Eugenia (Jenny) Burch Nesbit

There are a few records that specifically discuss Jenny Burch Nesbit, Harry’s wife. According to her daughter Sarah Nesbit’s 1872 application to the Freedman’s Bank, Jenny’s maiden name was Burch.⁵⁸

An undated note found in Bishop DuBourg’s Cathedral Account Book, is about a purchase of a particular kind of cloth for Jenny. It reads, “at Tiffany’s 3½ yds linsey for Jenny at 75¢ - @.62½.”⁵⁹ Linsey was a coarse, cheap fabric made of linen and wool often used for the clothing allocated to enslaved people.

Jenny Nesbit died on March 20, 1829. Her burial record of March 21 at St. Mary’s Assumption Parish in Perryville, Missouri, notes her name as Eugenia.⁶⁰ She died less than three months after she gave birth to her son, John Mary.

Charles and Areminta (Minty) Nesbit, and their children Mary Anna, Stephen, and Elizabeth

Charles Nesbit was born around 1808.

On July 24, 1824, a notice of arrivals on the steamboat Fanny in New Orleans listed “Bishop DuBourg and servant” among the passengers.⁶¹ On September 13, 1824, DuBourg traveled from Opelousas to Natchitoches. Father Aristides Anduze described the journey: “The order of the caravan at the start began with the guide on horseback leading by a long rope a mule carrying their provisions, followed by a Negro servant Charles, also on horseback, carrying a whip to urge on the laggard mule, then Anduze with the bishop bringing up the rear.”⁶² DuBourg continued his visits to churches in Louisiana until his return to St. Louis in March 1826. Then he left for France to resign.

Charles and Minty Nesbit were married at St. Mary’s Assumption in Perryville on March 21, 1829, by Father John Timon, CM. Charles was described as the son of Henry, servant of the bishop, and “Aminta” as the maid of the same bishop and the daughter of Mary. It is not clear if Mary was also enslaved by Bishop DuBourg. The witnesses were noted as Joseph and Mary,

“servants of the seminary.”⁶³ In records, Minty’s name is also recorded as Minthy, Aminta, Aryminty, and Mindy.

Charles and Minty Nesbit had three children that we know of: Mary Anna, Stephen, and Elizabeth. According to historian Kelly Schmidt, Charles was often separated from his family and “forced to make the approximately 80-mile trek between Perryville and St. Louis, sometimes with his family and sometimes separated; their nomadic life meant that Mary Ann and Stephen were baptized in Perryville, Elizabeth in St. Louis.”⁶⁴ Mary Anna was born on January 6, 1829, and baptized on February 14, 1829, in Perryville. Her parents were noted as “servants of the Seminary.”⁶⁵ Stephen, born on March 9, 1831, was baptized April 3, 1831, with Charles and Minty called “servants of Bishop Rosati.”⁶⁶

In February 24, 1831, Father John McMahon at the seminary told Rosati that Charles’ wife was within days of childbirth and she could not travel, referring to Minty’s pregnancy with Stephen, who was born March 9.⁶⁷ Stephen died in infancy and was buried on December 9, 1832, by Father Joseph A. Lutz.⁶⁸ Charles and Minty Nesbit’s third child Elizabeth was born on October 1, 1832, and baptized at the cathedral in St. Louis on April 18, 1833.

Charles and Minty Nesbit both stood in as godparents to the baptisms of other enslaved people, which provide insight into their movements between St. Louis and Perryville and illuminate the fluidity of enslavement between Rosati and the Vincentians. As Schmidt explains:

Their children’s baptisms, as well as those in which they stood as godparents, show the nature of overlapping ownership in the diocese as Charles and Areminta were alternatively considered the property of the Vincentians and of Rosati. In Mary Ann’s record, Charles and Areminta were listed as “slaves of the seminary,” while in Stephen’s they were slaves of Reverend Joseph Rosati.⁶⁹

As an example of this fluidity, on May 30, 1831, Rosati recorded in his financial records: “Exchanged my negro girl Mary^{ix} [Nesbit] and her two infant children, against the Negro woman Minthy and her two infant children.”⁷⁰ In the exchange, Minty and her children went to St. Louis, while Mary and her children went to the seminary in Perryville. According to Schmidt, this may have been an effort to reunite Charles and his family in St. Louis.⁷¹

In August 1831, DuBourg, now the Bishop of Montauban, France, wrote to Saulnier in St. Louis, “I am pleased to learn that Charles and William^x are with you, that the first is married and already has two children; you should have told me if his wife belongs to Mgr. I always wish well for this young man...”⁷²

On February 15, 1834, Father Joseph A. Lutz recorded the funeral of “Arimentre, slave belonging to the Right Revd. Bishop of St. Louis... about 27 years of age” in the death register at the Old Cathedral.⁷³ Rosati wrote to Timon on February 23, 1835: “Last year we lost Minthy and had to buy another black woman for \$500.”⁷⁴ The identity of the woman is unknown.

^{ix} Read more about Mary Nesbit in the next section.

^x Read more about William Nesbit in the section *Persons Enslaved by Archbishop Peter R. Kenrick*.

Father Joseph Lutz sent two letters to Rosati in 1837 reporting on Charles Nesbit being hired out in St. Louis. On July 24, he wrote that Charles was “hired by Mr. Leonard at the Rate of \$25.00 a month for one year, payable each month. The Jesuits^{xi} had refused taking him.”⁷⁵ It appears that Lutz had attempted to sell Charles to the Jesuits. Instead, he rented Charles out to Leonard. Enslavers would contract the people they enslaved to others for a profit. Lutz’s second report to Rosati on October 2 reads:

Charles is still with Mr. Leonard, who after having him to the end of the month, wants to keep him until he finds another cook to replace him, which plan was not agreeable to Charles. He decided to run away from Mr. Leonard’s. So he charged the sheriff to capture him and take him to jail, where he was freed after three days.⁷⁶

From December 1837 to August 1838, Rosati rented out Charles Nesbit to Mr. Mallet and Dr. Hardage Lane, who had purchased Aspasia LeCompte from Rosati in 1837.^{xii} Rosati’s financial ledger records the transactions for Charles’ work:

1837 December 2: Received of the same [Mr. Mallet] for balance of Charles ½ month wages \$2.50

1838 April 25: Received (through Mr Mallet) of Dr. Hardage Lane for pew rent \$14.00 also of for [sic] Charles wages \$15.00

1838 July 26: Received of Mr Mallet for Charles two monts [sic] wages \$50.00

1838 August 14: Paid Mr. Mallet for bills of painter for house rented to Mr Timon ff 11:80 for a pair of shoes for Charles ff 2:10 for shirts for [ditto] (additional indiscernible symbol follows) \$3:00 \$16.00

1838 August 22: Received of Mr Mallet for Charles wages \$25.00 ⁷⁷

Rosati also noted buying a pair of shoes for Charles for \$2 and shirts for \$3.⁷⁸

Charles Nesbit initiated a civil suit on April 23, 1840, to win his freedom from Rosati. This was the second freedom suit filed against the Diocese of St. Louis, the first being by Aspasia LeCompte in 1837, who eventually won her freedom in a subsequent suit against Hardage Lane. According to Schmidt, Charles and Aspasia knew one another through their enslavement by Rosati and Aspasia likely shared her experience with the legal system to help Charles sue for his freedom.⁷⁹

Rosati was out of the country at the time of the trial, granting Father Peter J. Verhaegen, S. J., his power of attorney over property, including enslaved people. Thus, Verhaegen was Rosati’s representative and named as the defendant.⁸⁰ Charles’s ground for freedom was based on the fact that he had been sent to work in Cahokia, Illinois, which at the time was a part of the Northwest Territory that Congress had deemed in 1787 as a free territory. Enslavers could transport enslaved people through the territory, but they could not reside there or have

^{xi} The Jesuits took control of Saint Louis University in 1829. They operated St. Aloysius Chapel beginning in 1835, which became Saint Francis Xavier (College) Church in 1844.

^{xii} Read more about Aspasia LeCompte and her freedom suits against Rosati and Hardage Lane in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*.

enslaved people complete work there. If the enslaved person was returned to “slave territory” after completing work or residing there, they could be considered free by the court.

The court found several witnesses who testified to seeing Charles working on a building of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in Cahokia, Illinois. One of those witnesses was Father Peter J. Doutreluingne, CM, the pastor in Cahokia.⁸¹ When Rosati learned that Doutreluingne was going to be a witness in the court, he wrote to him on April 23, 1840:

My Dear Doutreligne (sic), without a doubt you have caused me a great embarrassment, and in danger of losing my negro Charles at a loss of at least a thousand piastres. Since you had been in Cahokia you asked Charles my negro to paint the house of the sisters: I agreed; now Charles is being pushed by the lawyers to whom he has promised two hundred piasters suing me in a lawsuit to win his freedom; the law grants freedom to slaves when their masters send them to work in a free state, but they must have worked for three weeks. Now I am certain that Charles had not been at Cahokia more than a week, for he had painted two rooms ... Come to St. Louis to testify, for you must recall: 1. that you asked him, 2. that I did not rent him, 3. that he did not stay more than a week and I do not know when the work began, put it in writing.⁸²

Rosati’s letter to Doutreluingne demonstrates that he was well-aware of the laws and was exhorting Doutreluingne to testify specific things to avoid losing the case. An additional note on letter in someone else’s handwriting reads that Doutreluingne “does not remember to have asked Chas. He thinks that the Bishop having come to Cahokia, being pleased with the good, kindly offered Charles—he thinks that Chas did not stay more than two weeks, if that.”⁸³

François La Croix took depositions in the court of St. Clair County, Illinois, on June 13, 1840, from François Nadeau, François Demette, and François Vaudrie. They all testified that four years prior, in 1836, they had seen Charles at the convent of the nuns in Cahokia, Illinois, white washing and painting for about fifteen days. They knew him to be enslaved by the bishop of St. Louis.⁸⁴

Verhaegen’s lawyers claimed that Charles was in Cahokia for close to two weeks to recover his health. This was obviously a lie; it blatantly contradicts the testimony of the witnesses, as well as the letter from Rosati to Doutreluingne, in which he specifically coached him about the details of the situation.

On August 18, 1840, Verhaegen wrote to inform Rosati that “the lawsuit of Charles is in court,” and “I expect that in my next letter I will inform you that he is with another master. We will all be pleased when he is out of the house.”⁸⁵ A month later, he wrote again informing Rosati that “the suit of Charles is still in statu quo.”^{xiii 86}

When Rosati left the country in 1840, he gave written instructions to Judge Phillippe LeDuc^{xiv} in a ledger, “As for the trial of my Negro, Mr. Leduc will also be kind enough to choose a good

^{xiii} Text is underlined in the letter.

^{xiv} LeDuc had served many roles in the St. Louis legislature and politics, including being the clerk of the circuit and county courts, recorder of deeds, alderman, justice of the peace, and member of the legislature, and judge of probate.

lawyer; and once the trial is over sell the negro, and even rent him before the trial is over, if he sees fit.”⁸⁷ Verhaegen told Rosati on December 16, 1840, that Charles was working on the river as a cook, which was possibly in service of a man named J.W. Beakback.⁸⁸ Schmidt explains that this was purposely done to obstruct the court case by keeping Charles from consulting with his lawyers, and removing Charles from the jurisdiction of the courts while he was on the Mississippi River.⁸⁹

In LeDuc’s financial ledger, he added a notation that “Charles is committed to Mr. J. W. Beakback for 20f ^{xv} per month up to 23 January 1842.”⁹⁰ Another entry reads, “ January 19, 1842 – from Beachback, (sic) for John Byrne to collect wages for Charles, Negro \$82.50.”⁹¹

The court ruled in favor of Charles, granting him his freedom, and finding Verhaegen guilty of trespass.⁹²

After Rosati’s death in Rome in September of 1843, lingering debts for the legal fees were listed in Rosati’s probate records:

1 May 1845. notice to P. R. Kendrick, administrator of the estate of Joseph Rosati, deceased. A claim to be presented against the estate of Joseph Rosati by Primus and Taylor.” It was “per the services rendered by Wilson Primus and George R. Taylor for services in the St. Louis Circuit Court, and the St. Louis Court of Common Pleas, in the case of Charles, (a man of color) for _____, against Peter Verhagen ... \$50.00⁹³

Mary Nesbit and her two children

There is not a lot of information or documentation about Mary Nesbit, the oldest daughter of Harry and Jenny Nesbit. After receiving her from DuBourg, Rosati held her for only four years when he exchanged her for Minty Nesbit, the wife of Charles Nesbit, who was with the Vincentians at the seminary in Perryville.^{xvi} On May 30, 1831, Rosati recorded in his financial records: “Exchanged my negro girl Mary and her two infant children, against the Negro woman Minthy and her two infant children.”⁹⁴ Mary was around 24 years old.

In 1840, Father John Brands, CM, asked Father John Timon, CM, about the possibility of exchanging Minty Nesbit, the wife of Harry Nesbit, with Mary Nesbit, “Brother Harrington would wish to have old Mary at the farm [in Cape Girardeau], where she could attend the cattle, which are wanting attention, Mrs. Linnon having now two children to attend, and there she could likewise attend our washing, because Minty is not able to wash.”⁹⁵ Minty was at the Vincentian farm in Cape Girardeau, and Mary was presumably at St. Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville, where Timon was located at the time. It is currently unclear whether the exchange was granted, but Mary does appear in Cape Girardeau nine years later. In the "Census of the Catholic Population of Cape Girardeau taken in March 1849" at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Mary is among the names listed under "Blacks belonging to the college," along with Minty Nesbit and Jullian (Juliana) Rodney.^{xvii 96}

^{xv} The currency abbreviation f refers to the French franc.

^{xvi} Read more about Charles and Minty Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family.

^{xvii} Read more about Minty and her daughter Juliana in the section on Harry and Minty Nesbit’s family.

Eliza Nesbit

Note that in the research presented by the Society of the Sacred Heart, Eliza Nesbit's surname is spelled Nesbit. This report chooses to use the spelling Nesbit consistent with its use for member of the Nesbit family.

Eliza Nesbit was the third child of Harry and Jenny Nesbit. She was also known as Liza. Eliza appears early in the history of the Society of the Sacred Heart in North America as a child given to Mother Rose Philippine Duchesne, RSCJ, by Bishop DuBourg in 1828. In the Society's mythology Eliza was characterized as an orphan of seven and perhaps sickly, who was raised by Duchesne and accompanied the Sisters to the foundation of St. Michael's School in Convent, Louisiana, where she spent her entire life.⁹⁷

The records at St. Michael's Convent point to Eliza. One is in the financial ledger entitled "Notes, etc, Accounts of some pupils, etc., Opened 1840," showing that a woman named Eliza was "acquired January 1828." Another financial record states, "Jan 1828 purchase of a negress \$400.00." Due to the proximity of dates in the two records, this was likely Eliza Nesbit. Eliza had several children while at St. Michael's. Those mentioned in one of the convent's financial records were Sooky, Mary Anne, Oliver, Elizabeth and twin boys born in 1838, Frank and François.⁹⁸

The Society records mention Eliza Nesbit in the *Annual Letters* of 1858, 1872, and 1889. The *Annual Letters* of 1858 refer to Liza as the *doyenne, or most revered*, of the enslaved people at St. Michael, and quote Eliza as saying that she was with the Society since she was twelve; at present she was married since she had been told by Duchesne that she could not join the Society but would be with them in heaven. The author of the letter remarks on her piety and devotion to her work and the fact that she visited the Blessed Sacrament and assisted at Mass at the convent.⁹⁹

More information can be found about Eliza Nesbit's relationship with the Society of the Sacred Heart on its website, including a photograph. Upon her death in 1889, she was buried in the same cemetery as the religious. When the cemetery was closed the remains of over 200 religious and Eliza were placed together in an above ground tomb in St. Mary's Cemetery in Union, Louisiana. The Society has been able to contact some of her descendants.¹⁰⁰

Clement and (Emily) Louisa Nesbit, and their children Henry, Edward, and Francis

Note that Clement is also called Clem in the records; (Emily) Louisa is also called Louise; and Francis is also called Frank, particularly in later records.

Clement and Louisa Nesbit were both identified as a "servant of St. Mary's Seminary" in their marriage record at St. Mary's Assumption in Perryville on May 16, 1840.¹⁰¹ Their son Henry died on February 27, 1832, but his date of birth was not indicated in the sacramental death record.¹⁰² Their son Edward, born in February was baptized on April 10, 1841, and their son, Francis born February 7, 1843, was baptized at on March 5, 1843.¹⁰³ At this time, this is the only record located for Edward. There is an expenditure in the General Accounts of St. Vincent's College, Cape Girardeau, "to Polly midwife for Clement's wife" for \$2.50. It is dated March 24, 1846, but no record was located for a child being born to Louisa at this time.¹⁰⁴

balance ... for the negro, Clem and his family."¹¹⁰ Thus, it appears that the sale of Clement and Louisa Nesbit's family by the College to Bishop Odin was for total of \$1,050.

The "slave" manifest for the steamer Palmetto traveling from New Orleans to Galveston does not show the name of Clement or his wife and children.¹¹¹ The trip ordinarily took about 16 hours, but their voyage experienced several delays along the way. Timon wrote to Bishop Antoine Blanc of New Orleans that it was a "rough passage." The voyage was unpleasant and caused the Ursuline sisters to be sick.¹¹² In March 1847 Odin wrote to Rousselon that "the letter and the books for the convent came with Clement and Louisa Nesbit's family." As people enslaved by the bishop, Clement and Louisa Nesbit's family "had assumedly fared better than their chattels personal^{xviii} on the voyage from New Orleans to Galveston."¹¹³

The Galveston County property tax assessment for 1847 shows that Odin had property valued at \$15,000 and paid taxes of \$900 for two "Negroes."¹¹⁴ The 1850 U.S. Slave Schedule for Galveston City listed Odin as an agent with three enslaved people: one male aged 32, one female aged 28, and one male aged 4.¹¹⁵ There was not a listing for Odin or any priest in the 1860 U.S. Slave Schedule. Odin continued to enslave the Nesbit family so the missing listing must have been an oversight.

Prior to and during the Civil War, Galveston suffered because of the Federal blockade of the Galveston port which began in July 1861, and so, too, did Clement and Louisa Nesbit's family. Money was tight – Odin had told Rousselon in New Orleans about his debts and asked for a loan of two to three thousand dollars. He wrote that Andrew Nesbit, Clement's brother, was asking for \$14, and suggested that Rousselon could give Andrew the money and add it to the amount Odin owes.¹¹⁶ On February 15, 1861, Odin was installed as Archbishop of New Orleans. In September, Father Louis Chambodut wrote to Odin with news of Galveston's increasingly desperate situation. Galveston had turned into a military camp and they might need to evacuate next month. Chambodut reported that Clement and Louisa Nesbit were well.¹¹⁷ Within a month's time the situation worsened as Chambodut had predicted. He wrote to Odin that Clement Nesbit and his son Francis were not able to find any work.¹¹⁸ A couple of months later on December 30, 1861, Chambodut reported to Odin the increasingly desperate financial situation in Galveston. As paraphrased, the letter reads:

The pews cannot be let^{xix} and one-half of those for 1861 have not been paid. The houses do not give any more rent. The Brothers (of the Christian Doctrine) do not make enough to live. The (Ursulines) at Liberty need assistance especially with the boarders from the Galveston convent. At the house [Joseph. B.] Anstaett, the Father, is so poor that for seven months he has not been able to pay his board; his nephew, without employment, is also a charge to the house. Francis and Clem are without work and have to be fed... If Providence does not come to their aid he does not know what they will do.¹¹⁹

At the end of December, letters from Fathers Joseph Anstaett and John St. Cyr assured Odin that Clement and Louisa Nesbit's family were well.¹²⁰ On January 20, 1862, Chambodut

^{xviii} *Chattels personal* was the term used for enslaved persons being transported.

