



RELIGIOUS ED

LIFE WITH CHRIST IS A WONDERFUL ADVENTURE!-POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II



Summer with the Saints Venerable Pierre Toussaint

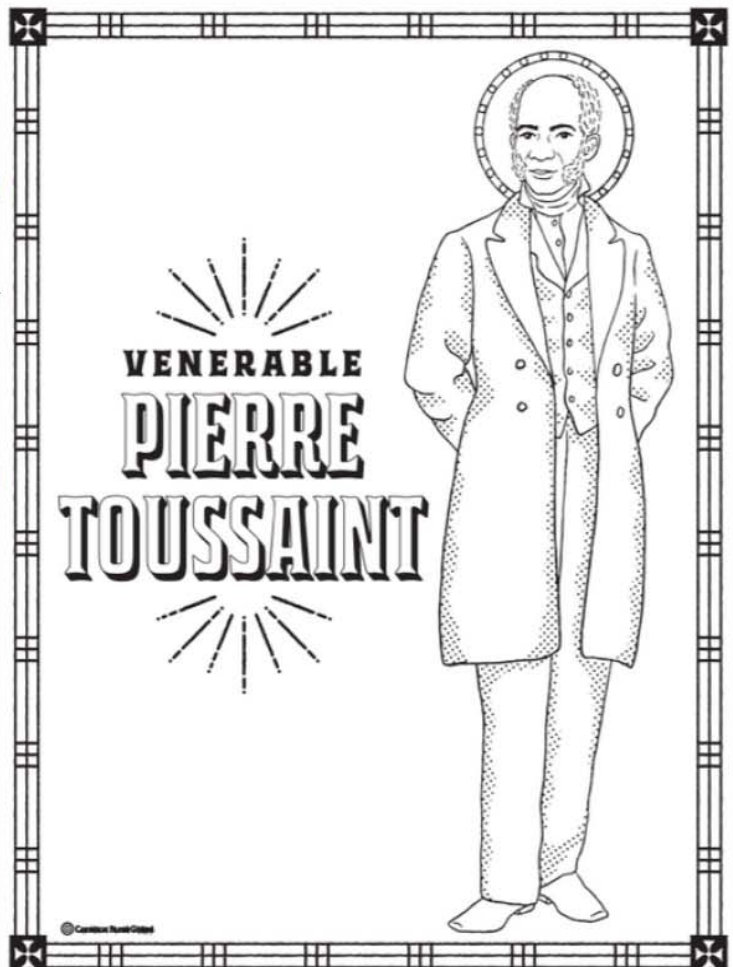
Did you know that New York City's most famous Catholic is a man who served God through his work as a hair stylist? And is the only layperson to be buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral? And was a slave for part of his life?

Born a slave in modern day Haiti, Pierre was educated by the tutors of his master's family, which was very unusual for the time. Due to political unrest on the island, Pierre was sent with members of his master's family to New York City. There Pierre was apprenticed as a hair dresser. He earned his own money doing the hair of the wealthy women and when his master's family fell on hard times, he used that money to help them.

Pierre lived during a time when being a Catholic was not popular and he was looked down upon because of his beliefs. Nevertheless, Pierre was not afraid to profess his faith and often talked to his customers about God and the beauty of the Catholic faith. He attended Mass everyday for sixty years as well as had a great devotion to the rosary.

Once freed, Pierre continued to work as a hairdresser in New York City and was able to purchase the freedom of Juliette Noel who became his wife. Pierre and Juliette always looked out for the poor and opened their home to orphans as well as those who needed a place of refuge. Because of his professional success, Pierre was able to give to those in need and help finance the building of the original St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

When Pierre died in 1853, he was buried in the cemetery of the cathedral he helped to have built. In 1990, Cardinal O'Connor had Pierre's remains moved to a crypt in the present day St. Patrick's Cathedral, where he is the only lay person. St. John Paul II declared Pierre Toussaint venerable in 1996 and Pierre is the patron of hair stylists and barbers.



© 2010 St. Elizabeth of the Trinity - Catholic Parish of St. John the Evangelist - All Rights Reserved - CATHOLICPARISHOFSTJOHN.COM