

**St. Rose-Philippine
Duchesne**
November 18



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1769–1852 • France

Philippine Duchesne's eyes grew wide as the priest told stories of his adventures in the New World, where he had brought the Gospel to the Native Americans, who had never heard of Jesus. As she left the church, she dreamed of someday becoming a missionary in America to share Jesus' love with others. Many years would go by and she would suffer many trials before this dream came to pass.

Philippine studied with Visitation nuns at their convent on a mountainside. Through her time with the kind, prayerful nuns, Philippine discovered that God, too, was calling her to join the order. Her family was large and wealthy, and her father did not want her to become a nun. He pulled her from the convent school, and she spent the last years of her education studying at home. But that did not keep her from listening to God's call, and she entered the Visitation order when she turned nineteen.

But Philippine was not a nun for long before the terrors of the French Revolution struck and the revolutionaries closed all the convents. Philippine and the other sisters had to flee. For ten years, Philippine cared for the poor and the sick, living her life as a nun out in the world. When the revolution was over, she joined the sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

Now the dream God had placed in Philippine's heart since she was a child was about to come true. Philippine's mother superior sent her and four other sisters to Louisiana in America to be missionaries. The journey was long, and Philippine fell so sick she almost died! When the sisters finally landed, they discovered that the bishop had not prepared a place for them. So they traveled to Saint Charles, Missouri, where they built a log cabin and opened a school.

For many years, Philippine Duchesne shared the Gospel of Jesus in the harsh, pioneering conditions of the Midwest. She founded six other houses, along with schools and orphanages, and worked to serve the Native American communities. When she turned seventy-one, Philippine was asked to join a mission evangelizing the Potawatomi tribe in Kansas. Because she could not learn the language, she spent her time there in prayer, and her holiness was an inspiration to the people in the tribe. The little children called her "Woman-Who-Prays-Always." Her last years were spent in quiet retirement dedicated to prayer. St. Rose-Philippine Duchesne, help me to bring God's love to others through service and prayer!