^{xix} Let means rented.

informed Odin that Louisa wished to see him, that Clement was with Ignacio Peralta, and that Francis had nothing to do.¹²¹

On June 19, 1865, news of the Emancipation Proclamation, written over two years earlier, finally reached Galveston, Texas. The fortunes of Clement and Louisa Nesbit's family seemed to improve. By 1870, the U.S. Census for Galveston census showed Clement's surname as Nibbitt. He was listed as 59 years old and a cook, and 54-year-old Louisa was a laborer. Clement had probably developed cooking skills while at St. Mary's of the Barrens and this provided him with the ability to find employment. Their son Frank was 28 years old.¹²²

The 1872 Galveston County tax rolls show that Clement Nesbit's property was valued at \$500 and his state and county taxes were \$28. The following year he was listed as having two properties valued at \$1,300 and he paid taxes of \$21.¹²³ The Galveston City Directory for 1875-1876 lists "Nevitt, Clem, (col'd), cook, north side, av M, bet. 24th and 25th."¹²⁴ The 1880 census shows Clement at age 70 and Louisa, 62, living on Avenue M with three boarders which provided additional income to his cook's salary. The places of birth for Clement and his parents on the census were Kentucky and Louisa's was Virginia.¹²⁵

According to the Galveston Insurance Board, Clement's house at 2414 Avenue M was built in 1874 with a basement, a brick cistern and a raised first floor.¹²⁶ Taxes for 1893 were \$3.50.¹²⁷ On July 11, 1867, Clement "Nebit" reported having lived in Texas for 20 years.¹²⁸

The Galveston city directories for the years 1886 to 1892 show Clement Nesbitt as the janitor (or cleaner) at the police station or mayor's office and his residence being on Avenue M. Later directories do not list a profession.¹²⁹ Clement died on August 26, 1899, at the age of 92. The inquest reported his birthplace as Kentucky, and his death to be from "old age." He was buried in the Old Catholic cemetery.¹³⁰

After Clement's death, Louisa Nesbit continued to rent rooms to lodgers and work as a washerwoman. In the 1900 U.S. Census, Louisa reported that she was born in Missouri in February 1818, married for 63 years, and able to read and write. Interestingly, the census reported her father being born in Germany and her mother in Missouri.¹³¹ This could have been a mistake by the census taker. The 1880 census had listed her and her parents as being born in Virginia.¹³² Louisa is listed in the Galveston City directories between 1901 and 1913 as living at the 2414 Avenue M address.¹³³ According to her death certificate, Louise Nesbit died on February 11, 1913, at the age of 96 (born 1817). The cause of death was "old age." The inquest contains no family information. She was buried in Calvary Cemetery in Galveston on February 12.¹³⁴ St. Mary's Cathedral does not have death or funeral records for 1898-1913 and thus the record could not be located for Clement nor Louisa Nesbit.

Frank and Dorcas Nesbit, and their children Louisa Lucie and Joseph

Francis, or Frank, Nesbit was confirmed at St. Mary's Cathedral in Galveston, Texas on June 2, 1859. According to the 1870 U.S. Census, he married Dorcas Lister who was born in September 1840.¹³⁵ The 1900 U.S. Census reported her birthplace as Florida.¹³⁶ The 1870 U.S. Census shows Alabama. In the 1870 U.S. Census for Maysfield, Texas, Frank "Nebit" (aged 33) and Darkus (sic) (aged 26, born Alabama) lived with a 16-year-old woman named Wanda Lister, who

was likely related to Dorcas somehow. They are all listed as “mulatto.” Frank’s job was indicated as working on a farm.¹³⁷

Frank and Dorcas Nesbit had two children. Dorcas later reported in the 1900 U.S. Census that she had five children, two of whom survived.¹³⁸ Their daughter Louisa Lucie Nesbit was born July 11, 1876, and baptized February 18, 1877, at St. Mary’s Cathedral by Rev. J. M. Gugol (where her grandfather Clement had worked for Bishop Odin). Her godmother was Louisa Nesbit, her grandmother.¹³⁹ Lucie married John Green who was born in May 1873.

Frank and Dorcas’s son Joseph was born April 5, 1878, and baptized May 18, 1878, at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Galveston by Rev. H. Parmantier.¹⁴⁰ The sponsors were Louis Nowette and Helene Carrier. Joseph died March 30, 1915, in Austin, Texas of tuberculosis.¹⁴¹

The 1900 U.S. Census shows that Dorcas Nesbit was renting a home in Robertson, Texas, with her children Joe and Lucy, and son-in-law John Green. Dorcas was a cook and reported that she could not read or write. Lucy was a servant, and Joe and John were day laborers.¹⁴²

By 1910, Dorcas and her son Joe moved to Austin and were living with a 44-year-old widowed man named Eliza Wicks, who was reported as “brother-in-law” on the census. The relationship of Eliza Wicks to Dorcas and Joe is unclear. Joe and Eliza were a laborers performing odd jobs. Dorcas was a washerwoman.¹⁴³

After Joe’s death in 1915, Dorcas continued to live in Austin, working as a laundress.¹⁴⁴ She died August 4, 1934, in Travis, Texas. Her death certificate indicates her mother was Judy Lister.¹⁴⁵

Dory Nesbit

Information about Dory comes from the work of Poole and Slawson, the Archdiocese of St. Louis Archives, and the Notre Dame University Archives. Brother Daniel Harrington, CM, had Dory at the farm in Cape Girardeau in June 1837, but complained to Father John Timon, CM, that he needed more hands for all the work. He wanted Dory’s father Harry Nesbit and another enslaved person named Luke^{xx} to be sent to him.¹⁴⁶ Later he wrote to Father John Odin, CM, at St. Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary that he needed help because he had no money and only Luke, Dory Nesbit, and Harry Nesbit with lots of work to be done.¹⁴⁷ Records of the Vincentian farm at Cape Girardeau show that Dory was there from 1837 to 1841, during which time he was confirmed by Bishop Rosati.¹⁴⁸ There are numerous expenses for Dory recorded in the General Accounts of St. Vincent’s College between the years 1838 and 1841: pantaloons \$1.25; cash for going to the Barrens \$0.50; stockings \$0.37½; socks \$0.37½; shirt \$1.00; cap \$1.00; new pants \$1.00; large coat \$6.00; pair of pants and coat \$6.00; to Mrs. Linnen for making clothes for Dory \$2.00; going to the Barrens \$0.37½; Dory black man \$2.00; and for making clothes \$1.00.¹⁴⁹

In 1840 Dory Nesbit returned to St. Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville where he was rented out to Valerio Faina, a local stonecutter, for five months at \$4 per month.¹⁵⁰ On April 28, 1841, Father Joseph Giustiniani, CM, at Natchitoches, Louisiana, wrote to Timon asking him to send him Dory. Timon did not know how to safely send him to Natchitoches except through Archbishop Antoine Blanc of New Orleans and asked him to have Dory sent safely by the first

^{xx} Read more about Luke in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*.

Red River boat. Giustiniani added that Dory was “an excellent Negro” and the brother of Andrew and John.^{xxi} ¹⁵¹

Sarah Anne Nesbit

Rosati recorded the sale of Sarah Nesbit in his financial ledgers on March 3, 1831:

Sold to the Rev^d Ch. De la Croix of the Parish of St. James, Louisiana, my negro girl called Sarah for the sum of three hundred dollars, of which one hundred are to be paid cash immediately and one hundred in twelve months, and one hundred in two years hence, and I have instructed Fr. De la Croix to send both the money and his notes to the Rev^d A. Jeanjean, New Orleans \$300.¹⁵²

Soon after the sale, Father Joseph Paquin, C. M., informed Rosati that he sent Sarah to Father Charles De La Croix.¹⁵³ According to Rosati’s financial ledgers, the \$200 balance was paid within a few months and soon Sarah was making money for Rosati:

June 2, 1831 – Received from the Rev. Ch. De la Croix his note for the payment of my negro girl Sarah, for \$200.¹⁵⁴

November 4, 1831 – Received from Mr. Hodiamont by the Rev. Mr. [Edmond] Saulnier for wages of my negro servant Sarah \$20.”¹⁵⁵

In several letters exchanged with Rosati, Bishop Leo-Raymond de Neckere, CM, discussed the payment for the sale of Sarah. He told Rosati that de la Croix wrote to Father August Jeanjean that Rosati wanted him to send the money for Sara.¹⁵⁶ At the end of the year, de Neckere wrote to Rosati, “Delacroix has asked me to send you the \$200 for Sara. I think that the best course would be to get a loan from the bank.”¹⁵⁷ However, a letter from de la Croix in February 1832 revealed that de Neckere had not sent the money because he was waiting on an order from Rosati to send it.¹⁵⁸

Sarah Nesbit’s application of August 14, 1872, from the Freedman’s Bank in New Orleans provided more links to her family’s history. Sarah indicated that her sister Eliza lived in St. James Parish, Louisiana; she had two brothers Andrew and John (Mary)^{xxii}; and her parents were Henry Nesbit and Jenny Burch. Sarah was 49 years old; born in Louisville, Kentucky, and brought up in Missouri; and her current occupation that of “wash,” or washerwoman.¹⁵⁹

William Nesbit

See William Nesbit’s story in the section *People Enslaved by Archbishop Richard Kenrick*.

Peter Augustine and Helen Leona Nesbit, and their children Louis and Emily Josephine

Poole and Slawson write that Peter’s full name was Peter Augustine. One of the first published accounts describing Bishop DuBourg as an enslaver in St. Louis is in a reference to the Old Cathedral choir of the 1830s and 1840s, organized and led by Judge Wilson Primm and including the wife of Henry Chouteau:

“[Peter] Augustin, a mulatto slave of Bishop DuBourg, a fine tenor; Father [Leo-

^{xxi} Read more about Andrew Nesbit in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*. Read more about John Mary Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family.

^{xxii} Read more about Andrew Nesbit in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*. Read more about John Mary Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family.

Raymond] De Neckere, a deep basso....”¹⁶⁰

In his financial ledger, Rosati recorded the sale of Peter Nesbit on March 17, 1832:

Sold to the Rev^d. John Boullier [CM]^{xxiii} my negro boy called Peter about nine or ten years old, for the sum of \$150, for which I have received a note of \$50 payable in 4 months, and cash \$100.”¹⁶¹

In another entry on March 19, 1832, Rosati wrote “Deposited in Bank \$100.”¹⁶² Thus, Peter was returned to the Vincentians in Perryville.

Peter Nesbit married Helen in 1837 or 1838 who was later purchased by Father John Timon, CM, in 1839.¹⁶³ Peter and Helen had a son named Louis in February 1839 and a daughter Emily Josephine in May 1843. They were both baptized at St. Mary’s Assumption Church in Perryville.¹⁶⁴ Sometime between 1839 and 1946, Timon sold Peter and Helen Nesbit’s family to Luther Taylor. According to Poole and Slawson, Taylor’s wife was Catholic, and “he sold the family within a few years because [they do] not appear with his household in the parish census of 1846-1847.”¹⁶⁵

Andrew Nesbit

Read about Andrew Nesbit in the section *People Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*.

Elizabeth Anna Nesbit

Elizabeth Nesbit’s birth and baptism was recorded in the sacramental registers at St. Mary’s Assumption in Perryville:

2 September 1827 I the undersigned baptized an infant negresse born 19 July of Henri and Joanna of the Seminary family who is given the name of Elizabeth Anna. The Godfather was Sefrois Papin. Petrus Vera S.CM Church of the Assumption by Fr. Peter Veragen, SCM¹⁶⁶

Research into Elizabeth Anna Nesbit is ongoing. There are at least two people by the name of Elizabeth Nesbit: the daughters of Harry and Jenny, and Charles and Minty. There are possibly more. The following is one possibility of Elizabeth Anna Nesbit’s story.

In 1835, Rosati wrote to Father John Timon, CM, at St. Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary to have him send a girl named Elizabeth to St. Louis with the intention of selling her. In Perryville, she was hired out to a stonecutter.¹⁶⁷

The letter is paraphrased:

[Timon] is obliged to sell Elisabeth but it will be to good and respectable Catholic families. [Timon] is to speak to the superintendent; [Timon] is to send her by some good opportunity. [Rosati] wishes to know her age and how much [Timon] thinks she might be worth.¹⁶⁸

On May 26, 1835, Rosati sold Elizabeth as indicated in his financial ledger, “Sold to Hugh O’Neil Jr. a negro girl eight years old called Elisabeth for the sum of 200.”¹⁶⁹ The Estate of Hugh O’Neil mentions the bill of sale from Rosati for Elizabeth dated May 26, 1835, but a physical copy is

^{xxiii} Boullier was in St. Joachim, Old Mines. He also served Ste. Genevieve.

not present.¹⁷⁰ Elizabeth Anna Nesbit was born in 1827 according to her baptismal record, and she was 8 years old in 1835, matching the age of the person sold to O'Neil. This strongly suggests that the sale to O'Neil was of Elizabeth Anna Nesbit.

On June 4, 1841, Father Peter Verhaegen, SJ, wrote to Rosati, notifying him that "Hugh O'Neil died today."¹⁷¹ Elizabeth shows up in the inventories in the Probate of the Estate of Hugh O'Neil of St. Louis on August 4 and September 10, where she is listed as, "1 negress slave, named Elizabeth, aged about 13 years" valued at 250."¹⁷²

The local newspaper *St. Louis New Era* carried an ad published for four weeks from January 28 through February 18, 1843:¹⁷³

Administrators Sale
for the public auction of two slaves belonging to the estate of
the late Hugh O'Neil, for payment of debts
Allen, a boy aged about 12 years, and
Elizabeth, aged about 14 years

The auction took place on March 6, 1843, and a document of March 18 from the St. Louis Probate Court stated that "Mrs. Mary (O'Neil) became the highest and last bidder for the said slaves and purchased the same.... For Allen, the sum of \$165, For Elizabeth, the sum of \$235."¹⁷⁴

John Mary Nesbit

Although John Mary Nesbit is listed in the documents for the sale and transfer of Harry's family from DuBourg to Rosati, he was born while the final documents were being negotiated and signed by DuBourg in France and Rosati in New Orleans. John Mary's baptismal record at St. Mary's Assumption in Perryville indicates he was born January 10, 1829, and baptized on February 5, 1829, his parents being Henry and Jenny "slaves of Illus and Rev Bishop." The sponsors were Charles and Maria (his older brother and sister) and the recording officiant was Father John Timon, CM¹⁷⁵ Jenny Nesbit passed away less than three months later. On April 28, 1841, Timon wrote to Bishop Antoine Blanc, CM, mentioning that John was the brother of Dory and Andrew.^{xxiv 176}

In 1872, Andrew's sister Sarah^{xxv} listed him as a sibling in her Freedman's Bank application in New Orleans, placing him in St. James Parish, Louisiana, at that time.¹⁷⁷

In the 1878 New Orleans City Directory, John "Nebett" was listed as a candymaker living at 323 First Street.¹⁷⁸

Harry Nesbit's second wife Minty, and daughter Juliana

Later, Harry married an enslaved woman named Aminta (Minty or Araminta) who was working at the Seminary but was enslaved by Walter Wilkinson, a local Catholic.¹⁷⁹ The marriage is not recorded at St. Mary's Assumption Church in Perryville.

^{xxiv} Read more about Dory Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit's family. Read more about Andrew Nesbit in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*.

^{xxv} Read more about Sarah Anne Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit's family.

A burial record at St. Mary's Assumption indicates Harry and Minty Nesbit's first child died the day he was born on September 2, 1831.¹⁸⁰ On February 27, 1832, the death of "Henry, son of Henry and Eugenia (Jenny), years old, servants of ... Bishop of St. Louis Joseph Rosati," was recorded, but Jenny had passed away in 1829 three months after John Mary's birth.¹⁸¹ It is likely this was Minty's son and the presiding priest John Brands, CM, misrecorded the name of Harry's first wife Jenny instead. Moreover, Henry was not noted on the 1829 transfer document of the Nesbit family from DuBourg to Rosati, suggesting that Henry would be Minty's son.

Poole and Slawson presumed that Father John Timon, CM, purchased Minty and her daughter Juliana from Wilkinson at some point.¹⁸² In April 1836, "Father John Mary Odin, [CM] accompanied by a slave family, Harry, Minty, and their daughter Juliana, left the seminary to take possession of the church at the Cape [Girardeau, Missouri]."¹⁸³ No record of Juliana's birth or baptism has been found in the sacramental records of St. Mary's Assumption Church in Perryville, but she may have been born around 1834.

Juliana and Hamlet Rodney, their children Adaline and her sister, and Minty

A "Census of the Catholic Population of Cape Girardeau taken in March 1849" was found in the back of the earliest marriage book of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Among the names listed under "Blacks belonging to the college" are Mary Nesbit,^{xxvi} Minty Nesbit, Jullian (Juliana) Rodney.¹⁸⁴ Hamlet Rodney is listed as "belonging to Doughty," possibly meaning Sarah Daugherty, as listed in the 1850 Slave Schedule as having 31 enslaved people.¹⁸⁵ The Catholic population census also lists Mathilda, designated as "free," and thus presumed to be a woman of color.

Juliana married Hamlet Rodney on December 30, 1848, at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Cape Girardeau. The marriage required a dispensation^{xxvii} because Hamlet was not baptized. The marriage record indicated that Hamlet was enslaved by the Doughty family.¹⁸⁶ However, Hamlet was hired by St. Vincent's College in Cape Girardeau^{xxviii} on November 23, 1848, for one year with cash paid to T. J. Rodney.¹⁸⁷ It is unclear at this time if T.J. Rodney sold Hamlet to Doughty/Daugherty around 1848-1850. A misrecording of the information is also very possible. The 1850 U.S. Slave Schedule for Cape Girardeau lists T. J. Rodney^{xxix} with 10 enslaved people, 4 females and 6 males.¹⁸⁸

An 1840 letter from Father John Brands, CM, to Father John Timon, CM, indicated that Minty was having difficulty doing her chores and "not able to wash."¹⁸⁹ The St. Vincent's College Board of Trustees minutes recorded a note in 1852, reading: "There was a question of "Leting (sic) Hamlet have Juliana his wife by giving security for the support and maintenance of Minty her mother."¹⁹⁰ The general account ledger records payments for work done by Juliana and Hamlet Rodney. It is unclear where they were paid directly, or the payments were absorbed by

^{xxvi} Mary Nesbit is discussed in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit's family.

^{xxvii} A marriage dispensation is permission granted by the diocese for a couple to be married despite having some circumstance(s) that might be an impediment to marriage or hinder a secure Catholic marriage.

^{xxviii} The Vincentians founded St. Vincent's Seminary and College in 1838. It closed in 1979.

^{xxix} The 1850 U.S. Census recorded T. J. Rodney as a merchant.

the college to care for Minty, as indicated in the prior quote. The ledger records tasks for both Juliana and Hamlet on the following days:

August 16, 1853, cash for work \$11.00,
September 17, 1853, on acct. \$10.00,
August 16, 1853, cash \$11.00,
September 17, 1853, cash on acct \$10.00.

Other items were for Hamlet alone:

January 2, 1848, cash to the boy \$3.25,
December 24, 1847, cash to a whip for the boy Hamlet \$0.25,
December 14, 1848, for chopping 3 cords wood \$1.20,
May 21, 1848, for cutting 5½ cords wood \$2.20,
July 23, 1853, on acct 2.00,
August 27, 1853, for 5 days work on wing \$5.00,
September 16, 1853, on acct. \$5.00,
October 15, 1853, for work about college \$20.00,
November 8, 1853, in full \$16.50,
August 4, 1854, in full for 16½ days mowing &c \$24.75,
September 16, 1854, Hamlet & Ike for 1,215 rails \$9.10.

