

INSTITUTE HISTORY WORKSHEET

TOPIC: Mère Aloysie (1875-1888) & Mère Aimee de Jesus (1888-1907)

Mère Aloysie (1875-1888)

Places:

Gohissart, Belgium 1876
Springfield, MA 1877
Borgerhout, Belgium 1878
Salem, MA 1878
Salzannes, Belgium 1879
Lynn, MA 1881
Merxem, Belgium 1880
Lodelinsart, Belgium 1880
Somerville, MA 1881
Woburn, MA 1884
Antwerp South, Belgium, 1885
Redwood City, CA 1885



People & Relationships between them:

- Mère Aloysie: student at Jumet when Ignace & Constantine are there; novice mistress to Laura Petre; Superior at Namur 1864-1875; Knew Louis de Gonzague, Louise, Loyola,
- Bishop Gravez of Namur: Mère Aloysie asks him to introduce the cause of Julie
- Sr Mary of St. Francis (Laura Petre), Aloysie was her novice mistress? She is novice mistress while Mary of St. Francis is postulant mistress, Mary of St. Francis is superior of Namur most of Aloysie's generalate

Dates & Events:

1817: April 25 - born in Brussels, Thérèse Joséphe Mainy was boarder at Jumet when Ignace was superior and Constantine was teaching there.

1833: Enters Notre Dame - – she knew Francoise.

1836: September 17 – 1st profession; later served as Novice Mistress (worked closely with Sr Mary of St Francis)

1864 to 1875 served as superior of the Mother house (assistant to Constantine).

1875: December 2 – Mère Aloysie elected (58 years old – she and Mary of St Francis are contemporaries (1817-1888 vs 1811-1886)

1879: critical debate in Belgium about schools – December 8 Mère Aloysie places entire congregation under protection of Blessed Lady

1880: horrible flooding at Namur – bodies of 1st 3 mothers removed from tombs to Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Mary

1881: April – Mère Aloysie asks Bishop Gravez of Namur to introduce cause of Beatification of Julie

1882: SNDdeN purchase Julie's family home in Cuvilly

1886: Mère Aloysie's golden jubilee & death of Sr. Mary of St. Francis

1886: Sister Marie des Saints Anges takes over task of English correspondence & care of English estates

1888: June 16 – death of Mère Aloysie

Impact of War/Political Unrest:

- Belgium: still the tension between Catholics and Protestants focused on the schools – comes to ahead in 1879

Relationships with Hierarchy/Clergy:

Collaborative

Primitive Spirit:

- Mère Aloysie lived through the aftermath of the Great Trial of 1835 when the primitive spirit was almost lost at the motherhouse itself
- Devotion to Julie – renewed everywhere with steps towards Beatification
- Devotion to May

Spirituality underpinning everything:

- When very existence of SNDdN in Belgian is question in 1879 – Mère Aloysie places entire congregation under protection of Mary
- St. Francis de Sales is Mère Aloysie's role model (great model of education for early Sisters)
- Where one of us is, all of us are

What touched your heart?

- The importance of the physical: if there had not been a flood in Namur, would Mère Aloysie have started the process towards canonization?

Mère Aimée de Jésus (1888-1907)



Places:

Waltham (Pond Street), MA 1888

Arlington, MA 1888

Waltham (Newton Street), MA 1889

Summit, East Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, OH 1890

Providence, Rhode Island 1891

Loretto, Illinois 1892

Peabody, MA & San Jose, CA 1893

Downanhill, Glasgow, Scotland August 1894

South Boston, MA & Odell, Illinois 1895

Lancaster, PA 1898

Brookline, MA & Watsonville, CA 1899

Worcester (Notre Dame du Lac), MA 1900

Trinity College, Washington, D.C. 1897 -1900 (classes open November 4, 1900)
Tiegnmouth, England, 1901
Leeds, England 1904
Saratoga, CA 1905
Santa Barbara, CA & Salinas, CA 1906

Congo:

Kimwenza 1894
Ndembo 1896-1900
Kisantu 1900
Lemfu 1905

Southern Africa:

Empandeni 1899-1932
Embakwe 1904 – 1978
Kroonstad 1907-72

People & Relationships between them:

- Mère Aimée de Jésus and Sr. Julia McGroarty both entered the congregation in 1846 – Aimee is truly a 2nd generation SNDdeN – no direct connection to Julie, Francoise or Ignace
- Mère Aimee knows the early English Sisters and the English reality well – sent to open house at Mt. Pleasant early in her years of ministry
- Jesuits – invite us to both Congo and Southern Africa
- Sister Superior Julia & Sister Mary Euphrasia – roles at Trinity
- Sister Marie des Saints Anges
- Sister Marie Aloyse – becomes superior at Namur and Aimée de Jésus’ right hand in 1900; leads SNDdeN delegation to Rome for Beatification

Dates & Events:

1825: Born Elodie Dullaert (daughter of an Army colonel) in Ypre, Flanders, Netherlands
1846: enters Notre Dame; receives the habit & the name Aimée de Jésus on June 9
1848: September 14 – makes vows
1851: Sent to England as superior of Islington Flags, Liverpool. She moves the community to Mt. Pleasant.
1853: returned to Namur
1856: 1st Mistress at Ghent
1869: 1st Mistress at Ixelles
1872: named Superior of Tirlemont (1/2 way between Brussels and Liege)
1888: June – called to Namur to take up position of Superior of Motherhouse. Mère Aloysie dies days later.
1888: July 11 – election of Mère Aimee de Jesus (1st election for Mother General in which representatives from the Sisters in the U.S. were present)
1889: June 25 – Julie declared Venerable
1890: March 14 – Decree of Approbation of Julie’s writings; May 27 Apostolic Process opened (every house involved)
1894: Scotland & Congo foundations
1897: Permission given for college in Washington, land acquired for Trinity
1898: King Leopold II of Belgium creates the Order of Merit to honor those who promote the interests of the Belgian Congo and Mère Aimée de Jésus is named Knight of the Order of the Crown (lots of publicity results)
1899: September 4 – school opens at Empandeni w/53 children
1900: November 4 – Trinity classes begin for 1st time

