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Black Saints: Toussaint L'Ouverture

NCR Today

Black Saints

Nov. 23 Toussaint L'Ouverture

Did you know that a black Haitian Catholic, Toussaint L'Ouverture played a key role in the first successful attempt by a slave population in the Americas and world to win independence from European colonialism?

He defeated armies of three imperial powers: Spain, France, and Great Britain. The success of the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) had enduring effects on shaking the institution of slavery throughout the New World. Haiti became the second independent republic in the Americas. After being captured by the French general Leclerc, on the ship to France, Toussaint L'Ouverture warned his captors that the rebels would not make his mistake in the following words, "In overthrowing me you have to cut down in St. Domingue only the trunk of the tree of liberty; it will spring up again from the roots, for they are many and they are deep." Haiti became an independent state on January 1, 1804.

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More about Black Catholic history

Blacks in Catholic Christianity have a long and vibrant history.

Much of that history is generally unknown to Black Catholics as well as to the rest of the faithful. On July 24, 1990, the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus of the United States designated November as Black Catholic History Month to celebrate this long history and proud heritage of Black Catholics. During this month we celebrate the presence of our ancestors who kept the faith and are models of living the Gospel life.

November is Black Catholic History Month.

Sign up for our daily Black Catholic Saints email during the month of November to learn more about these holy men and women.

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