Together Juliana and Hamlet earned \$42.00, while Hamlet earned about \$84.35.¹⁹¹

In 1853, the Trustees signed an obligation "promising freedom to Julian[a] & her two children Adaline and her sister on the Condition that she Juliana and her Husband Hamlet, pay five Hundred Dollars to Pres & faculty of St. Vincent's College & moreover support Minty, her mother, During her natural life." It was signed by the secretary of the board J. F. McGerry.¹⁹² That same day, Juliana paid \$50 in cash to the College "in part payment for her freedom."¹⁹³ Juliana also made payments of \$20 in March 1854 and \$10 in July 1855. Other items in the general account ledger show payments to Juliana for washing and other work. It is not clear at this time whether "Adaline and her sister" are the children of Juliana or a sperate family.

Finally, over two years later at a special meeting of the Board of Trustees, "It was moved by Revd. J. Knowd, the free papers of for Juliana and her two children be prepared in due form of Law, in accordance with promise made to her on the 19th of May 1853 passed unanimously."¹⁹⁴ It is not yet known if Hamlet Rodney was freed by his enslaver.

Two Unidentified People

On November 24, 1824, Father Edmond Saulnier told Rosati that Bishop DuBourg "requested the two little Negresses who were at Mr. Layton's home."¹⁹⁵ John Layton lived in Perry County, Missouri, and DuBourg had purchased a woman named Rachel from Layton in 1822.^{xxx} A month later, DuBourg wrote to Rosati asking him, "If [Father John] Carretta has not left yet, he should take with him the two little negresses that you have the goodness to get from Florissant,^{xxxi} and

^{xxx} Read more about Rachel below in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*.

^{xxxi} Florissant, Missouri, is located 15 miles north of St. Louis City, Missouri.

if not, would you send them at another opportunity.”¹⁹⁶ It doesn’t appear this happened as a few months later he again wrote Rosati wanting him to send the two “little negresses” to Mr. [Ferdinand] Rozier, with prayers and on the first steamboat, recommending them especially to the Captain.¹⁹⁷ He finally offered Rosati his sincere thanks May 25, 1825, after he received his “little letter by which he announced the two young negresses arrived safe and sound” in New Orleans.¹⁹⁸

At this point, it is unclear who these two people were.

Rachel

On October 20, 1819, DuBourg wrote to Rosati, who was then the superior at St. Mary’s of the Barrens Vincentian Seminary, advising “Rosati that he would do well to rent the negresse [Rachel] from [John] Layton.”¹⁹⁹ Less than a month later he told Rosati, “if Mr. John Layton agrees to give me one or two years to pay for his negresse (\$300 per year), arrange for the sale to go through and make him two obligations in my name – I can’t do better.”²⁰⁰ Almost a year later on September 14, 1820, DuBourg asked Rosati to “pay \$200 to John Layton as the first payment for the negresse.”²⁰¹ While the woman in question was never named in these letters, it is most certainly Rachel.

According to the Perry County property records, Cornelius Rhodes sold Rachel to John Layton for \$150.00 on September 5, 1821, to secure debt owed to Layton. Rachel would be returned to Rhodes once the debt was paid off.²⁰² The transaction was recorded on September 17, 1821. Rhodes and Layton were noted as residents of Cinque Hommes Township.

On August 28, 1822, DuBourg wrote Rosati, “I will take the negresse if I can get 6 months credit for \$254. Only use the \$200 in cash of the bill I am sending you as long as you obtain this credit, and furthermore, as long as you recognize this girl as a person of good constitution, intelligence, well-being, and morals.”²⁰³ Rosati then made the purchase for the bishop on September 10, as recorded in the bill of sale:

Know all men by these presents that I Cornelius Rhodes of the State of Missouri and County of Perry have bargained and sold and by these presents do bargain, sell, and deliver unto the Right Revd. Bishop Du Bourg a certain Negro-woman named Rachel, about twenty six year old (sic), for and in the consideration of the sum of four hundred and fifty four dollars; and I will warrant the afore said Negro woman unto the afore said Rihgt (sic) Revd. Bishop, and his heirs...

The witnesses to the document were Fathers Leo-Raymond De Neckere, CM, and John D. Timon, CM²⁰⁴

On September 4, DuBourg told Rosati that Mr. Pratte^{xxxii} promised to deliver DuBourg’s payment of \$200 for Rachel to Ste. Genevieve.²⁰⁵ On behalf of DuBourg, Rosati made the final payment for Rachel to Rhodes:

Barrens settlement September 14th 1822

^{xxxii} Mr. Pratte is referred to as “the elder” in several letters and should not be confused with Father Henry Pratte, the pastor of Ste. Genevieve Parish in Ste. Genevieve.

I undersigned have received from the Rev. Mr. Rosati
ninety seven dollars for the negro Woman
Cornelius Rhodes²⁰⁶

After Rosati made the purchase, DuBourg directed him to “send the negresse as soon as possible to old Mr. Pratte. She can go [to Ste. Genevieve] in the wagon with the books.”²⁰⁷

DuBourg kept Rachel in St. Louis. He returned to Louisiana in 1823, sending a letter from the Côte d'Acadie, Ascension Parish, to Father Edmund Saulnier with instructions about what to do with his possessions in St. Louis. “I leave in St. Louis my negress Rachel, my furniture, the rest of the linens, the ornaments, the organ, the vases, and everything else to Bishop Rosati.”²⁰⁸

DuBourg legally enslaved Rachel, but other clergy also enslaved her in practice, including Bishop Rosati and Fathers Francis Neil and Edmund Saulnier. Saulnier was the vicar at the Old Cathedral for several years and became Chancellor under Archbishop Peter Kenrick from 1850 to 1862. It should be stressed that the following letters do not reflect the lived experience or character of Rachel as they were written from the perspective of her enslaver Saulnier. Rachel exercised resistance to her enslavers by acting in ways that would frustrate them. Enslaved people would commonly make life uncomfortable or difficult for their enslavers as a form of resistance to their bondage and exerting control over their lives. The passage below also documents the physical abuse of Rachel by Father Saulnier as punishment for her resistance.

In two letters from Saulnier, now the vicar at the cathedral, to Rosati in Perryville in 1825, he complained about Rachel, who was evidently living and working at the cathedral residence for priests. Saulnier saw Rachel’s behavior as problematic which he detailed in a letter on November 15, stating why “I would like to get rid of our negresse Rachel”:

I have another thing to tell you, I would like to get rid of our negress Rachel for several reasons. She has been spoiled a lot by Mr. Niel who allowed her to do many things in the house that a slave should not do. Since she came, I can say that I have almost never had meals at a fixed time. She is of a dominant spirit even for her masters always full of excuses, very often in a bad mood even brutal, going to mass on Sunday or not going, dressing properly on Sunday evening and not in the morning, not wanting to do what is told to her from time to time. when someone reproaches her, speaking to you for hours on end without being able to silence her. Indecent sometimes in her dress even on the feast day of St. Louis, that I had people for dinner. she had the shamelessness to come without a handkerchief *du cel* (maybe a headscarf) to present herself in front of the company and not wanting to make too much of it I had warned her, even ... drinking wine ... Such is the woman that Mr Niel made to receive communion almost every Sunday & whom I now have to govern. I have studied her character as much as I could I have turned her in every way to see how to take it and having seen only her faults cited above. I thought about the Cowskin^{xxxiii} and last week, I saw myself forced to do it. Because around 4 o'clock having come to ask me to confess & that I did not want it because I see that every time I receive her for confession, what happens once,

^{xxxiii} A whip.

2, 3, 4, times a week, is that I do not see her better behaved after than before in the house and she has all the notable external faults (I do not know what to think.) Finally this very evening she asked to confess. She came to find me telling me that she wanted to go out being bored at home. I told her that I didn't want it, so she replied that she wanted to go there & that it wasn't the first time. As this is not the first time that she responded the same and that she does what she wants. I gave her blows with the Cowskin on her bare feet and arms. I assure you that it is very painful to me to do such things. Because it is not my place. but no one in the house wants to chastise her, although all complain, even those of the city. Because when someone comes to ask for me, she does with whoever comes what seems good to her. She sends them away if they don't please her.²⁰⁹

It should be highlighted that in addition to physically abusing Rachel, Saulnier also denied her the Catholic sacrament of confession. The passage also indicates that Niel forced her to receive the sacrament of communion against her will.

Saulnier continued to wonder if he should sell or trade Rachel because he questioned her morals, writing to Rosati again on December 6:

We have only the negress to serve us. I do not dare sell or trade her because of her morality - if she has any. Because she is nearly incomprehensible in her ways, and that is the only quality that she has. For she has all the faults that I have listed to you. If I could get out of this, I would send her to you, if you want. Maybe she would behave better. If you think that I need to trade or sell her, not here. Because nearly all the negresses are visited^{xxxiv} by several white [men].”²¹⁰

In February 1826, Bishop DuBourg wrote to Bishop Rosati, “For my staff, I hire my Negro Tony^{xxxv} and the negress Rachel that I have in St. Louis.”²¹¹

A month later before leaving the country to resign, DuBourg proposed to conditionally sell Rachel and Anthony to Michel Doradou Bringier, the husband of his niece Aglae DuBourg, for 1000 piastres to pay for his travels back to France. In the document of sale, Rachel was noted as being 30 years of age and originally purchased from John Layton. Instead of sending Anthony and Rachel to Bringier in Louisiana, DuBourg sent Jesse.^{xxxvi}²¹²

Despite having put Rachel up for collateral with Bringier,^{xxxvii} DuBourg sold Rachel to Mother Rose Philippine Duchesne, RSCJ, in May 1829. DuBourg was likely unaware of Saulnier's complaints about Rachel. Duchesne did not find Rachel's behavior acceptable either. On November 11, she wrote to Rosati about a story Rachel fabricated:

Rachel, our Negro, says she spoke to you, and she knows now that she does not belong to us. I think this is a story she has made up out of her own head. We bought her from Bishop DuBourg and paid for her. He asked for her back from

^{xxxiv} Visited, as in prostitution.

^{xxxv} Read more about Anthony in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*.

^{xxxvi} Read more about Jesse Nesbit in the section *Persons Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*

^{xxxvii} See more on the legal arrangement in Jesse Nesbit's section.

Father Saulnier; he wished to sell her to his nephew if we had not kept her. I thought Bishop DuBourg had told you so himself.²¹³

Rosati responded to Duchesne on November 20, "I have not seen Rachel. I know that she had been sold to you by Bishop DuBourg and that you had paid him."²¹⁴ It is possible Rachel was trying to cause confusion to impede her sale to the Sisters or to resist her enslavement in general.

Duchesne then complained to Mother Madeleine-Sophie Barat, the foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart in France, expressing her frustration with DuBourg and Rachel:

I wrote twice to Bordeaux to Bishop DuBourg, especially to tell him of our very real regrets. Perhaps I will be obliged to ask him for a receipt for the black woman that he sold us and for whom I must pay the rest of the price to the Reverend Father, which has been done. She is not so good anymore, and says that she does not belong to us and will not stay. If you see him, please speak to him about this, because the Reverend Father [Charles Van Quickenborne, SJ] has [DuBourg's] power of attorney for something else and says he can do nothing about this.²¹⁵

The priests at St. Mary's of the Barrens were aware that the Sisters of the Sacred Heart wanted enslaved people to help with their domestic chores. While the sisters were trying to get rid of Rachel, the priests wanted to sell them another woman, who is not identified in the records. On November 20, 1826, Father John Odin, CM, wrote to Father John Timon, CM, in St. Louis that he had spoken to Rosati about buying an enslaved woman. Rosati was unwilling to take on more debt and suggested that Mother Duchesne might be glad to buy her. If not, the bishop could speak to Eugénie Audé who would probably buy her.²¹⁶ Mother Audé was at St. Michael's Convent in Louisiana at this time.

Years later in January 1829, Duchesne seemed to be resigned to keeping Rachel as she explained to Saulnier, "Rachel is a bit better. If this continues, we will be satisfied because where in the world are there not troubles."²¹⁷ But later that year, the situation changed and Rachel was out of the Society's possession as seen in a letter to Barat, "We have acquitted all our debts by the \$200 received from the Society of the Faith, \$500 from our Mother General and by the sale of Rachel."²¹⁸

Anthony

On March 28, 1825, DuBourg purchased Anthony from Mademoiselle Ursule Labat for 550 piastres, by which Labat received 250 piastres, and the balance of 300 piastres was given to Labat by DuBourg in the form of a note payable in one year.²¹⁹ According to the recorded transaction, Anthony had been purchased in a mortgage by Labat along with other enslaved people on June 11, 1824, from Joseph Pequet for 938 piastres.²²⁰ The mortgage in profit was June 12, 1824, and signed on March 28, 1825, by the mortgage registrar M. Duralde.²²¹

In February 1826, Bishop DuBourg wrote to Bishop Rosati, “For my staff, I hire my Negro Tony and the negress Rachel^{xxxviii} that I have in St. Louis.”²²²

As discussed in Rachel’s section, DuBourg conditionally sold Anthony and Rachel to his nephew-in-law Michel Doradou Bringier for 1000 piastres to pay for his travels back to France. Anthony was noted as being 30 years old. According to the document of sale, it appears that Anthony remained in St. Louis, and DuBourg sent Jesse to Bringier as collateral until the debt was repaid.²²³

Jesse Nesbit and Steven

On December 29, 1823, DuBourg wrote to Rosati from Côte d’Acadie, Louisiana,^{xxxix} as he traveled to New Orleans: “You want to bring the little negro Jesse to his brother Charles.^{xl} When you return I will give you in his place Steven who is much stronger than Jesse and more apt to serve you on the plantation.”²²⁴ Jesse Nesbit was not named in the document of sale of Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family from DuBourg to Rosati in 1829. It is possible Jesse was simply not recorded as Harry and Jenny’s child in the document, or that DuBourg mistook Jesse and Charles’s relationship as brothers in his letter to Rosati above. In the 1880 census, Jesse’s surname is recorded as Nesbit, the same as that of Harry and Jenny’s family.

After resigning from the bishopric and returning to France in 1826, DuBourg wrote to Rosati on September 19, “To get money for my trip, I sold the little negro Jesse to Mr. Bringier, with the condition that I will take him back in two years from the date of the last April 1. I will return him to his family, [namely] to you.” And he added in the same letter that he would make arrangements to reimburse Bringier for the cost of Jesse, reassuring Rosati not to worry about this, as he would not do anything to interfere with the founding of the seminary.²²⁵

A month later before leaving the country to resign, DuBourg conditionally sold Anthony and Rachel to his nephew-in-law Michel Doradou Bringier for 1000 piastres to pay for his travels back to France. Instead of sending Anthony and Rachel to Bringier in Louisiana, DuBourg sent Jesse until the loan could be repaid.²²⁶

From 1827 to 1831, DuBourg and Rosati corresponded regarding the repayment of this debt to Bringier to retrieve Jesse. DuBourg wrote to Rosati in 1827, “I do not know if I can buy back Jesse before next April, which is the date that I put in the sale I pray that Mr. Bringier can postpone this indefinitely. If you can make an advancement soon, you will be reimbursed, if I can, and yet better if I die. I promise to pay you the same amount. The price is \$500.”²²⁷ A few months later, Rosati wrote to Bringier that he wished to pay the note of DuBourg.²²⁸ This must not have been completed because in 1829 DuBourg wrote to Rosati asking him to “buy back Jesse from Doradou [Bringier], reimbursing him for the 500 p.^{xli} that “he had advanced me on the head of the young Negro. He should be worth more than that today. Think of his feelings.”²²⁹

^{xxxviii} Read more about Rachel in the prior section under *Persons Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*.

^{xxxix} Côte d’Acadie, or the Acadian Coast or County, became St. James and Ascension Parishes in Louisiana.

^{xl} Read more about Charles Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family.

^{xli} The currency abbreviation p refers to *piastres*, the French word for the United States dollar.

On August 13, 1831, DuBourg reminded Saulnier in St. Louis, “Do not fail to inform me if Mgr has bought back Ness which I had sold conditionally to my nephew Mr Bringier. I very much want him to do it, because I fear that this young Negro will get lost.”²³⁰ Ness is not a name mentioned in other documents. DuBourg may have miswritten the name for Jesse.

In the 1880 U.S. Census for Ascension Parish, Louisiana, Jesse Nesbit was recorded as a 65-year-old laborer with his wife Susan and five children. Jesse and Susan Nesbit’s children were named in the 1880 census as Aris, aged 25; Livinia, 21; Clement, 19; Eliza, 12; and Richard, 6. The census places Jesse’s birth year around 1815.²³¹ He must have died somewhere between 1880 and 1900 because the 1900 census shows that Susan was a widow with Livinia, Eliza, Andrew at home. Lavinia married Gustave Diggs in 1907.²³²

Bishop Joseph Rosati, CM

Pietro Raffaele Aloysius Guiseppe (Joseph) Rosati, entered the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians) in Rome in 1807, and was ordained on February 10, 1811. During a visit to the region, Bishop William DuBourg, PSS, recruited members of the Congregation, including Rosati and Felix DeAndreis, CM, to join him in the newly established Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas.²³³

The small group of Vincentian missionaries arrived in Baltimore, Maryland on July 26, 1816, and traveled to Bardstown, Kentucky, where they stayed for two years to prepare for their work in Louisiana. Here they learned English and saw what their work among indigenous people, immigrants, and enslaved people would be like. In Bardstown, Rosati took the name “Joseph,” the anglicized version of his Italian name “Giuseppe.”

It is possible that Rosati and his fellow Vincentians were exposed to slavery in Italy or France. While the Kingdom of Naples abolished slavery in 1808, the Kingdom of Sardinia did not abolish it until 1848 to 1855, and even then, complete abolition in Italy didn’t occur until 1878. Regardless, the Vincentian missionaries would have certainly observed the deep enmeshment of slavery in American society during their time in Baltimore and Bardstown.

In 1818, the Vincentians founded St. Mary's Seminary of the Barrens in Perryville, Missouri. Following the unexpected death of DeAndreis in St. Louis on October 15, 1820, Rosati became superior of the Vincentian mission.

The Vatican appointed Rosati as the co-adjutor bishop to DuBourg on July 14, 1823. It came with the stipulation that the diocese would be divided into two episcopal sees within three years with Rosati going to St. Louis and DuBourg returning to be bishop of New Orleans. DuBourg consecrated Rosati on March 25, 1824, at the Church of the Ascension of Our Lord in Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Thus, Rosati was simultaneously serving as Vincentian superior and as co-adjutor bishop.

