

Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet Fund Report 2024

Merciful God, who raised up thy servant Frances Joseph Gaudet to be a champion of the oppressed: Grant that we, encouraged by her example, may advocate for all who are denied the fullness of life to which you have called all your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Greetings from the newest Co-Chairs, Rev. A. Ryes, Rector, St. Patrick's Episcopal Church and School, Zachary, and Rev. Jane-Allison Wiggin, Rector, Historic Saint Luke's New Orleans. We would like to express gratitude for Rev. Canon Rob Courtney's leadership chairing the committee for many years and wish him all the best in his new role in the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee. We also extend our thanks to Tamika Gerhardt for beginning her work as The Frances Joseph Gaudet Missioner for Congregational Vitality & Beloved Community and coordinating the Gaudet Umbrella.

The Gaudet Fund Committee is one of six ministries under the new Gaudet Umbrella. Hopes and dreams for the future of the Gaudet Fund Committee include:

- 1) Sharing Gaudet's story more widely, within the diocese and throughout the larger Episcopal church.
- 2) Increasing the support given to organizations that reach incarcerated youth.
- 3) Expanding youth discipleship opportunities, intergenerational mentorship, and job training.
- 4) Collaborating with the other affinity ministries under this umbrella.

The Gaudet Fund Committee honors the legacy of Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet. It stewards the Gaudet Fund that awards annual scholarships to African-American students of Episcopal schools in our Diocese and awards grants to community organizations within the geography of the Diocese that primarily serve the needs of African-American children.

Blessed Gaudet earned a national reputation in her life as a prison reformer, educator, and missionary. She was a driving force behind the establishment of the first juvenile court in New Orleans. Blessed Gaudet, with a longtime connection to clergy and parishioners at Historical St. Luke's Episcopal Church in New Orleans, the oldest African-American parish of our Diocese, has both an icon and stained glass window in its sanctuary. She is honored in the calendar of The Episcopal Church on Dec. 31 and included in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*. Blessed Gaudet wrote her autobiography *He Leadeth Me* in the early days of the Gaudet School. "To help remedy the conditions mentioned in previous chapters I have founded an industrial home and school, where the homeless children of my race may be cared for and trained for lives of usefulness." (Gaudet, 126)

The Fund: The value of the Gaudet Fund at the end of fiscal year 2023 was approximately \$4.9 million. Currently, the annual draw on the fund value is 4.5% of a rolling three-year average. The committee reevaluates the percentage annually, and has been more inclined in recent years to prioritize grant requests directly aligned with Blessed Frances's passion for evangelism, education, and criminal justice reform.

Scholarships: Through the Gaudet Fund, need-based Scholarships are awarded to pre-k through 12th grade African American students of Episcopal schools in The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. For the 2024-2025 school year, the Gaudet Fund awarded \$103,541 in scholarships.

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Grants: Grants awarded by the Gaudet Fund support not-for-profit agencies that create, manage, and expand educational opportunities for African-American children within the boundaries of the Diocese of Louisiana. All not-for-profit agencies are eligible to apply. The total was \$115,949 for the 2024 calendar year.

School, City, Award

Episcopal, Baton Rouge \$49,853
 St. Luke's, Baton Rouge, \$6, 619
 Christ Episcopal, Covington \$4,346
 St. Andrew's, New Orleans \$8,850
 St. James, Baton Rouge \$15,081
 Trinity, New Orleans \$5,999
 Trinity, Baton Rouge \$4,776
 St. Matthew's, Houma \$3,834
 St. Martin's, Metairie \$4,185

TOTAL \$103,541**2024 Grant Awardees**

Arts Council of Point Coupee \$2,302
 A's & Aces \$3,453
 Baton Rouge Ballet Theater \$4,604
 Baton Rouge Youth Coalition (BRYC) \$4,604
 Educare New Orleans \$4,604

The 18th Ward \$2,000
 Gardere Community Christian School \$8,000
 Historic Saint Luke's Episcopal Church \$16,000
 Kids Orchestra \$5,500
 Louisiana Center for Children's Rights \$6,000
 Rooted Ones Mentoring Program \$2,302
 Son of a Saint \$2,500
 Anna's Place New Orleans \$25,000
 TEEP – Trinity Episcopal's Educational
 Enrichment Program \$6,000
 Tekrema Center \$2,302
 Thrive Academy \$4,604
 TREE Teaching Responsible Earth Education
 \$1,500
 Ubuntu Village \$10,000
 Uptown Arts \$1,000
 The Walls Project \$3,673

TOTAL \$115,949**The Committee**

The Rt. Rev. Shannon R. Duckworth, Bishop
 The Rev. Canon Morgan MacIntire, Canon to the Ordinary
 Tamika Gerhardt, The Frances Joseph Gaudet Missioner for Congregational Vitality & Beloved Community
 Jessica Lee, Executive Assistant to Bishop Duckworth
 The Rev. Audra Ryes, Co-Chair, Rector, St. Patrick's Episcopal Church Zachary
 The Rev. Jane Allison Wiggin, Co-Chair, Rector, Historic St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Orleans
 Mr. Owen Cope, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Baton Rouge
 The Rev. Canon Rob Courtney, Canon to the Ordinary, Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee
 The Rev. Stephen Crawford, Rector, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Franklin

If you have any questions about the Gaudet Fund application process, please contact Jessica Lee at the diocesan office via email at jlee@edola.org.