1903: proposed teacher training college in Johannesburg (Belgravia)
 1905 - 1907: building a new Poor School in Namur – funded by American Sisters – opened in 1907
 1906: March 19 – Decree of Beatification issued and celebration set for May 13
 1906: April 9 – formal opening of tomb, examination and division of remains
 1906: April 18 – San Francisco earthquake greatly disrupts SNDdeN life and ministries in California
 1906: May 13 – Beatification, Triduum at Rome, Namur Cathedral & Motherhouse
 1907: December 9 – death of Mère Aimee de Jesus

Impact of War/Political Unrest:

- Tensions in Europe for King Leopold II over colonialization practices spills over to SNDdeN (Leopold was given Congo as a personal possession in 1885 by other European leaders. By 1898 there was great consternation throughout Europe on the way the Congolese were treated in his name – more on that later. When Aimée de Jésus is awarded a Knighthood it is interpreted as is she supports, and our Sisters in Congo are helping implement, the atrocities being committed against the Congolese. That's not true – but it makes anything having to do with the royal family a very touchy subject.
- Some difficulty because of length of time correspondence takes (Belgravia falls through and we lose money 1904-1909; complicates getting good information about what is going on concerning Trinity)
- 2nd Boer War in Southern Africa (11 October 1899 – 31 May 1902) interferes with our being able to send additional Sisters to Empandeni
 - The term Boer, derived from the Afrikaans word for farmer, was used to describe the people in southern Africa who traced their ancestry to Dutch, German and French Huguenot settlers who arrived in the Cape of Good Hope from 1652.
 - British 1st occupied the Cape in 1795 so France couldn't get it. Took it for good in 1806. By 1880 they had extensive territory and most of the Boers had moved north into the Orange Free State and Transvaal. Britain was expanding its empire and wanted to stretch from the Cape to Egypt. The 1st Boer War (1880-1881) was to take the Orange Free State and Transvaal which separated them from what would become Southern Rhodesia. It became the first colonial war since the American War of Independence that Britain ended up settling by treaty.
 - Then gold and diamonds were discovered and Britain decided to try again. They won but at terrible cost.

Relationship with Hierarchy & Clergy:

- Great collaboration with Bishop in Namur and Bishops elsewhere to move the cause of Julie forward
- Great collaboration with the Jesuits in Southern Africa, Congo and it is a Jesuit who is postulator of Julie's cause that gets it moved forward so fast
- Great collaboration with clergy (including bishop) in Scotland
- US: great collaboration in work to make Trinity a Reality
- Difficulty with German professors at Catholic University and in St. Louis around idea of college for women

Primitive Spirit:

- Devotion to Julie – renewed everywhere with steps towards Beatification
- Teach them what they need to know for life
- Commitment to the poor in the most abandoned places – building the poor school in Namur, look at where we expand; Aimée de Jésus' resistance to being associated with royalty
- Training of the Sisters – begins Normal School at Namur (early type of college –we had one at the Summit to get Sisters certified)

- Sharing resources to start Trinity, Scotland, Congo & Southern Africa
- Congo: tremendous work training mothers from beginning – strong focus on women and girls; focus on the whole individual
- Equality among the Sisters – all work hard
- Letter writing: Julia to Sisters about progress at Trinity; Mary Euphrasia about 1906 earthquake to Sisters in East
- Hearts as wide as the world – we in both East and West and North and South Hemisphere's by 1900; six Sisters from Belgium, England and America are chosen to attend the Beatification

Spirituality underpinning everything:

- Congo and elsewhere: great devotion to Mary;
- Living the cross everywhere
- Importance of Eucharist everywhere
- Tremendous faith of Sisters in new areas of mission: not afraid to be small in number
- Sisters motivated by the same gratuitous love which they drew from the Heart of Christ
- Where one of us is, all of us are
- Focus on role of silence in Sisters' lives

What touched your heart?

- Mère Aimee de Jesus is 1st mother general to have ministerial experience outside of Belgium
- Fires and the horror of them for our Sisters everywhere (Southern Africa, San Francisco)
- Contrary to what we may think in light of the hard time she gives Sisters Julia and Mary Euphrasia, she is good at delegating

New insights?

- Mère Aimee closes 5 small Belgian houses in 1 year to bring novices back to Namur – not as much focus on social ministry during her time – re-rooted us in educational tradition; necessary as professionalism in education grew
- Mère Aimee is the product of a military family – she is more regimented (stricter on silence and other matters), comes closest to focusing on uniformity instead of unity
- Emphasis on silence – does she so focus on it that some of the joy is lost?
- Mère Aimee doesn't like problems with Rome caused by Trinity; doesn't like Mary Euphrasia's interactions with Belgian nobility;
- Scotland: different reality than England: all schools part of national system & all denominations respected - Scottish ND schools transferred to State with roles of Sisters and religion respected; simply didn't have to fight the same battles