When Pope Leo XII accepted DuBourg’s resignation from the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, he published two decrees. The first split the large territory of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, creating the Diocese of New Orleans and the Diocese of St. Louis. The second decree made Bishop Rosati the temporary apostolic administrator of both dioceses. As Rosati

was already serving as the Vincentian superior in America as well, he decided he could better serve the Church solely as bishop. Thus, on March 20, 1827, the Vatican appointed him as the first Bishop of St. Louis. However, he continued as the Administrator of New Orleans until 1829, when it installed its first resident bishop, Leo-Raymond de Neckere, CM

Segregated Worship Spaces

In 1832, Bishop Joseph Rosati repurposed the abandoned St. Louis Academy building to serve as St. Mary's Chapel for free and enslaved people of color. He wrote to John Timon, CM, on February 26, 1832:

In two weeks there will be a second church, St. Mary's Church. (Rosati) has had the old college converted into a church by removing all the partitions and the floor above where Father (Edmond) Saulnier lived. It will hold 5 to 600 people. It is for the colored people (Negroes). On the first and third Sunday of each month there will be an English sermon at the High Mass. The Jesuits are in charge.²³⁴

Several transactions in Rosati's financial ledgers reveal some of the work needed to renovate the building for the chapel. On May 21, 1832, Rosati paid Hugh O'Neil, Jr., "for the amount of expenses for St. Mary's Chappell in St. Louis for the use of coloured people, in full, with a check on the Bank \$765."²³⁵ On June 20, Rosati recorded that he owed Jean Latresse, a painter, \$161.19 $\frac{3}{4}$ by "Bill of work at St. Mary's chappell."²³⁶ On June 21, he paid Latresse \$82.92 $\frac{1}{4}$ for painting the chapel.²³⁷

In May 1830, Rosati paid Thomas English, a carpenter, to make improvements to the buildings on the church grounds, including \$3.78 for "layin a rough floor in the Negros house," where Rosati housed the people he enslaved.²³⁸

Rosati built a new cathedral in 1834, which is now called the Basilica of Saint Louis, King of France, located downtown on the Gateway Arch National Park grounds. It is locally referred to as the Old Cathedral. Rosati collected subscriptions to finance the construction of the church. Some of these subscriptions came from people of color, who were likely free. In August 1831, he received \$50 "from Mr. Berger and Charleville a payment of subscription of coloured people towards the building of the new church."²³⁹ Rosati received \$2 "from N. woman of color for her subsc."²⁴⁰ And in March 1833, he received \$47 "by Mr. Rodier in payt of subs for the building of the Church/ coloured people."²⁴¹

Despite contributing funds to build the cathedral, people of color were segregated in the new church. Bishop Rosati included separate worship spaces for people of color at the rear of the cathedral. He wrote, "Attention was also given to the accommodation of the poor Negroes: for their special use are two beautiful galleries, where the people of both sexes belonging to this class may assist separately at the divine offices."²⁴² St. Mary's Chapel became the worship site for German-speaking Catholics under Father Joseph Anthony Lutz, and ceased to be used for segregated worship and catechism of people of color.²⁴³ Later the building accommodated a free school for boys in 1844 and then burned down in 1849.²⁴⁴

In 1836, Rosati hired the carpenters Darst and Mathews to build the roof and steeple of the cathedral. He paid them \$165 for “the Black woman services,” the details of which are unknown.²⁴⁵

Freedom Suits and Sales of Enslaved People

In 1824, the Missouri General Assembly passed an act that allowed enslaved people to petition for their freedom. Two freedom suits were filed against Rosati and the Diocese of St. Louis: one in 1837 by Aspasia LeCompte, whom Rosati had enslaved since 1834, and the second in 1840 by Charles Nesbit. Read more about Aspasia LeCompte in the section *People Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*, and Charles Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family under *People Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*.

In addition to buying and selling enslaved people, in at least one case Rosati acted as an intermediary for the sale of an enslaved family by receiving and distributing money. Rosati’s financial ledger shows several transactions regarding the sale by Baron Emanuel de Hodiamont, a former Trappist monk who came to St. Louis in 1803, to Charles Carpentier Valle^{xlii} in Ste. Genevieve:

- 1831 March 5: Received from Mr. Hodiamont seven hundred dollars to be sent to Mr. C. Vallé of Perry County, MO, in payment of a family of Negros bought by Mr. H. from Mr. Vallé, which I have lodged in the Bank, and will pay to Mr. Vallé on his order \$700
- 1831 March 5: Received from Mr. Hodiamont a note of fifty dollars payable in six months to Mr. C. Vallé which I must deliver when called for [\$50 amount not written in ledger]
- 1831 March 5: Received from Mr. Hodiamont a note of fifty dollars payable to me in six months, for which I will advance to the Rev. John Odin the same sum as soon as he shall call for it \$50
- 1831 March 21: Paid Mr. Ribeuit of St. Genevieve a bill drawn on me by Mr. Odin with \$200 cash, and check of \$500 on the Bank, in all. N.B. This money was left with me by Mr. Hodiamont to be sent to Mr. Carpenter Vallé for his negroes, etc. \$700
- 1831 September 5: Received from Mr. Hodiamont in payment of his not in my favour for which I had advanced to Mr. Odin the sum of \$50
- 1831 October 18: Received from Mr. Hodiamont for a bill by me paid on his acct. to Mr. Vallé \$50²⁴⁶

On November 4, 1831, Rosati paid Hodiamont \$20 “for servants wages,” which may mean he rented a person enslaved by Hodiamont.²⁴⁷

^{xlii} The Valle Family were an influential and affluent colonial family in Ste. Genevieve, who originally made their name as Spanish commandants while the area was under Spanish rule. The Felix Valle House is a Missouri State Historic Site. The Jean Baptiste Valle House is a National Historic Park site.

People Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati

Apostolic Delegate to Haiti

In 1840, Pope Gregory XVI appointed Rosati as his apostolic delegate to meet with Haitian President Jean-Pierre Boyer. The Haitian Revolution, lasting from 1791 to 1804, established the Republic of Haiti, but the war and its aftermath destabilized the Catholic Church there. Haiti was the former Sainte-Domingue colony where DuBourg and his family owned plantations and enslaved many people. The Vatican made several failed attempts to negotiate a settlement with the Haitian government to reestablish the Church before appointing Rosati to this role.

Rosati stopped in Baltimore on the way to Haiti. In a report to the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith in Rome, Rosati wrote, “In Baltimore I visited the community of black and mulatto sisters, almost all originally from Haiti, of which Mr. [James] Joubert [PSS] is the founder and director; I spoke to them about [Haiti], and they assured me that if religion was established there, they would be ready to go there.”²⁴⁸ The community was the Oblate Sisters of Providence that DuBourg’s fellow Sulpician Father Joubert had helped found in Baltimore in 1829.

Rosati continued to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and drafted a concordat with the Haitian government in early 1842. The agreement reestablished communication with the Vatican, particularly in choosing Church leaders. Rosati returned to Europe to report the results of his mission to the pope. The Vatican wanted some changes to the concordat before giving final approval, but Rosati passed away before he could resume negotiations with the Haitian government. In 1860 after several more years of civil unrest, Haiti and the Vatican signed a concordat largely based on the work that Rosati had begun.

After reporting his work to the pope, Rosati became severely ill in early 1843, likely stricken by tuberculosis. He died on September 25, 1843, in Rome.

Henry

The first known record of an enslaved person being purchased by Rosati was that of a young boy named Henry, acquired from Cornelius Rhodes of Perry County, Missouri. The record can be found in the Vincentian Archives:

I have received from Mr Rosati two hundred and twenty-five dollars and twenty cents in full pay of a negro boy called Henry eight years old _____ Barrens settlement 14th November 1821 signed Cornelius Rhodes Test (witness) John Layton.²⁴⁹

Father Louis Moni wrote to Rosati from New Orleans about the new purchase, telling him, “I recommend little Henry to you.”²⁵⁰ And then in August of 1822, Fr. Moni told Rosati that “I have given the price for Henry to [Phillip Borgna, CM]”²⁵¹ Both of these letters were written from New Orleans where both Fathers Moni and Borgna were at the time. Borgna was later Vicar General of St. Louis from 1833 to 1836.

Rosati wrote to Borgna on November 25, 1825, that “you forgot the sheet you bought for little Henri and he thanks you very much for the hat and is still waiting for something to make his outfit.”²⁵²

Andrew Nesbit

Andrew Nesbit was the son of Harry and Jenny Nesbit, born into slavery February 15, 1822, and baptized on March 16, 1823, at St. Ferdinand Church in Florissant, Missouri. Two years after his birth, DuBourg sold the Nesbit family to Bishop Rosati.

Andrew Nesbit appears in over twenty letters between 1831 and 1846. A large portion of the correspondence between 1831 to 1834 describe Rosati’s attempts to sell Andrew, which resulted in a great deal of back-and-forth between him and potential buyers. On October 25, 1831, the Bishop of New Orleans Leo-Raymond de Neckere, CM, told Rosati that “[Father Charles] de la Croix has heard that you wish to sell little Andrew, he would take him.”²⁵³ Rosati contacted de la Croix, the pastor of St. Michael Church in Convent, Louisiana, to sell Andrew to him, “I accept the offer that you have made to buy my little negro Andrew for \$200. I am sending him with this letter on the *Oregon*.”²⁵⁴ However, this transaction never did take place. De Neckere wrote to Rosati on December 21, 1831, about his plan to send Andrew and that de la Croix said that Andrew would arrive on the steamboat *Oregon*, but he was not there.²⁵⁵ In a letter to Rosati, Father Edmond Saulnier wrote about his trip on the *Oregon* when they stopped at Ste. Genevieve on December 1 at 8 o’clock:

The same evening, Mr. Van Laughler, who is to rejoin Msgr. De Neckere, came on board. The negro of whom you spoke did not show up. Mr. Van Laughler told me he was on a farm two miles lower down but he did not come on board. On Dec. 2 towards 10 o’clock we landed at Cape Girardeau, where we stayed two hours.²⁵⁶

Then Bishop Rosati wrote to de la Croix just over a month later, “The little negro Andrew who should have left on the *Oregon*, reached the river too late; the steamboat had already passed by.”²⁵⁷ In a follow-up letter to Father John Timon, CM, on January 9 1832, he said, “[De la Croix] is afraid nothing has yet been done about this [account of his establishment] just as about the commission he gave Father [Joseph] Paquin to send Andrew to St. Mary’s Landing.”²⁵⁸

De la Croix told Rosati, “I was worried about the fate of little Andrew who was lost. He was not sent by the steamboat according to your letter, I was bothering him from price to pay. If you can, withdraw from Mons. [de Neckere] thirty days later so that I can have time to prepare the full payment since I have a lot of things to pay at the moment. If by any means you can send me a boy under ten years old from the same family I will pay you \$100 more.”²⁵⁹

In February, Rosati wrote to Father John B. Tornatore, CM, the superior at St. Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary, telling him to keep Andrew at the seminary if he has not left.²⁶⁰ Then he wrote again to Tornatore in September “to take the little negro Andrew and send him to Fr. de la Croix recommending him to Amadeo Landry.”²⁶¹ Rosati wrote to Father Antoine Blanc, CM, on the same day to inform him of Andrew's sale to de la Croix.²⁶² But the sale still did not happen due to de la Croix’s inability or unwillingness to send Rosati the money.

In the meantime, an offer had been made again to sell Andrew to de la Croix but it appears that Rosati increased the price to \$300. On October 25, de la Croix wrote Rosati:

I received a letter from Madame Duchesne in which I found a small note which says that Andrew's price is 300 piastres. I hoped that I would succeed in this year because last year you sent me little Andrew for 200 piastres but he didn't arrive. I accept your price but payable in installments at one hundred piasters when he arrives, one hundred in one year, and one hundred in two years. You will be obliged to send him to me as soon as possible. As for the first hundred piastres, you can ask Mr. DeClusk for forty piastres which I sent to him by [de Neckere] for the same object, and draw on me for the other payments.²⁶³

A few weeks later, Rosati wrote to Tornatore at the Seminary, "I cannot wait years for the little negro. Bishop de Neckere tells you that I am counting on this money."²⁶⁴

Bishop de Neckere told Rosati that de la Croix found that the price for Andrew too high and was claiming he had great debts to pay for his church.²⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Rosati wrote to de la Croix with the news that, "I cannot accept your proposition for the little negro."²⁶⁶ On February 4, 1833, Rosati wrote to de la Croix who was at St. Michael Church that "\$200 would complete the payment for the little negro Andrew."²⁶⁷

In Rosati's financial ledger, he recorded on February 5, 1833, "Received of [Madame] Duchesne on acct. of the Revd. Charles (sic) De la Croix of Louisiana in part of payt. of my boy Andrew sold him for \$300."²⁶⁸ However, it does not appear de la Croix bought Andrew because Rosati wrote Blanc in May asking if there were any priests who wanted Andrew.²⁶⁹

Rosati eventually sold Andrew Nesbit to Antoine Blanc, who would become Bishop of New Orleans in 1835. In June, Blanc wrote to Rosati from New Orleans, referring to C. Scott and "\$200=value due for the little negro."²⁷⁰ Scott was a steamboat captain in New Orleans who Rosati would have known. Rosati's financial ledger contains the following entry: "July 1, 1833 - Received of the [Rev.] A Blanc balance for the negro boy Andrew sold to his brother by the Clerk of the [Steamboat] Mitchigan (sic) \$200.00."²⁷¹

A year later in July 1834, Blanc told Rosati that Andrew should stay in St. Louis.²⁷² It is unclear why Andrew would have been in St. Louis. Evidently, Andrew did not stay there because that same summer, Andrew was in Natchitoches, Louisiana. Father Edward D'Hauw, who was appointed to St. Francis in Natchitoches, assured Blanc in a letter on May 17, 1834, that Andrew was to be at [Blanc's] disposition until he reached 30 years old.²⁷³ A few months later, on September 25, 1834, D'Hauw informed Blanc that his Andrew was taken to the home of Jean Baptiste Prudhomme, and that D'Hauw "took every means to cure his propensity for stealing and lying."²⁷⁴ It should be emphasized that this was written by the enslaver D'Hauw and should not be taken as a reflection of Andrew's situation and character. These were acts of resistance towards his enslavers. As described in Rachel's story, it was not unusual for enslaved people to make life uncomfortable or difficult for their enslavers to take control over aspects of their lives and to resist enslavement.

D'Hauw wrote Blanc on March 16, 1835, that he was sending "Andrew with Mr. George, after having told the boy that Blanc would allow him to rejoin his mother if Blanc was pleased with

him.”²⁷⁵ Andrew would have been about 14 years old and may not have known that his mother Jenny had died in 1829, meaning D’Hauw and other priests had withheld information from him.

A few years later, Andrew Nesbit is mentioned again in correspondence. On May 15, 1838, Father John Boullier, CM, informed Blanc that Father Bonaventure Armengol, CM, at Assumption Church in Lafourche wanted to have Andrew to take over the kitchen with his brother.²⁷⁶ At this time his brother’s identity is unknown. Over a week later Andrew arrived to Armengol with a letter from Blanc dated May 18. Armengol responded to Blanc that Andrew was delayed because the boat stopped there only on its return. Armengol was grateful but said he did not need Andrew at the present time.²⁷⁷ From the enslavers’ perspective, Andrew seemed to have difficulty with steamboat schedules. Again, this was probably a form of passive resistance.

In June, Armengol wrote to Blanc about several enslaved people, including Andrew, as paraphrased here:

Andrew hurt his foot; it has been well taken care of but is still lame. Brother Blanka teaches Catechism in English to Isaac and Andrew twice a day... He plans to send Isaac and Andrew to [Ascension Church in] Donaldson [Louisiana] to Father (John) Boullier, (CM) for a retreat, First Communion and Confirmation. When (Blanc) goes up to Donaldson they can talk about Andrew... Armengol is pleased with Andrew's simplicity and docility.²⁷⁸

Isaac was also enslaved by the Vincentians in Donaldson. In July, Armengol told Blanc that if he needed Andrew to fill the loss of George, another person he enslaved in Donaldson, Andrew would be sent to Blanc at the first hint.²⁷⁹

Andrew Nesbit is mentioned again in a letter Father John Timon, CM, wrote from Cape Girardeau to Blanc on April 28, 1841. In discussing the delivery of Dory Nesbit to Father Joseph Giustiniani, CM, at Natchitoches, Louisiana, Timon stated that Dory was the brother of Andrew and John.²⁸⁰

On March 7, 1846, Father Etienne Rousselon, who was Vicar General of New Orleans, wrote to Bishop Blanc that Andrew had gone to St. James Parish with his “apprentice master.”²⁸¹ At this time, it is unclear who or in what capacity was the apprentice master.

In a letter to Rousselon in 1861, Bishop Jean-Marie Odin, CM, offered to pay for the \$14 Andrew Nesbit requested for purposes unknown at this time.²⁸²

In 1872, Andrew’s sister Sarah Nesbit^{xliii} listed him as a sibling in her Freedman’s Bank application in New Orleans, placing him in St. James Parish, Louisiana, at that time.²⁸³

Aspasia LeCompte and her child

Aspasia LeCompte was born into slavery in 1804 in St. Louis. Her mother Judy was born in Virginia in 1786. She was sold five times and lived in at least five states.²⁸⁴ Judy LeCompte was sold to William LeCompte of St. Louis in 1800. According to historian Anne Twitty, Judy “seems

^{xliii} Read more about Sarah Anne Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family.

to have remained with LeCompte, or his family, for at least the next two decades, long enough, in any case, that she would eventually take his name as her own.” During that time, Judy had three children: Aspasia, Celeste, and Toussaint.²⁸⁵

Bishop Rosati purchased Aspasia LeCompte from Louis Menard as shown in the following financial ledger entry:

St. Louis April 18th 1834 - Bought of Mr. Louis Menard a negro woman with her child, the woman is called Aspasia for the sum of five hundred dollars, of which \$250 I have paid today, and for the balance given my note at twelve months with interest of six per cent.

The Sale has been made by Mess^{rs}. Tesson J Sire as attorney in fact of Mr Menard. Drawn on Bank for \$210.00.²⁸⁶

At this time, it is not known what happened with Aspasia’s child.

Between 1827 and 1839, Aspasia LeCompte filed six freedom suits against four of her enslavers: Francois Chouteau, Pierre Menard, Bishop Joseph Rosati, and Hardage Lane. The suit against Menard went to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1831, where it was dismissed for being outside its purview. Each time Aspasia filed a new suit, the enslaver sold or moved her to avoid liability and impede the trial.²⁸⁷

Aspasia filed a freedom suit against Bishop Rosati on January 9, 1837. Several documents provide details of the suit:

To the Honorable Luke E. Lawless Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit for the State of Missouri

The petition of Aspasia a woman of color respectfully represents that she is the daughter of Judy who was born in the state of Virginia about the year 1786 and whom about 10 or 11 years old was bought to Louisville Kentucky and sold to a certain William Sullivan who kept her for a short time as a slave and then sold her to a certain Robert Bunton a resident of the Town of Vincennes in the north-western Territory. That the said Bunton took your petitioner’s mother to the town of Vincennes in the territory aforesaid about the year 1798, in which place she was owned and continued to be held as a slave by the said Bunton for the space of two years or afterwards. That after your petitioner’s mother had been held and treated as a slave in the town of Vincennes and Territory aforesaid for the length of time set forth above she was sent to Kaskaskia in the said Territory and some short time afterwards sold to a certain William LeCompte of the town of Saint Louis in the province of upper Louisiana where she has remained in slavery ever since, and gave birth to your petitioner about thirty-two years ago in the town of Saint Louis.

Your petition further represents that she is now illegally held in slavery by a certain Joseph Rosati of St. Louis contrary to the provision of an ordinance by the Congress of the State in day of July seventeen hundred and eighty-seven your petitioner this for prays that she may be permitted to sue as a poor person in

order to establish her right to freedom, that counsel be assigned her for that purpose and finally that your honor may grant the usual orders in such case as in duty would will ever pray.

Aspisa her mark X a woman of color, St. Louis County.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day 1837 ²⁸⁸

By detailing the whereabouts of Aspasia's mother Judy, the petition demonstrated Judy was unlawfully enslaved in Vincennes, Indiana, and Kaskaskia, Illinois, which at the time was a part of the Northwest Territory that Congress had deemed in 1787 as a free territory. Enslavers could transport enslaved people through the territory, but they could not reside there or have enslaved people complete work there. If the enslaved person was returned to "slave territory" after completing work or residing there, they could be considered free by the court. Three years later, Charles Nesbit also filed a freedom suit against Rosati based on this premise.^{xliv}

The court summoned Rosati to appear before the judge of the Circuit Court on the first day of the next term and "to answer unto Aspisa, a woman of color of a plea of trespass for false imprisonment, wherefore this said Aspisa saith she hath sustained damage to the amount of three hundred dollars."²⁸⁹

Rosati immediately sold Aspasia on January 7 to Hardage Lane to obstruct Aspasia's case and avoid legal liability and financial losses. Lane was a physician and professor of at Saint Louis University. Lane paid Rosati in full on February 24.²⁹⁰

In March the charges against Rosati were broadened to include violence and mistreatment:

Aspisa a woman of color by F W Risque her attorney complains of Joseph Rosate [sic] of a plea for false imprisonment. For that whereas the said Joseph Rosate [sic] to writ on the 2nd day of January 1837 of the city of St. Louis in the county aforesaid with force and made an assault upon the said Aspisa to not at &c. and then & there but, bruised and ill treated her the said Aspisa and then and there imprisoned her and kept her and detained her in prison then, without any reasonable or probable cause whatsoever for a long time to wit for the share of the then following, contrary to the laws of the land and the will of said Aspisa. And the said Aspisa that at the time and before the committing of the said grivances [sic] she was and still is a for person [sic] and that the said Joseph Rosate [sic] held and still holds her in slavery, to the damage of the said Aspisa of the sum of \$300, and therefore she brings suit.²⁹¹

After being sold to Lane, Aspasia sued him for her freedom in July 1837 and won in 1839.²⁹² She immediately filed another suit against him for trespass and false imprisonment for holding her in slavery during the two years of the trial. Schmidt explains that Aspasia likely feared that Lane would not release her. Aspasia did not win the case, but she was freed.²⁹³

^{xliv} Read more about Charles Nesbit's freedom suit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit's family.

Later, Lane sought compensation from Rosati for the financial loss of Aspasia and legal fees. Rosati's financial ledger contains a list of expenses paid to Lane:

To this amount paid you for negro woman Aspasia 700.00
In interest at the rate of six per cent up to Aug. 20th 1839 110.25
To this amount an award in favor of Sullivan for traveling to Vincennes and taking depositions 11.34
To this amount being one third of the fees paid to Msgrs. Guyer, Hudson and Primm 50.00
To this amount paid clerks and Sheriff cost in the Courts of St. Charles and St. Louis to clerks and the sheriff 34.98
The whole amount of fees906.57

At the end of the invoice are the various payments made by Rosati, and the notation "settled Nov. 13th 1840." The document was signed by Lane and M. P. Leduc as the agent of Rosati.²⁹⁴

In June 1839, Father Joseph Lutz notified Rosati by a letter that "Dr. Lane wants to be paid for Aspasia." Although Rosati's agent had promised to do so, it had not been paid as yet.²⁹⁵ As seen above, it was paid in full in 1840.

According to Schmidt, Aspasia assisted her family to win their freedom as well, including her mother Judy, her sister Celeste, and Celeste's children Celestine, Lewis, and Andrew. Many of these trials were occurring concurrently with her own.²⁹⁶

Aspasia's daughter Mary Rozella was born on March 14, 1840. In 1842, Aspasia and Celeste obtained their freedom licenses. They were working as washerwomen.²⁹⁷

For a fuller discussion of Aspasia LeCompte and her family's fight for freedom, reference Kelly Schmidt's article "Slavery and the Shaping of Catholic Missouri, 1810-1850" in the *Missouri Historical Review*, April 2022.

Ignatius, Serena, and their child James

Rosati purchased a family of enslaved people for St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary on July 17, 1827, "from Benjamin Wilson for \$500. Over the following two years the bishop paid Wilson \$700 'for his negroes.'" A ledger from the seminary shows two payments to Mr. Wilson. One on July 18, 1829, for \$100.00 and the other on September 3 "to Mr. Wilson for one family negro on acct \$200.00."²⁹⁸ It is believed this was the family of Ignatius, Serena, and James.

Several months before the sale was initiated Ignatius was baptized at St. Mary's Assumption Church in Perryville on March 14, 1827. The record notes he was 50 years old, and Willson (sic) enslaved him.²⁹⁹

James was 7 years old when he was baptized at the church in Perryville:

4 January 1829 I, the undersigned, baptized James L born 1 March 1822 of Ignatius and Serena slaves of the Illus Rev^d J. Rosati. Sponsors were Charles slave of the same Bishop and Aminta.^{xlv} J. Timon S.CM³⁰⁰

^{xlv} Read more about Charles and Minty Nesbit's family in the section about Harry and Jenny Nesbit's family.

Then a few months later, the parents Ignatius and Serena were married at St. Mary's Assumption in Perryville on March 21, 1829, by Father John Timon, CM, who noted them as being enslaved by St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary. Ignatius's name is abbreviated as "Nace" in the margin. The witnesses were Fathers Blanc and Vanouchi.³⁰¹

Lady

Rosati wrote to Father John Timon, CM, at the seminary telling him that we have lost "our old Lydy."³⁰² The Old Cathedral sacramental death register states:

On the twenty second of October eighteen hundred and thirty two, I the undersigned performed the rite of the ecclesiastical burial on the corpse of Lady, Slave of the Right Rev^d Bishop Rosati. _ Lefebre³⁰³

Jane

In Rosati's financial ledger, he notes several transactions regarding the hire of a woman Jane to the Sisters of Charity (now the Daughters of Charity) at Mullanphy Hospital between 1830 and 1832:

In Rosati's financial ledger, organized by entity, under debit records:

1830 December 31: to a month's wages of my negro Woman Jane \$4
1831 March 4: to two month's wages of my negro woman Jane \$8
1830 April 8: to two month's wages of my negro girl Jane \$8
1831 June 11: to [two] two month's wages of J. up to this day \$8
1831 August 13: to [two] months wages of the negro girl \$8
1831 October 15: to Jane's two months wages \$8
1831 December 17: to Janes two months wages \$8

In Rosati's financial ledger, organized by entity, under credit records:

1831 January 14: [By Cash] for a months hire of my negro Woman Jane \$4
1831 January 28: By Cash from Sr. Xavier for Janes wages \$4.00
1831 March 4: [By Cash for two months' hire of Jane] \$8
1831 March 6: By Cash for Janes wages \$4.00
1831 April 21: [By Cash] from Sr. Xavier Supr. For Jane's 2 [months] Wages \$8
1831 June 26: By Cash for the negro girl 3 months wages \$12.00
1831 August 18: [By Cash from Sr. Xavier] for Jane's 2 mts wages \$8
1831 October 18: [By Cash] from [Sr. Xavier] for Jane's 3 months wages \$12.11³⁰⁴

And in Rosati's financial ledger, organized chronologically:

1831 June 2: Received from Sr. Xavier Spr of the Hospital \$4 for my negro girl one month's wages, and \$16 for the Building of the Hospital, in all \$20
1831 October 18: Received from Sr. Xavier for the Negro girl Jane for two months wages \$8
1831 December 15: Received from Sr. Xavier for Jane's 3 month wages \$12
1832 January 26: Received of Sr. Xavier for Jane's wages \$4
1832 March 10: Received of Sr. Xavier Supr of the Hosp for 1 month wages for Jane \$4³⁰⁵

Founded in 1828, Mullanphy Hospital was the first hospital established west of the Mississippi River. Its namesake was John Mullanphy, a prominent Irish Catholic businessman and philanthropist. Upon Rosati's request four Sisters of Charity came to St. Louis to operate the hospital. In the deed, John Mullanphy specified that the hospital care for "all such indigent sick free people without regard to color, country or religion." The hospital was located on Spruce Street between Third and Fourth Streets. The first hospital was a three-room log cabin, and the number of patients quickly overwhelmed the small quarters. The small contingent of sisters soon grew to twelve. A new hospital was opened in 1832 on Spruce Street to accommodate the growing city's needs.³⁰⁶

Unidentified Woman

When Minty Nesbit, wife of Charles Nesbit, died in 1834, Rosati bought an enslaved person to replace her. Rosati wrote to Timon on February 23, 1835: "Last year we lost Minthy and had to buy another black woman for \$500."³⁰⁷ The identity of the woman is unknown.

Other Enslaved People Referenced in Rosati's Papers

Allen

Rosati did not take legal or physical possession of Allen.

After his death in 1841, the will of Hugh O'Neil bequeathed "to the Right Reverend Joseph Rosatti [sic] my negro boy named Allen aged about ten years, a slave for life."³⁰⁸ It stated O'Neil bought Allen and his mother Mary on April 4, 1832, from S. Deaves.³⁰⁹

The inventory on August 4 lists Allen as "1 negro boy, a slave aged about 11 years " valued at \$250.³¹⁰ And the September 10 Inventory has a notation under "1 negro boy, a slave, aged about 11 years," that reads, "bequeathed to the Rt. Rev. Joseph Rosati."³¹¹ In a paper entitled, "First annual Settlement," dated September 10, 1842, it states "Slave bequeathed to Bishop Rosati \$250."³¹² However, it does not appear that Rosati ever took possession of Allen.

The local newspaper *St. Louis New Era* carried an ad published for four weeks from January 28 through February 18, 1843:³¹³

Administrators Sale
for the public auction of two slaves belonging to the estate of
the late Hugh O'Neil, for payment of debts
Allen, a boy aged about 12 years, and
Elizabeth,^{xlvi} aged about 14 years

The auction took place on March 6, 1843, and a document of March 18 from the St. Louis Probate Court stated that "Mrs. Mary (O'Neil) became the highest and last bidder for the said slaves and purchased the same.... For Allen, the sum of \$165, For Elizabeth, the sum of \$235."³¹⁴

^{xlvi} Read more about Elizabeth Anna Nesbit in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit's family.

François and Medar

A letter from Father Henry Pratte of Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, informed Rosati that he was “sending by François and Medar the little horse which came from the Barrens.”³¹⁵ It is not clear whether they were delivering or riding the horse to Ste. Genevieve, or both. No other information has been found about these two people or whether they were enslaved by Rosati, Pratte, or the Vincentians at St. Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville, Missouri.

Marguerite

On June 2, 1830, Father Edmund Saulnier related a story to Rosati about Father Lawrence Zender, originally from the Diocese of Cincinnati, who demanded the “negresse Marguerite” cut his hair like a tonsure:^{xlvii} “Yesterday he demanded again that Marguerite fix his hair in the model to make him a cap because everybody would regard his tonsure as stupid.”³¹⁶ At this time, it is unclear who enslaved Marguerite.

Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick

Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick was born in Dublin, Ireland, on August 18, 1806. He was ordained a priest at St. Patrick’s Royal College (Maynooth) in Dublin in 1832. His brother Francis Patrick Kenrick became Bishop of Philadelphia in 1830, and invited Peter to teach theology at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. Peter Kenrick then served as president of the seminary from 1835 to 1837.

In 1840, Kenrick went to Rome to apply for admission with the Jesuits, but the Jesuit superior did not approve it. However, in 1841, Kenrick was appointed as the coadjutor bishop to the Diocese of St. Louis. Rosati consecrated Kenrick on November 30, 1841, at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Philadelphia, right before leaving for his commission in Haiti. As coadjutor bishop, Kenrick administered the Diocese of St. Louis in Rosati’s absence. When Rosati passed away, Kenrick was elevated to the Bishop of St. Louis on September 25, 1843, and served as archbishop until his death on March 4, 1896.^{xlviii}

Not that there is a limited understanding of the extent of Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick’s involvement in slavery. Most of the personal and archdiocesan papers under Archbishop Kenrick were destroyed after his death. Several financial records exist from that time, but they are often vague and do not usually discuss individual clergy’s property.

Kenrick’s Views on Slavery, People of Color, and the U.S. Civil War

Research into Kenrick’s involvement in and views on slavery have been difficult to locate, as his records are very limited. According to the St. Louis Catholic Historical Review, Kenrick’s successor Archbishop John Kain directed Kenrick’s papers to be destroyed when he was

^{xlvii} Tonsure is cutting or shaving part of the hair as a sign of religious devotion and might be done in a variety of styles. A well-known Christian example would be the Franciscan (like St. Francis of Assisi) monk’s hairstyle where a ring of hair is left around the perimeter and the top is shaved off.

^{xlviii} The diocese was elevated to the Archdiocese of St. Louis in 1847, and Kenrick’s official position changed from bishop to archbishop.

appointed to the episcopacy in 1896. Correspondence with Peter's brother Archbishop Francis P. Kenrick was sent to the Archdiocese of Baltimore to be added to the Francis P. Kenrick Papers, now held at the Catholic Historical Research Center of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. What survived of Peter R. Kenrick's papers were held by Chancellor Henry Van der Sanden and salvaged from his effects upon Van der Sanden's death in 1910.³¹⁷ Therefore, much of the analysis of Kenrick's views on slavery, people of color, and the U.S. Civil War is pieced together from external sources.

One primary source record is a letter of January 1, 1843, from Kenrick to Bishop John Baptist Purcell of Cincinnati, Ohio, objecting to an article in the Catholic Telegraph about an advertisement for an enslaved person.³¹⁸ However, he does not explain why.

Kenrick was well-aware of the strong racism that existed in St. Louis and participated in it. In 1844, he began developing a plan to open a school for children of color. Initially, he planned to invite the Oblate Sisters of Providence in Baltimore to operate the school. As mentioned previously, this was the first religious order to be founded for Black Catholic sisters in the U.S. However, Kenrick changed course and asked the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, who were already working in the diocese. In a letter to letter to Father John Timon, CM, Kenrick remarked on the added benefit of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet being white, which he hoped might bring less attention to the school:

The Sisters of St. Joseph have agreed to establish a house at St. Louis for the benefit of coloured (sic) children, and I therefore have abandoned all idea of inviting the Sisters of Providence from Baltimore. Independently of the greater facility with which the matter can be now arranged, the strong prejudices against the colored population which are so prevalent might cause the effort as originally contemplated to be regarded with suspicion...³¹⁹

In 1845, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet opened the school for the daughters of free people of color at 3rd and Poplar Streets in St. Louis. According to a history on the congregation by Sister Mary Lucinda Savage, C.SJ:

A lively interest was manifested in the education of these children [of color] by Bishop Kenrick, and also by Right Reverend Edward Barron, for several years Vicar-Apostolic of the Liberian colony in Africa. Bishop Barron came to St. Louis in 1845, and in company with Bishop Kenrick, frequently visited the school, encouraging teachers and pupils. Following is a portion of a letter from one of the pupils written into the annals of the Sisters in Carondelet:

We felt at home and were happy, because the time and attention of the Sisters was all our own, and there was no one to tease us. Archbishop Kenrick often visited us, and when Bishop Barron came to St. Louis, the Archbishop brought him to see us. Father Paris, who was the chief organizer of the school, visited us at least once a week. He would hear our lessons and note our improvement.³²⁰

Despite the promising start, local citizens began threatening the sisters because of the school, and Kenrick made the decision to close it in 1846. Sister St. John Fournier, who was one of the founding sisters who taught at the school, gave this account of the events:

The first mission in St. Louis [was] a school for liberated Negroes... We also prepared slaves for the reception of the sacraments, and this displeased the whites very much. After some time, they threatened to have us put out by force. The threats were repeated every day. Finally, one morning as I was leaving the church, several people called out to me and told me that they were coming that night to put us out of the house. I said nothing to the sisters, and was not afraid, so great confidence had I in the Blessed Virgin! ... At eleven o'clock, the sisters woke with a start when they heard a loud noise. Out in the street was a crowd of people crying out and cursing... Suddenly, the police patrol came and scattered those villains who were trying to break open the door. They returned three times that same night, but our good Mother protected us and they were not able to open the door from the outside nor to break it down.... The day after our adventure, the Mayor of St. Louis advised Bishop Kenrick to close that school for a time and he did so.³²¹

Kenrick did not reopen the school, and soon after in February 1847, the Missouri State legislature passed an act banning schools "for the instruction of negroes and mulattos, in reading and writing."³²²

Publicly, Kenrick was generally silent on the war and the issue of slavery. The experience surrounding the Sisters' school may have very well influenced Kenrick's decision to claim nonpartisanship and noninvolvement to avoid confrontation. However, secondary biographies and various primary sources document that Kenrick supported slavery and the Confederacy behind closed doors. Moreover, Kenrick himself enslaved people.

In one description of Kenrick's views on the Civil War and enslaved people, historian Father John Rothensteiner wrote:

Archbishop Kenrick, no doubt, had decided opinions in regard to the two great questions that were agitated between North and South: slavery and secession. But fair and just, as he always was, he took into consideration the point of view of the southern people, as well of that of the abolitionists... Archbishop Kenrick's sympathies, as those of most of his people and priests, inclined to the Southern cause yet his position as a Catholic prelate forbade an expression on the matter. He was a slave holder, on a very small scale, but his slaves were perfectly contented with the home he gave them. He sympathized with the sufferings of all men, whether black or white or brown, or yellow; but he did not think immediate emancipation of the negro class the only remedy for these sufferings.³²³

In this quote, Rothensteiner pushes the common narrative of the majority white culture that denied and softened the harsh reality of slavery, such as by claiming that people were content being enslaved by Kenrick. The fact remains that Kenrick enslaved people, and it cannot be assumed he treated them kindly. There has been a longstanding myth that Catholic enslavers were more benevolent than non-Catholic enslavers. Historian Kelly Schmidt writes:

Historians have argued that enslavement to members of the Catholic Church was more benign than among other, usually Protestant, enslavers, but the accounts

discussed here and recent scholarships on slavery and Catholicism reveal that enslaved people endured the same abuses and cruelties at the hands of Catholic enslavers. The assumption that people enslaved to Catholics fared better than other enslaved people originated during the era of slaveholding itself, with clergy who were often immigrants justifying their actions with claims that they were more indulgent and less adept when managing enslaved people than “American” slaveholders, that they provided for enslaved people by giving them access to the Catholic faith, and that “priest’s slaves” were notorious for being granted the leisure to do as they pleased.³²⁴

A biography about Kenrick also asserts that “it was pretty well known that [Kenrick’s] sympathies were with the South. We do not know that he went the entire length of the Calhoun doctrine of the Right of Succession, but we do know that he condemned the war not only as inexpedient, but as unjustifiable.” Even the authors of this biography, which was published during Kenrick’s lifetime in 1891, were not completely aware of Kenrick’s full views on the war.³²⁵

The 1891 biography claims that Kenrick “abstained entirely from preaching” during the first two years of the war because he did not want to get involved in contention.³²⁶ Archbishop Patrick J. Ryan, who had served as a priest, vicar general, and auxiliary bishop under Kenrick, wrote that Kenrick also abstained from reading the newspapers in the early years of the Civil War “because he believed that, in the peculiar circumstances of Missouri as a border state, the interests of religion would be best forwarded by prudent silence.”³²⁷ In a letter to his brother Francis in 1862, Peter wrote that he had “decided to get involved as little as possible in these turmoils so that with the help of God I shall be able to be of service to the end.”³²⁸

It does appear that Kenrick was deliberate about separating religion from politics. During the war Kenrick refused to permit the U.S. flag to be flown from his cathedral on the grounds that “no secular banner belonged there,” but he did allow wounded Union troops to be cared for in diocesan buildings.³²⁹ In one instance, Colonel Francis P. Blair, Jr., of the First Regiment of Missouri Volunteers asked Kenrick to appoint Father Pierre-Jean de Smet, SJ, as chaplain to the Unionist outfit. Kenrick rejected the request, possibly on the suspicion that de Smet, known internationally for his missionary work among the Pacific Northwest Native Americans, was being used as a propaganda tool to recruit soldiers. On another occasion, succession-supporter Father John O’Sullivan of St. Malachy Parish came into conflict with military authorities, and Kenrick had him transferred to the Diocese of Alton. When Father John Bannon abandoned the pastorate at St. John the Apostle and Evangelist to join the Confederacy as a chaplain, Kenrick remained silent and did not recall Bannon from the field.³³⁰ Later, Kenrick appointed then-Father Patrick Ryan to minister to Confederate prisoners of war, and Father Patrick Feehan to Union troops.³³¹

Despite Kenrick’s attempts to maintain neutrality in the public eye, his personal views were apparently still known and shared. Ryan relayed an event in which the U.S. Secretary of State William Henry Seward became aware that Kenrick “shared the views of the distinguished jurist Charles O’Connor of New York, as well as many other great authorities, in regard to the relations of the States to the government.” Charles O’Connor was a lawyer who supported the

States' Rights Democrats during the Civil War. Seward wrote to his friend and Union-supporter Archbishop John Hughes of New York to ask if Kenrick could be transferred from the Archdiocese of St. Louis.³³² Nothing transpired of the request. Only the Vatican can remove and appoint bishops. Samuel Miller who authored a biography of Kenrick wrote:

Perhaps in some measure Seward's concerns were justified. During the War Kenrick remained in regular and closer contact with Archbishop John Odin in New Orleans and Bishop William Elder in Natchez than with the other members of the American hierarchy. The connection with Elder was of particular interest, because both Kenrick and Elder were regarded with deep suspicion by the military authorities of the Union Army... Both Kenrick and Elder expected to be jailed for their attitudes, a fate which actually befell Elder.³³³

In two letters to Archbishop Odin, Kenrick expressed his disapproval against a priest from the North being named as the bishop of Little Rock, Arkansas:

Although Father [Patrick John] Ryan is young, I believe that his name may be added to the other two ... Could you not find someone who will be likely to bear the burden of the episcopacy among the Southern clergy? I am afraid that the attempt to procure nominations among the Northern Clergy will prove a failure and an embarrassment.³³⁴

Two months later, he repeated his recommendation to Odin about a bishop for Little Rock, "Hence no clergyman should be chosen from any of the Northern or Border states."³³⁵

Several sources stated Kenrick's disfavor with the immediate emancipation of enslaved people. The following cases document that Kenrick refused external assistance or guidance to provide ministry to people of color. These cases may be a mix of Kenrick's racism towards people of color as well as his reluctance to release his iron grip on episcopal control of the diocese.

At the extraordinary session of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore on October 22, 1866, there was a discussion by the bishops to establish a national coordinator for the evangelization of Black people. "Peter Kenrick, the archbishop of St. Louis, who had been in very bad humor throughout the council, 'asserted that he would accept no such prefect; if one were forced upon him, he would renounce the episcopacy.' He spoke about the evils of a divided administration."³³⁶ Kenrick was reluctant to share his authority over the Catholic faithful in St. Louis. The Council delayed the question of emancipated people until the final closing of the council; therefore, a record of the discussion and Kenrick's specific comments are not contained in the official *Acta et Decreta*.

Several years after emancipation, a newly founded group of missionaries called the Mill Hill Fathers came to the U.S. from England in 1871 to minister among African Americans. Their leader Peter Benoit came to St. Louis, but "Peter Richard Kenrick was not favorably disposed" to their work. When their founder Herbert Vaughn visited St. Louis in 1872, it was reported "Kenrick was pessimistic about the evangelization of African Americans and refused permission to collect money for the work."³³⁷ Just a year later, though, Kenrick approved the founding of St. Elizabeth Parish, the first segregated church for Black Catholics in St. Louis.

Late Nineteenth-Century Segregated Worship Spaces

The Jesuits had been providing spiritual ministry to Black Catholics in St. Louis since the 1840s through a small chapel in St. Francis Xavier College Church at Saint Louis University. Through the efforts of Black Catholics like Mathilda Tyler, the plans for a new church for Black Catholics developed.³³⁸ As historian Kelly Schmidt explains, “the congregation had outgrown the small, segregated chapel assigned to them in the third gallery of the church, and they wanted a space to worship free from the prejudice of white parishioners they encountered at St. Francis Xavier.”³³⁹ A church at 17th and Christy Streets was proposed in 1870, but the plans fell through. In 1873, St. Elizabeth Parish opened at 14th and Gay Streets in the former Vinegar Hill Hall meeting building for Presbyterians and Baptists.³⁴⁰

St. Elizabeth was the first segregated church in St. Louis designated for Black Catholics. Nationally, it was the fourth Black “national parish” of its kind. National ethnic parishes were established for many immigrant groups in the U.S., such as Irish, German, Czech, Italian, and Polish, to provide ministry within their own language and culture. St. Elizabeth remained the only designated parish for people of color until Archbishop John J. Glennon designated St. Nicholas as a Black Catholic parish in 1926.

At the first proposal of a new parish in 1870, Father Ferdinand Coosemans, SJ, recorded the wishes of Kenrick regarding the restrictions on St. Elizabeth’s ministry:

Said church is to be exclusively for the Colored people, i.e. no Baptisms, no marriages, or funerals except for that class of people, and no pews rented to any but them. It shall be carefully published that said church is exclusively for the colored people and that the Sacraments will not be administered there to the whites. This however should not be understood as binding the pastor to refuse Holy Communion to those people other than colored, who actually present themselves at the communion rail. The Viaticum or Extreme Unction is not to be administered by the pastor to any except the colored people, unless, of course, in those cases of sudden or extreme necessity in which all priests by the General Law must aid the dying.

On the other hand it is understood that the pastor of the Colored people may perform all ordinary pastoral duties for that class of people throughout the City, unless another Church for that class be built with the approval of the Most Rev. Archbishop.

No changes will be made in these conditions without the written consent of the Most Rev. Archbishop of St. Louis, or his ecclesiastical (sic) representative, as also of the pastors of St. Nicholas Church and St. John’s.

In testimony whereof I have herewith set my hand and affixed the seal of my office this 16th day of July 1870. Fred Coosemans, SJ³⁴¹

When St. Elizabeth opened in 1873, Panken asked for clarification from Father Joseph A. Zealand, SJ, about how to handle the sacrament of the Eucharist at the church:

...What is to be done next – if [white] people present themselves for holy communion, must they be refused, and if so, is any explanation to be given them before or after? Should the Archbishop be consulted before such measures are adopted?

The response from Zealand was an emphatic “no” on behalf of Kenrick:

Let Communion be refused. No further explanation is needed. As the Archbishop has expressed his mind on the subject in a manner that cannot be mistaken, it would be improper to again consult him about it.³⁴²

The matter was again raised in 1926 by Father Joseph M. Milet, SJ, to Archbishop Glennon. Apparently, the Jesuit priests were administering sacraments, including the Eucharist, to white people at St. Elizabeth, and Glennon confirmed, “to go on as we and the other pastors have been doing namely – to continue administering the Sacraments in St. Elizabeth’s church to white people as well as colored people.”³⁴³

In 1873, St. Elizabeth Parish opened a school for people of color in St. Louis. In 1880, the Oblate Sisters of Providence^{xlix} came to St. Louis from Baltimore to operate the school. The sisters also opened the St. Frances Catholic Colored Orphan Asylum (1887-1965), St. Rita Academy (1912-1951), and St. Frances Day Care Center (1965-1991).

St. Elizabeth Parish closed in 1951 after Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter desegregated diocesan schools and parishes in 1947. By closing formerly segregated Black schools and parishes in 1951, Ritter intended to spur the integration of other schools and parishes. In practice, however, many parishes and schools remained *de facto* segregated.

People Enslaved by Archbishop Peter R. Kenrick

Unidentified Enslaved People in the U.S. Census

There are three enslaved people listed for Peter R. Kenrick in the U.S. Census Slave Schedules of 1850 and 1860. In the 1850 Slave Schedule, there are two young men aged 13 and 79, and a 47-year-old woman.³⁴⁴

In the 1860 Slave Schedule for St. Louis there is a 34-year-old male and a 33-year-old female, and 12-year-old female. John A. Brownlee's name is just above Kenrick's name with a notation that he is "employer" and Kenrick is "owner" of all three.³⁴⁵ Kenrick was renting enslaved people to Brownlee. According to the 1860 U.S. Census for the City of St. Louis, John A. Brownlee was a Wholesale Dry Goods Merchant with a wife and six children. He had one clerk and four servants from Ireland. Perhaps the enslaved people did the more menial tasks in the store. Brownlee is listed in the 1860 census as the next-door neighbor of Fathers Patrick Phelan and Michael McFaul, priests of Immaculate Conception Parish at 8th and Chestnut Streets.³⁴⁶

^{xlix} As discussed earlier, this was the first Catholic sisterhood to be founded for women of color in the U.S. Incidentally, DuBourg’s fellow Sulpician Father James Joubert, PSS, helped found the order in Baltimore in 1829, which was initially comprised of Black Haitian refugees from DuBourg’s birthplace.

William and Louise Nesbit, and their child Margarita

William Nesbit was the son of Harry and Jenny Nesbit and born about 1820.

Bishop Kenrick was the executor of Bishop Rosati's estate. On the third day of May 1844, in the "Inventory of all the REAL AND PERSONAL ESTATE of Joseph Rosati, late of the County of St. Louis, deceased," there is the following, "A black boy named William, aged about 30 more or less." Within the documents of the first settlement it reads, "By estimated value of Negro boy William, in the possession of the executor, \$500."³⁴⁷

In Rosati's probate files, there are several records of Kenrick receiving payments for William's labor. In the first settlement of the estate, one document recorded the "amount of wages of William, a negro boy belonging to the estate from 26th Sept. 1843 to 26th May 1845 \$200." William was hired out again the following year with the record stating, "wages of negro boy William for one year ----\$120." The final settlement of the estate included a receipt for "amt of wages of negro boy William from 26 May 1846 to 26 May 1847, \$120." In this four-year period, William earned \$520 for Kenrick.³⁴⁸

An entry in Rosati's financial ledger of October 18, 1838, shows that \$20.00 was paid to Mr. Seavers for clothes for William.³⁴⁹

The baptism register at St. Mary's Assumption in Perryville recorded that Margarita, born February 23, 1839, the daughter of William and Louise, "servants of the Seminary" was baptized on March 30, 1839.³⁵⁰ William and Louise were most likely married in 1837 or 1838 although no record has been found in any marriage register.³⁵¹ Louise was one of several enslaved purchased by the Seminary to unite families. There is an expense record for February 10, 1847, in the St. Vincent's College Cape Girardeau accounts for "travelling expenses of Mr. Chandry and Louise to St. Louis and back \$21.00."³⁵²

William Nesbit was emancipated or manumitted on July 21, 1847.³⁵³

Chloe and Jerry

Although Kenrick's papers were destroyed after his death, his financial records were fortunately retained. The financial records include receipts and expenses for a variety of purposes, including for enslaved people. There are a number of expense entries in the *Mixed Accounts Ledger of 1844-1860* for people named Chloe and Jerry from 1850 through 1852:

Church and House Expenses:

April 19, 1850	Clothes for Jerry and Cloé \$10
May 15, 1850	Jerry \$6
September 11, 1851	Clothes for Chloe and Jerry \$16

Seminary expenses:

June 18, 1852	To Chloe \$3
July 15, 1852	Chloe and Jerry for clothes \$10
November 12, 1852	Jerry servant \$6 ³⁵⁴

Clothes were purchased once per year, and a handful of expenses do not specify the purpose. The expenses of 1852 refer to the Theological Seminary of St. Louis in Carondelet, Missouri. Kenrick ran the seminary from 1842 to 1859.

Unidentified Person

Kenrick records two entries for 1852 in his financial ledger for seminary expenses:

April 5	Servant of [Seminary] order of R. A. O'Regan \$36.20
April 14	Servant of order \$20 ³⁵⁵

The word “servant” was a euphemistic term for an enslaved person. This person was enslaved by Father Anthony O'Regan was an Irish priest who served at Kenrick's theological seminary in Carondelet, Missouri, and later became Bishop of Chicago in 1854. Kenrick was paying O'Regan to rent the enslaved person.

People with Undetermined Status in the Records of Archbishop Kenrick

There are several entries in Kenrick's financial ledgers that are very difficult to confidently identify as being related to enslaved people. The entries are often abbreviated and ambiguous, known only to the author Kenrick himself. One major impediment in determining a person's status was the use of the word “servant,” which was used in the records to describe both free domestic workers and enslaved people. Another issue is the inconsistency of entries for a given person. Free domestic workers could be quite transient, as shown in Kenrick's Cash Book from 1849 to 1856 in which at least 11 free servants with surnames are named.

There are several indicators used to identify enslaved people in the financial records, but unfortunately none of these were absolute indicators for the people described below. One marker was that no surname was provided for the person, as enslavers rarely used surnames for enslaved people. Through examination of the records, some first-name-only entries were determined to likely be white, paid servants based on other entries.

Another factor considered was the nature of the transactions. In most instances where a name was flagged for analysis, Kenrick purchased shoes or clothes for “servants” or those with a first name only, as seen with Chloe and Jerry. Kenrick would have been responsible for the basic necessities of those enslaved including regularly purchasing clothing for them. However, this is not to say that he did not provide uniforms or gifts to his free, paid servants.

Edward

In Kenrick's *Cash Book 1849-1856*, an entry records “Shoes for Edward” for \$3.25 on July 19, 1855.³⁵⁶ This is the only Edward noted in this book, and he is not mentioned in the *Day Book 1855-1858*.

Unidentified “Girl”

In the Cash Book 1849-1856, there is an entry for “Miss Timmons for wage of girl,” of \$35 on August 22, 1855.³⁵⁷ Whether this person was free or enslaved is unclear.

Diocesan Clergy as Enslavers

The following presents people enslaved by diocesan priests under the authority of Bishops DuBourg, Rosati, or Archbishop Kenrick.

Rev. Henry Pratte

Born in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, on January 19, 1788, Father Henry Pratte studied at the seminary in Montreal, Canada, and was ordained a priest there. Pratte was sent to be pastor of Ste. Genevieve in October 1815. Pratte built churches in Old Mines and in Fredericktown. Rosati administered Extreme Unction to Pratte on “the very day of his death” on September 1, 1822, and buried him in the sanctuary at Ste. Genevieve church.³⁵⁸

Nanette and François Thomas (Victor)

François Thomas (Victor), born on April 2, 1820 to his mother Nanette, enslaved by Rev. Henry Pratte. Father Pratte baptized the child on April 9, 1820, at Ste. Genevieve Catholic Church in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. The godparents were François Thomas [illegible] and Marie Louis Delassus.³⁵⁹

There are several other entries in the Ste. Genevieve baptism registers of children born to a mother named Nanette between 1817 and 1825, but none of the enslavers’ names are Father Pratte. The enslavers for these records include August Aubouchon, François Valle, and John Scott.

François and Medar

See François and Medar’s story under the section *People Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*.

Rachel

See Rachel’s story in the section *People Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*.

Rev. François Niel

Father François Niel was the first diocesan priest to be ordained at the St. Louis cathedral for the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas. DuBourg ordained Niel on March 19, 1818, and subsequently appointed him as rector at the cathedral and headmaster of St. Louis Academy, the first college west of the Mississippi River. The school is now credited as the origins of Saint Louis University. In March 1825, Niel went to Europe and raised money for the diocese with the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. He became ill during his travels and never returned to St. Louis.³⁶⁰ He may have died in 1835 or 1836.

Flora and her child Francois, and Rachel

In October 1824, Niel wrote Rosati that he had not yet found an enslaved person although he asked several people if there were any for sale. Niel would continue to search.³⁶¹

On January 1, 1825, Father Edmund Saulnier baptized François Nithan, born in August 1824 to Flora, who were both indicated as being enslaved by the “General Rector” Niel. The godmother was Rachel, enslaved by “Mr. Niel.”³⁶² This is the same Rachel as described in the section *People Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*.

Rev. Francis Cellini

Father Francis Cellini was a priest from the Diocese of Ascoli Piceno in the Marche region of Italy. He was serving at Santo Spirito in the Saxon District when he followed DuBourg's call for missionaries to the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas. He entered the Vincentian novitiate at St. Mary's of the Barrens in Perryville, Missouri, in 1819. In 1822 he missioned in Louisiana, returning to the seminary in 1824. In January 1825, he went to Europe for reasons currently unknown. In July 1827, Cellini returned by way of Kentucky to become pastor in Prairie du Rocher, Illinois. Upon his return, he left the Vincentian order to become a diocesan, or secular, priest. In 1829, he was appointed pastor at Fredericktown in Madison County, Missouri. In 1843, he served as the chaplain at the St. Louis hospital. In 1844, Kenrick appointed Cellini as Vicar General of the diocese, a role he served until his death on January 6, 1849.³⁶³

Alban

There are a few records regarding Alban in Rosati's financial ledgers. The first entry of June 7, 1834, identifies Alban as being enslaved by Mrs. Mary S. Smith.³⁶⁴ Smith was a loyal benefactor to the Church who made several gifts and loaned thousands to Rosati to build the cathedral. Cellini also received financial favors from Smith, including hiring Alban from her, which Rosati would pay when Cellini could not. In entries of November 5 in both of his financial ledgers, Rosati noted the debt for Alban's wages:

Settled the acct with Mr Cellini for Albans wages from which it appears the amt of money received for Albans wages is \$57; and the amt paid by me for Mr Cellini \$100.50, therefore a balance remains in my favour of \$42.50.³⁶⁵

To balance in my favor at the settlement of acct. made with the Revd. Mr. Cellini Nov. 5th, 1834 \$42.50... To Albans boarding³⁶⁶

Rosati had paid Mrs. Smith the debt for Alban's wages and Cellini still owed Rosati \$42.50.

Rev. Aristides Anduze

Aristides Anduze was born in the Diocese of Rodez in France. He arrived in St. Louis at least by 1820, receiving his minor orders from October through November. Bishop DuBourg ordained Anduze to the priesthood on August 19, 1821, at the cathedral in St. Louis. After ordination, Anduze became a professor at the St. Louis College. In 1823, he missioned in Louisiana. Bishop Rosati gave him permission to return to Europe on April 12, 1827.³⁶⁷

Unidentified Enslaved Family

Father Aristides Anduze bought a family from St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary for \$1350 on April 5, 1832.³⁶⁸ Their identity is not yet known.

Rev. John Mary Irenaeus St. Cyr

Father Jean Marie Irenaeus St. Cyr, originally a priest of the Diocese of Lyon, France, was ordained at the St. Louis Cathedral by Bishop Rosati on April 6, 1833. Rosati assigned St. Cyr to mission in Chicago, where he founded the first Catholic parish there. On his return to St. Louis in 1837, he missioned in western Illinois along the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. His first local pastorate was at the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Kaskaskia, Illinois, from

1839 to 1844. When Kaskaskia flooded, St. Cyr accompanied the Visitation Sisters to St. Louis, and was appointed Quasi-Vicar of the cathedral. In 1848, he was assigned to Potosi, Missouri, and in 1849 to Ste. Genevieve, where he served until 1862. In 1863, he moved to Carondelet to become a chaplain for the LaSalle Institute and then the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. He died on February 20, 1883, at the Nazareth Home for retired and sick Sisters of St. Joseph.³⁶⁹

Françoise, and Unidentified Women

The Ste. Genevieve Parish death register contains a record for Françoise, described as a 50-year-old “colored” woman, who was buried on September 22, 1855. St. Cyr was the celebrant and also recorded as the enslaver of Françoise.³⁷⁰

According to the 1850 U.S. Census Slave Schedule for Ste. Genevieve, St. Cyr enslaved a 67-year-old Black woman.³⁷¹ The 1860 U.S. Census Slave Schedule recorded that Father St. Cyr enslaved a 64-year-old “mulatto” woman.³⁷² The census also indicates there was a separate “slave house” from the priest’s residence. Due to the differences in ages and dates, it is not clear whether any of these women were one in the same. The ages could have been misidentified. There are no sacramental death records from Ste. Genevieve that indicate other enslaved women (besides Françoise in 1855) to have been enslaved by St. Cyr.

Rev. Ambrose J. Heim

Reverend Ambrose Jean Heim was born in 1807 in France. He came to St. Louis in June 1833 and was ordained on August 7, 1837, by Bishop Rosati.³⁷³ He was sent to Immaculate Conception Parish in New Madrid, Missouri, where he served until 1841. The more than 75 families in the area were not able to sufficiently support Heim financially. On December 6, 1837, Heim wrote to Rosati that Captain Robert McCoy was feeding him and his horse. On June 19, 1838, he wrote again in a desperate tone that he was becoming so poor, and he did not know where to turn. He had written to several priests in Louisiana but had not received any replies.³⁷⁴

Heim was appointed as pastor at Prairie du Long, Illinois, in 1842. In 1843, he served as the chaplain for the Visitation Sisters in Kaskaskia, Illinois. In 1844, Heim returned to St. Louis to serve at St. Mary of Victories Parish. Kenrick appointed him as quasi-vicar at the cathedral. He became the secretary for the Diocese of St. Louis in 1847 and served under Kenrick until his death on January 3, 1854.³⁷⁵ Heim was often referred to as “the priest of the poor.” Because he was fluent in German, English, French, and Latin, Father Heim could help new immigrants in their own language. He set up a small bank where poor white Catholics could deposit their savings. Heim was the spiritual director of the first Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States, founded in St. Louis in 1845.

James Mohan

In 1842, Heim received James Mohan through the bequest of Captain Robert McCoy. According to historian Robert Sidney Douglass, “Captain McCoy was one of the most prominent men in New Madrid, he came to the settlement with Morgan, and became an officer under the Spanish authorities, being in command of a Spanish galley, or revenue boat.”³⁷⁶ McCoy died on October

6, 1840, in New Madrid. The 1840 U.S. Census listed McCoy holding 21 people in slavery.³⁷⁷ The New Madrid County Clerk of the Probate Court does not have records from 1840.

The probate files on Marie McCoy included a receipt signed by A. J. Heim stating that,

I, the undersigned Ambroise J. Heim one of the Legatus of Marie M^cCoy dec^d. of the last will and testament of said deceased. One Mulatoy Boy named James which was bequeathed to me by the will of said Marie M^cCoy and was valued at Two hundred and fifty dollars by the appraisement of said estate, New Madrid December the 22d. 1842.

Witness

A. J. Heim

Rudolph Delaroderie.³⁷⁸

In Heim's temporary will dated April 4, 1843, he stipulated that if he should die while he is away from the parish, "the negro boy or mulatoy boy James who was given and bequeathed to me by Capt. Robert McCoy" be given to Mrs. Zelia Waggoner.³⁷⁹

It is not known whether Heim brought James Mohan with him to Illinois when he served there in 1842 and 1843. Heim may have written the will noted above before going to Kaskaskia instead of taking James with him. Illinois was a "free state" where slavery was illegal, and it would have been a risk to bring James because James could have sued for his freedom.

An 1850 U.S. Census Slave Schedule could not be located for Heim.

In Kenrick's *Mixed Accounts Ledger 1844-1860*, for the Cathedral, there is an entry for "Clothes for James" for \$14.40, dated October 30, 1851. James was regularly paid wages each month from 1851 to 1853. The first payment was \$50 on December 16, 1851. He was paid \$8 per month from February 4, 1852 to January 20, 1853.³⁸⁰ It is assumed this is the same James who Heim enslaved.

In that same ledger, the entry of April 10, 1853, shows \$10 paid for "Servant, of Rev. A. J. Heim." A second entry of November 4, 1853, states "Boy at [Seminary], Rev. A. Heim."³⁸¹ Kenrick paid Heim to rent James. In the "Church and House expenses" \$2.25 was paid for "Shoes for servants" on December 27, 1853.³⁸² The names of the servants were not specified, but given the date, James could have been one of them.

In Heim's last will and testament of 1853, as recorded in the probate file in 1854, he only specified James and no other property:

I hereby declare my will that the negro boy belonging to me, named James Mohan, be free and restored to liberty to all interests and purposes as if I had emancipated him from servitude, agreeably to the laws of the State of Missouri. And hereby nominate and appoint the Most Reverend Peter Richard Kenrick, Archbishop of St. Louis, Executor of this my last will and testament, as also my residuary legatee, who will out of my effects pay all my debts and funeral expenses.³⁸³

In Kenrick's *Day Book 1855-1858*, he paid \$6 to "James for scrubbing school room" on August 31, 1857.³⁸⁴ James is not mentioned again in this ledger.

The 1870 U.S. Census for the City of St. Louis listed the family of James Mohan. James was 40 years old (born 1830) and working as a waiter in a hotel. His wife Ophelia, aged 36 (born 1834), was described as “keeping house.” Four children were named: Alex, aged 10 (1860); Salina, aged 7 (1863); Ernest, aged 5 (1865); and Eugene, aged 2 (1868). Interestingly, all are listed as White.³⁸⁵ The 1874 St. Louis City Directory lists James Mohan as a laborer living at 611 S. 3rd St.³⁸⁶

The 1880 U.S. Census for St. Louis recorded James Mohan, aged 49, living at 610 South Fifth Street with his wife Ophelia, aged 40. He was a janitor for the railroad, and she was “keeping house.” They had six children in the household as well as Ophelia’s mother Louise Richard, aged 64. The children were Selina 18 (1862), Ernest 14 (1866), John 11 (1869), Julia 6 (1874), Peter 3 (1877), Thomas 1 year and 3 months (1878). All the family members are designated as “mulatto.”³⁸⁷ In the city directory for 1881 James Mohan was listed as a porter living at 610 S. 5th Street.³⁸⁸ In 1883 James Mohan was a porter, living at Osceola near Stringtown Road.³⁸⁹

Ophelia must have passed away between 1880 and 1885. The 1910 U.S. Census for St. Louis showed John Mohan, aged 38 (1872), as an engineer in an office building with his wife Fannie, aged 39 (1871), and a daughter Sarah, aged 19 (1891). All were designated as Black. They had been married 15 years (1885) and lived at 914 Market Street in a multi-family dwelling.³⁹⁰

Rev. Charles de la Croix

Father Charles de la Croix traveled with Bishop DuBourg from Bordeaux, France, on June 17, 1817, to Annapolis, Maryland. Several months later, he went to Bardstown, Kentucky, to learn English. In 1818, he resided at St. Mary’s of the Barrens in Perryville, Missouri, for a little while before being appointed to St. Ferdinand Parish in Florissant, Missouri. In 1822, de la Croix briefly went to visit Osage tribes and returned. He went to Louisiana in 1823, where he was pastor at St. Michael’s, Louisiana, until June 7, 1827, when he returned to France.³⁹¹

Sarah Anne Nesbit

Rosati sold Sarah Anne Nesbit to de la Croix in 1831. See Sarah Anne Nesbit’s story in the section on Harry and Jenny Nesbit’s family under *People Enslaved by Bishop William DuBourg*.

Andrew Nesbit

De la Croix tried to buy Andrew from Rosati in 1833 but the sale did not go through. See Andrew Nesbit’s story under the section *People Enslaved by Bishop Joseph Rosati*.

Rev. Auguste Jeanjean

Father Auguste Jeanjean was born in France in 1795 and came to Baltimore in 1817. After being ordained by Bishop Benedict Flaget in Bardstown, Kentucky, in 1818, Jeanjean was sent to Vincennes, Indiana, with the intention of founding an academy for boys, which did not come to fruition. Upon learning this, Bishop DuBourg called Jeanjean to St. Louis, where he arrived at the end of January 1819. He left for New Orleans the following March 19 after being appointed assistant at the Cathedral.³⁹² Jeanjean was at St. Michael’s church in St. James Parish, Louisiana, from 1827 to 1830, when he was reappointed to New Orleans to serve at the St. Louis

Cathedral. Sometime between 1832 and 1835, possibly longer, he made visits to Cincinnati, Ohio, New York, and France and Rome. Jeanjean died on April 12, 1841, in New Orleans.

Félicité and Antoine

Records in the New Orleans Notarial Archives show that Jeanjean bought Felicite and her son Antoine in 1821 and then sold them to Father Bernard Martial in 1822. Read about Félicité and her son Antoine in the section *People Enslaved by Rev. Bernard Martial*.

Rev. Charles Mariani

Little is known about Father Charles Mariani. He was present at the blessing of the church of the Assumption on December 20, 1819, and at the dedication of St. John the Baptist Church by Bishop DuBourg in Edgard, Louisiana, on March 7, 1822. He served in St. James Parish, Louisiana, briefly in 1823 before being sent to Donaldsonville, Louisiana.³⁹³ The 1820 U.S. Census for St. James Parish, Louisiana, reported Mariani in a household with one male aged 1-16 years, two males aged 26-45 years, and one female older than 45 years.³⁹⁴ At age 54 in 1846, Mariani traveled on the ship Ontario from Marseilles to New Orleans.³⁹⁵

Anna

An 1823 act of sale in New Orleans recorded that the Reverend Charles Mariani pastor of the parish of St. Jacques des Allemands Comte d'Acadie, sold to Antoine Malinari in New Orleans, an “American negresse” named Anna about 36 years old for 350 piastres whom he bought from Jacques Serre according to an act from Augustin Dominique Tureaud of St. Jacques.³⁹⁶

Rev. Bernard Martial

In 1817 Bishop DuBourg invited Father Bernard Martial from Bordeaux, France, to begin a school in St. Louis and to escort a group of Religious of the Sacred Heart, including Mother Philippine Duchesne, from France to St. Louis. Martial began a school for boys in New Orleans but he closed it after two years, transferring some of the students to St. Joseph College in Bardstown, Kentucky.

Between May 1824 and July 1828 Martial went to Europe to do fundraising on behalf of Bishop Benedict Joseph Flaget for the Diocese of Bardstown and St. Joseph’s College. When he returned, he went to New Orleans where he served as chaplain at the Ursuline convent. Martial died at the Ursuline Convent on July 31, 1832, at the age of 62.

Landa

After living in New Orleans for two months, Martial purchased an enslaved person for the first time. On July 14, 1818, Martial bought a young woman named Landa, about 18 years old, from John E. Ward for 1,200 piastres. The document of sale described Landa as “mulatto.” Landa had been sold to Ward for \$750 by James White in Charleston, South Carolina, on May 15, 1818. She arrived in New Orleans on July 6 on the *Fame* and was sold to Martial a week later.³⁹⁷

Only three months later, Martial sold Landa using Bishop DuBourg’s brother Pierre-François as the broker for the deal. On October 3, 1818, Pierre F. DuBourg, the *agent specialty authorized in loco* of Bertrand Martial, granted to John Rawlins Landa, “aged about eighteen years in consideration of the sum of \$1200 of which \$1000 has been paid and for the remaining sum of

\$200 Rawlins has granted his promissory note." This authorization to Pierre F. DuBourg was signed by Martial in New Orleans on October 3, 1818. She was purchased on July 15 for \$1200.³⁹⁸ It is not known why Martial sold Landa after purchasing her only three months earlier.

Billy, Rose, and Edwin

On November 23, 1820, Martial paid \$1400 for Billy about 30 years old, Rose about 26 years, and her son Edwin about four years old. They were bought from Jean Baptiste Moussier, a ship owner, who had bought them from Beverley Randolph of Richmond, Virginia.³⁹⁹ They arrived to New Orleans on October 19, 1820, on the ship *Margaret Wright*.⁴⁰⁰ Jean Baptiste Moussier was a merchant living at the corner of Burgundy and Maine.⁴⁰¹ His sugar cane plantation was called Ile de Barataria, located south of New Orleans.

Suzanne

On December 28, 1820, Martial purchased an enslaved woman named Suzanne, about 40 years old, for 300 piastres from Antoine Destoupes. The record states that Suzanne was bought from Sainte Grandie, a free woman of color, on February 15, 1820.⁴⁰² The 1822 New Orleans city directory listed Rev. Antoine Destoupes as a professor of music residing at 64 Bourbon Street.⁴⁰³ The religious denomination of Destoupes has yet to be resolved.

Geri, Sam, and Betty

In January 1823 Martial bought a piece of land "facing the river" from Manuel Andry for six thousand piastres.⁴⁰⁴ A few months later he sold three enslaved people on July 10, 1823. The first two, Geri aged 35 and Sam aged 40, were sold to Pierre Cottret and his wife Jeanne Dupre for 1400 piastres, paying 1200 piastres with the payments spread out over a number of months. Martial had acquired them from Jean Baptiste Moussier. The third person was 26-year-old Betty, who was sold to Theodore Fontenay for 500 piastres.⁴⁰⁵

Félicité, her son Antoine, and Firmin Martial

On February 1, 1822, Father Auguste Jeanjean sold Félicité and her son Antoine to Martial. Félicité was 47 years old, and Antoine was 9.⁴⁰⁶ Félicité is described as having a fractured right shoulder. Félicité and Antoine were acquired by Jeanjean from Marie Ursule Lathomon, a free woman of color and the widow of Jean St. Laurent as recorded in the transaction of March 16, 1821, at a price of eight hundred fifty piastres.⁴⁰⁷ In the 1821 sale, Félicité's age is 46, and Antoine's is 6.

In the 1830 U.S. Census of New Orleans, Martial was recorded holding a woman in slavery who was between 24 and 36 years old.⁴⁰⁸ There is little doubt that this was Félicité named in Father Martial's will, the inventory of his estate, and his succession, which is discussed further below. However, the census does not note her son Antoine.

On May 2, 1826, Bishop Joseph Flaget of Bardstown, Kentucky, wrote to Martial, while the latter was in Europe, confirming Martial's gift of enslaved people to Flaget:

You know by this letter that I agree to the article on the first page of your letter where you make me a donation, pure and simple, of your slaves, in confirmation of the first donation, which I regard as null and void all clauses contrary to the above. This, being already held as a pledge, I will keep said servants to my own charge and risk, to my perils and profits, without imposing

in any way whatsoever on Mr. [Rev. Francis Xavier] Evremond for the care and expenses of the little negroes.⁴⁰⁹

Martial must have reacquired Félicité after returning to New Orleans because she is in his will. It is not clear that he reacquired Antoine as well. Documents after Martial's death refer to Firmin instead, who was similar in age to Antoine. In Martial's will, filed on August 6, 1832 and signed by Judge Charles Maurin, he gave and left "to my two slaves Félicité and Firmin for their service their life and liberty after my death." His estate of August 9, 1832, included "Félicité, negress, age about 50 years estimated at the sum of 150 piastres \$150.00 and Firmin, griffe^l, age about 12 years estimated at the sum of 400 piastres."⁴¹⁰

However, Félicité and Firmin were discussed in a lengthy February 18, 1833, letter of Flaget to Father Joseph Hazeltine following Father Martial's death:

My dear Hazeltine

Mr. Joseph Lombard on Bourbon street charged with the recording of the succession of Father Martial since the opening of his will wrote to me to find everyone to whom he owed money, that Fr. Martial had on hand, and where are the Negroes and Negresses that he brought to New Orleans. I am answering by sending you a copy of the act of donation that was made by my generous friend of his slaves and of all the money that he will give [St. Joseph's College in Bardstown] by selling the property. I am likewise sending a copy to dear Father [Louis] Moni so that he can consult a lawyer about the right that I have ___^{li} on Firmin. So I suppose that the will of Father Martial will be considered null. Know that the good Curé has already taken charge of his affaires as pastor, the effort to see and consult lawyers for things that he is a stranger to and consult such as yourself. If I say to that child you are not ____, I do not free him but enslave him.⁴¹¹

Flaget wrote to Hazeltine again on March 25, 1833, asking him to locate the papers that would show the bishop had given Félicité to Father Martial.⁴¹²

Firmin is named in another document from the New Orleans Notarial Archives dated April 9, 1834, almost two years after Martial's death. The document stated that Martial had manumitted Firmin by a holographic will of January 29, 1832, but that Firmin had to serve Father Jean Pierre Pouget during that same year. However, Pouget died shortly after Martial. The agreement was that Firmin would work until he attained 21 years of age. Firmin apprenticed for Pierre Mello a free man of color who was a carpenter and joiner by trade. The document continued by saying that Mello had looked after Firmin in his own home, clothed and fed him, given him lodging, and taught him in health and sickness; for this reason, the products Firmin completed belonged to Pierre Mello. Neither he nor the apprentice had claimed any amount of money as retribution but at the end of the agreement, Mello should pay Firmin 15

^l "Griffe" was a term used to describe a person with three-quarters black and one-quarter white ancestry, or a person of mixed black and indigenous ancestry.

^{li} The symbol "___" indicates an illegible word.

piastres for which Mello had agreed to keep Firmin for six months. Even though the document spelled Pierre's name as "Mello," he signed his name "Pierre Melo."⁴¹³

The death of "Firmin Martial, a free man of color," was recorded in a New Orleans city death register as occurring on October 5, 1841. He was a 21-year-old carpenter having died on Rue Bourgogne.⁴¹⁴

Rev. Flavius Henry Rossi

Father Flavius Henry Rossi was born in Siena, Italy, though the date is unknown at this time. He served at St. Martin des Attakapas, Louisiana, in 1817 and 1818, in the absence of Father Miguel Barriere. Rossi was installed on May 2, 1819, at St. Landry, Opelousas, Louisiana and served there until his death in 1839.⁴¹⁵ Bishop DuBourg went to Opelousas and spent time with Rossi during his visitation tour of 1821.⁴¹⁶ Opelousas was about 12 miles from Grand Coteau. Rosati visited Opelousas when he dedicated the new church on March 29, 1828.⁴¹⁷ Rossi also served as administrator of St. Charles church in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, from 1836-1839. Father Flavius Rossi died November 23, 1839.⁴¹⁸

Unidentified Enslaved People

The 1820 U.S. Census of St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, recorded that Rossi was not yet a naturalized citizen, and lived with one white male between the ages of 26 and 45. He enslaved four people: a male and a female aged 14-26, and a male and a female under 14 years.⁴¹⁹

In the 1830 U.S. Census of St. Landry Parish, Rossi was described as in his 30s and living with a free man of color between 36 and 55 years old. He enslaved four people, some probably being the same as indicated in the 1820 census: a male and a female between 36 and 55 years of age, a male under 10 years, and a female between 10 and 24 years.⁴²⁰

Other Clergy as Enslavers

The following presents people enslaved by religious order priests or by secular priests who enslaved people before Bishop DuBourg was appointed over the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas in 1815.

Rev. Pierre Gibault

Father Pierre Gibault was born in 1737 in Montreal, Canada. He attended the Seminary of Quebec and was ordained on March 19, 1768. Bishop Jean-Olivier Briand appointed Gibault as Vicar General of the Illinois Country in 1769. Gibault visited settlements in present-day Illinois, including Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Prairie du Rocher, Fort Chartres, and St. Philippe. He was the second missionary priest to include St. Louis in his travels, visiting between 1770 and 1772. He also had the occasion to travel further north into present-day Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana.

Gibault wrote to Bishop Briand about his duties, "I hold public prayers every evening towards sunset, teach catechism four times a week, three of these for the whites, and one for the blacks or slaves. As often as possible I give exhortations upon matters of faith most useful for the instruction of the hearers."⁴²¹

In 1778, Gibault became involved in the American Revolutionary war, earning him the nickname of the "Patriot Priest." Gibault would travel to towns ahead of American Brigadier General George Rogers Clark of the Illinois Regiment to persuade the inhabitants to side with the Americans. Through his efforts and financial support, Father Gibault played a major role in assisting Clark to secure the Illinois Country for the Americans.⁴²² As a result of his support of the American cause, British forces named Father Gibault a traitor to the British Crown.

Gibault settled in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri in the early 1780s. He then stayed in Vincennes, Indiana from 1785 to 1788. His mission took him further west again to Cahokia and Kaskaskia in 1788 and 1789. In 1790, he became the first rector of New Madrid, Missouri, and died there in 1804.⁴²³

Laurens and Pelagie

While staying in Ste. Genevieve, Gibault fell ill and wrote a will. According to historian Carl J. Eckberg, "[Gibault] wished to be buried in the parish church... and bequeathed his two black slaves to his sister and her husband." However, he further stipulated that "the two slaves could, should Gibault die, sell themselves if they wished to another master and only the proceeds of the sale would go to the priest's sisters and her husband. Gibault perhaps suspected his brother-in-law of cruelty and wished to afford his house slaves the opportunity of having a better master."⁴²⁴

Before he left for Vincennes, Gibault sold two enslaved people in September 1784 to pay his debts. On September 18, 1784, Gibault sold "a baptized negro named Laurens, age 25" to Louis

Bolduc^{lii} in Ste. Genevieve for \$550.⁴²⁵ Just ten days later on September 27, Gibault sold a Black woman named Pelagie, age 25 to Spanish Captain Don Antonio De Oro in Ste. Genevieve for \$525.⁴²⁶

According to Ekberg:

Gibault was not a good manager of money, and his pitiful income from tithes, alms, and stipends, often left him in difficult financial straits. In 1783, a creditor from Montreal dunned him for a thirty-three-livre debt going back to 1768. And a year later, Antonio de Oro, the new commandant in Ste. Genevieve, had Gibault's slaves sequestered in the town jail until the priest paid his debts to two ferryboatmen; Gibault was compelled to sell the slaves to pay this debt.⁴²⁷

Rev. James Maxwell

Father James Maxwell was born around 1742 in Ireland. At that time, present-day Missouri was under the Diocese of Louisiana, and Bishop Luis Penalver y Cardenas appointed Maxwell as the pastor at Ste. Genevieve Parish in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri on September 9, 1795. Maxwell arrived sometime in 1796 and stayed there until his death on May 30, 1814.⁴²⁸ In addition to Ste. Genevieve, Maxwell missioned to nearby settlements including New Bourbon, Old Mines, and St. Michael. According to historian John Rothensteiner, "Father Maxwell had many cares besides the care of souls. He was the owner of immense tracts of land, a planter of consequence, with a number of slaves, and a man of great political and social influence."⁴²⁹

Fidel, Telemaque, and Sylvie

According to the baptism register of Ste. Genevieve, on September 18, 1798, Maxwell baptized Fidel, a "mulatto belonging to the undersigned pastor of this parish, born on the 15 of August." The godparents were Telemaque and Sylvie, also enslaved by Maxwell.⁴³⁰

Deltee and Her Three Children

On April 18, 1800, Maxwell sold Deltee and her three children to Joseph Placi, a resident of Ste. Genevieve, for \$700. The document of sale described "a negress named Deltee around 25 years old and her three children; the first a mulatress around 4 years old, the second a mulatto around 11 years old, and the third a negritte around one month old."⁴³¹

Rev. Turgot, Vicar-General of Illinois

No information is known yet about Father Turgot, who is assumed to have been Vicar-General of the Illinois Country somewhere in the mid- to late-1700s. Inquires with the Archdiocese of Quebec, Archdiocese of Baltimore Archives, and Jesuit Archives did not turn up information.

Apollon, Jeanette, and Anselmo

According to Louis Houck in *A History of Missouri*, "Father Turgot, Vicar-General of Illinois, freed three slaves belonging to the mission to-wit: Apollon, a negro man of sixty years, who it would seem should have had some doubt as the true motive of his clerical master, but for the fact that his wife 'Jeannette, aged thirty-eight years and a child, aged three and one half years, named

^{lii} Louis Bolduc was a merchant and trader. The Louis Bolduc House in Ste. Genevieve is operated by the National Park Service as a prime example of early French Colonial architecture along the Mississippi River.

Anselmo' were also manumitted at the same time."⁴³² Houck does not specify a time period, but it is presumed to be the mid- to late-1700s.

Rev. Bernard de Limpach, OFM Cap

Father Bernard de Limpach, OFM Cap, was a missionary priest assigned to St. Louis between 1776 and 1789.

Neptune, Mellanie, Marie Jeanne, Jean Pierre

In the first Old Cathedral sacramental register of 1766 to 1781, there are two entries indicating four people enslaved by Capuchin priests. In the register, the enslaver is noted as the "Capuchins," but presumably the four enslaved people were specifically held in bondage by de Limpach in St. Louis.

In the first day of entries, Marie, a Black woman enslaved by Sylvestre Labadie, was baptized June 24, 1776, by de Limpach. The godparents were Neptune and Mellanie, who were recorded as "Black slaves" of the Capuchins.⁴³³

In the second record, a one-month-old child Marie Jeanne was baptized on June 4, 1778. She was born May 8 to Mellanie and Jean Pierre, both indicated as being enslaved by the Capuchins. The record notes that they were legitimately married in the Church. Mellanie is likely the same woman who served as a godparent of Marie in the previous record. The godparents of Marie Jeanne were Benoit Basquez (Benito Vasquez) and his wife Julie Papin, who were prominent white figures in the early history of St. Louis.⁴³⁴

On June 1783, Jean Pierre and Mellanie served as the godparents for the baptism of a child named Helene, daughter of Sophie, and enslaved by Mr. Marie.⁴³⁵

Rev. Bernardo de Deva, OFM Cap

Capuchin priest Bernardo de Deva came from Spain in the 1770s to St. Gabriel in Iberville Parish, Louisiana until 1779. From there he went to the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans before becoming pastor at Assumption Church on Bayou Lafourche in 1793. He became a secular priest, probably when the U.S. bought Louisiana and the Capuchins returned to Spain. Father de Deva retired in 1806 but came out of retirement to serve the Church again. He was at the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans for a short while, and then returned to Assumption by 1810.

De Deva retired in 1817 to a plantation he bought on the Bayou Lafourche. Bishops DuBourg and Rosati visited de Deva in April 1824 while they were making their visitations of the region. De Deva donated 1,000 acres at Plattenville to be used as a school and seminary for the Diocese of Louisiana.⁴³⁶ He had made this land available to DuBourg together with certain "cultivators" (enslaved people) to work it.⁴³⁷ The idea was that enslaved people could farm the sugar cane and support a school by their work. Dubourg, in turn, had suggested using the people enslaved by Mary S. Smith in Grand Coteau on the Lafourche property farm.⁴³⁸ However, those plans did not materialize.⁴³⁹

De Deva died on June 9, 1826.

Unidentified People

De Deva is listed as “Pere Bernard” (Father Bernard) in the 1810 Louisiana State Census for Assumption Parish, Louisiana, with a household of two white males aged 26 to 45, one white male over 45 years old, and four other enslaved people with no ages given. The 1820 Louisiana State Census for Assumption Parish shows his household as having ten enslaved people: two white males aged 45 years and older; one female, aged 26 to 45; three females under 14 years old; two males under 10 years; two males aged 14 to 26.⁴⁴⁰ When de Deva died on June 9, 1824, he manumitted the woman he enslaved and her children, “leaving her the furniture, except the chapel and mantel clock.”⁴⁴¹

Rev. Jean Antoine Le Dru, OP

Jean Antoine Le Dru was born near Cambria, France on April 8, 1752. He joined the Order of Friars Preachers (Dominicans) and was ordained around 1775. He missioned in Canada for several years before leaving for Baltimore in 1788. There, the Apostolic Prefect John Carroll, soon to become Bishop of Baltimore in 1790, assigned Le Dru to the Illinois Country^{liii} at Kaskaskia, Illinois.⁴⁴² As evident from the sacramental registers, Le Dru missioned along the Mississippi to St. Louis and Ste. Genevieve in Missouri, and to Fort Chartres, Prairie du Rocher, and Cahokia in Illinois. He was pastor at the Old Cathedral in St. Louis from 1789 to 1793. On his return to Canada, he stopped in Michigan to overwinter and served there as a priest without official permission from the British government. Around July 1794, the British arrested Le Dru and banished him. They put him on a boat on October 22 with nine days provision and he was never seen again.⁴⁴³

Rachel

According to Louis Houck in *A History of Missouri*, Le Dru “freed his negress Reichelle (Rachel) aged twenty-six years, for the price he paid M. Reihle for her, a liberality apparently that did not cost the pious Father much.”⁴⁴⁴

Rev. Gabriel Isabey, OP

Two French Dominican priests Jean Antoine Le Dru, OP, and Gabriel Isabey, OP, worked in the Mississippi Valley in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Isabey ministered at St. Martinville, Louisiana, from 1804 until his death on July 1, 1823.⁴⁴⁵

Mary, Adonis, Congo, Denis, Zabeth, Louis Georges, Achilles, Silvie, and Silvain

Two transactions in New Orleans documented the purchase of several people by Isabey. One record stated that Gabriel Isabey, the pastor of the church in Attakapas, purchased a “creole negrillon”^{liv} named Mary, originally from the Carolinas, about 11 years old, from Charles Marie Baligaud. The sale of Mary was for the sum of 500 piastres on May 1, 1809. The record noted that Mary was acquired by Baligaud from Monsieur Hatiér on April 29, 1809.⁴⁴⁶

Dame Ann Maillard des Comeaux sold two enslaved men to Isabey on May 1, 1809: Adonis aged about twenty-two years old and Congo aged about twenty years old. The sale was for the sum

^{liii} Before Missouri gained statehood in 1821, the Upper Louisiana area was also known as Illinois Country.

^{liv} The term “negrillon” sometimes referred to an African of short stature.

of eleven hundred and 40 piastres.⁴⁴⁷ These two men were bought by Maillard Comeaux from Mathias Peychaud before notary Narcisse Broutin in 1808.⁴⁴⁸ Note that the name Congo does not indicate he was from the Congo. It was a derogatory term used to describe Black people.

When Isabey moved from France, he brought his nephew François Marc with him. Marc took care of Isabey's plantation at St. Landry Parish, Louisiana. The 1820 U.S. Census for St. Landry gave the numbers and ages of the people living on the plantation: one male older than 45 years; one male aged 26-45; and one male aged 16-26. One of these was a non-naturalized foreigner. Four enslaved people were listed: one male, older than 45 years; one male aged 26-45; and one female aged 26-45.⁴⁴⁹ The two older enslaved men might have been Adonis and Congo; the woman could have been Mary. However, Isabey enslaved several other people as described in his will below. The census also indicated one free, "colored" female at the plantation, who was also named in the probate of Isabey as Rosette Rubion.

The Dominican Friars archives in Paris, France, do not have any pre-Revolution records, but the succession of Isabey is in the St. Martinville Courthouse records. Isabey's will began with the words, "I, Gabriel Isabey born 16 July 1759 in the town of Dôle" Dôle, France was in a commune of the Jura department in the Burgundy region of eastern France. The will continued with the names of the people he enslaved:

...the eight slaves that I have, namely, young Denis, Zabeth and her two children Louis Georges, mulatre age 23 years and Achilles, negro age 24 years or about, Adonis, Congo, Silvie and her son Silvain age 15 years

Isabey manumitted four of the people he enslaved:

I give freedom to George Louis a mulatre, to young Denis, to my housekeeper (domestique) and ____ Silvain negro, for fulfillment on the day of my death.

Isabey also intended to give gifts to the people he enslaved:

In recognition of her good services that I received from Rosette Roubion femme de couleur from St. Domingue, resident of the town. I leave her the property of Zabeth and of her sons, Achilles understanding however that she cannot evict them and following upon his death the property of the said slave Zabeth and her son Achilles, should pass to his little girl Marie, daughter of Madam de La Combre. To Louis George, mulatre and to Silvain negro, the amount of 1000 piastres that I have in the bank.⁴⁵⁰

François Marc requested the probate of Isabey's will be opened, identifying himself as "the nephew of said G. Isabey, and his only collateral heir in this parish and in the State of Louisiana."⁴⁵¹

In an anonymous article from 1889, written by someone who seems to have known Isabey, they described the effect of Isabey's death on the people he enslaved:

...when [Father Isabey] died there was general mourning. He owned a plantation, of which his nephew, (François) Marc, took care. Little children were greatly attached to him. A venerable lady tells that when she was four or five years old, she went to his door, and calling his old servant, Sylvain, by his pet name, said:

"Vain-vain, where is Isabey?" The good priest came out and gave her cakes and candy. The memories of childhood are never forgotten, and to her latest breath she recalled this incident with pleasure. Vain-vain could not survive his master. He ran through the village, exclaiming in his picturesque jargon: *Maite mouri, Négue mouri* ("The master is dead, the negro is dead"). His intense grief deprived him of the little sense he once had. He bought a loaf and got a bottle of water, and laid them on Père Isabey's grave: "Cé pour vouyage là" ("This is for your journey"), said he. He wandered in the wood, which at that time surrounded the church, striking his head against the trees and crying out: *Maite mouri, Négue mouri*. A few days later the body of the poor Congo was found floating on the [Bayou] Tèche.⁴⁵²

It should be noted that the story should not be taken at face-value, and is demeaning towards Sylvain by insulting his intelligence and using the derogatory term "Congo."

François Marc did not receive any enslaved people from Isabey upon his death. When Marc died on September 20, 1826, at St. Martinville, his will bequeathed to "the named Véronique, a free negress, my negress named Mary, about 19 or 20 years old, my property, which I acquired from Misters Ribitty & Casteman, by an act _____ by Paul Berant judge of the Parish of St. Martin, the 11th of October 1823; For, to the said Véronique." Another will is dated June 7, 1825 with the same information.⁴⁵³

Final Reflections

The enslaved individuals identified in this report played a vital role in building the local Church from a small, frontier mission to a thriving archdiocese. Their efforts must be acknowledged, and their stories must be told. This work is not complete. There are unidentified enslaved people within the report that the committee strives to identify, and there are enslaved people that research has yet to uncover. They will be added to the report as the research continues.

The Archdiocese of St. Louis regrets the harmful legacy of enslavement perpetuated by these past diocesan bishops and clergy. The USCCB Pastoral *Letter Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love* teaches that racism, in all its forms, is an evil in society. Furthermore, an act based in the evil of racism is sinful act.

We recognize that these bishops and clergy sinned through their acts.

In order to be fully penitent and reconcile ourselves before God, we must be open and honest about our sins, now and in the past. Only then can we truly seek the forgiveness.

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Endnotes

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² Stafford Poole, CM, and Douglas J. Slawson, CM, *Church and Slave in Perry County, Missouri 1818 – 1865*. Lewiston, New York: E. Mellon Press, 1986, 6.

³ Annabelle M. Melville, *Louis William DuBourg, Bishop of Louisiana and the Floridas, Bishop of Montauban, and Archbishop of Besançon*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986, 5, 8.

⁴ "Haiti: Early Period," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Haiti/Early-period>.

⁵ "Transatlantic Slave Trade Database," *Slave Voyages Consortium*, <https://slavevoyages.org/>.

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⁷ Melville, 10.

⁸ Letter from William C. C. Claiborne to President James Madison, 28 October 1804, quoted from Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America: The Border Colonies and the Southern Colonies*, vol. 4, Washington DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1935, 663-664.

⁹ Letter from DuBourg to Rosati, 28 January 1829, Folder EXEC/01/C3000037, DuBourg Papers, AStLA.

¹⁰ Melville, 23-36.

¹¹ Joseph William Ruane, *The Beginnings of the Society of St. Sulpice in the United States (1791-1829)*, Baltimore, Maryland, 1935, 98.

¹² Willis Duke Weatherford and Frank P. Graham, *American churches and the Negro: and historical study from early slave days to the present*, Literary Licensing, LLC, 2012, 239.

¹³ "From the Catholic Telegraph: Archbishop DuBourg," *Shepherd of the Valley*, vol. 2, no. 26, 23 May 1834, 4.

¹⁴ Pasquier, 347.

¹⁵ Thomas Ulshafer, PSS, "Slavery and the Early Sulpician Community in Maryland," *U.S. Catholic Historian*, vol. 37, no. 2, Spring 2019, 8; Record of William DuBourg, 1810 US Census, Baltimore, Maryland.

¹⁶ Kevin Starr, *Continental Achievement: Roman Catholics in the United States: Revolution and the Early Republic*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2020, 243; Ruane 232-234.

¹⁷ Letter from John DuBois to Ambrose Marechal, PSS, 23 November 1812, quoted in Ruane, 231-232.

¹⁸ Letter from DuBois to Marechal, 23 November 1812, quoted in Ruane, 240.

¹⁹ Letter from DuBois to Marechal, 23 November 1812, quoted in Ruane, 243-244.

²⁰ "Collections made by Thomas McGuyre from Non-Subscribers," Cathedral Account Book, 1818-1827, FNCL/215, DuBourg Papers, AStLA, 14.

²¹ Poole and Slawson, 148.

²² Poole and Slawson, 162.

²³ Poole and Slawson, 163.

²⁴ Poole and Slawson, 212.

²⁵ Letter from William DuBourg to Joseph Rosati, 3 October 1823, Folder EXEC/01/C3000036, DuBourg Papers, AStLA.

²⁶ Letter from DuBourg to Rosati, 9 November 1823, EXEC/01/C3000036, DuBourg Papers, AStLA.

²⁷ Letter from DuBourg to Rosati, 9 January 1825, EXEC/01/C3000036, DuBourg Papers, AStLA.

²⁸ Pasquier, 532.

²⁹ Letter from Leo De Neckere to Rosati, 3 July 1831, EXEC/01/C3003395, Rosati Papers, AStLA.

³⁰ Sale of Bob by Charles LeCompte to DuBourg, 12 May 1808, Abp. Louis W. V. DuBourg (1766-1833), RG 3, box 18, Associated Archives, St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore, Maryland. Hereafter abbreviated as AASMSU.

³¹ Sale of Polly by DuBourg to Ursuline Sisters, 4 June 1822, Ursuline Community Archives, New Orleans, Louisiana.

³² Sarah Nesbit's application, 14 August 1872, United States Freedman's Bank Records 1865-1874, New Orleans, Louisiana, Roll 12, June 20, 1866-June 29, 1874, accounts 5-1018, 4365-8570, NARA, Ancestry.com.

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- ³³ Sale of Harry and Jenny Nesbit's Family by DuBourg to Rosati, 26 October 1829, Legal Documents, 1816-1854 [folder 1 of 5], AF/2011/9358 [AR/01329], ANOA; Property Records, Book Q, p. 189-192, St. Louis City Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis, Missouri.
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- ³⁶ Letter from DuBourg to Rosati, 10 May 1823, EXEC/01/C3000036, DuBourg Papers, AStLA.
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- ⁴⁸ Letter from Rosati to Rev. Louis Sibourd, 17 April 1829, EXEC/01/C3000124, Rosati Papers, AStLA.
- ⁴⁹ Letter from Rosati to DuBourg, 12 July 1829, EXEC/01/C3000124, Rosati Papers, AStLA.
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- ⁶⁴ Schmidt, Kelly, "The Pervasive Institution: Slavery and Its Legacies in U.S. Catholicism," *American Catholic Studies Newsletter*, 49, no. 1, Spring 2022, 16.
- ⁶⁵ Baptism record of Mary Anna, 14 February 1829, Baptism Register, 1822-1856, SMA-SVdP, no. 555.
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- ⁶⁸ Death record of Stephen, 9 December 1832, St. Louis [Old] Cathedral Death Register, AStLA, 12.
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- ⁷⁴ Letter from Rosati to Timon, 1.173, MVIN-UNDA.
- ⁷⁵ Letter from Lutz to Rosati, 24 July 1837, EXEC/01/C3003344, Rosati Papers, AStLA.
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- ⁹⁰ Entry of 29 April 1840, LeDuc Memoranda Book, EXEC/01/D1000060, Rosati Papers, AStLA.
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- ⁹⁵ Letter from John Brands, CM, to John Timon, CM, 8 May 1840, MVIN-002-402, MVIN-UNDA.
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- ¹¹⁷ Letter from Chambodut to Odin, 18 September 1861, ANO-UNDA.
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