



Built in 1841, the St. Augustine Catholic Church was the first black church in Louisiana and the first black Catholic Church in the U.S. The church was built by a group of free African Americans in the historically black Tremé neighborhood where it still stands today. Attendance in the new church was initially 1/3 white, 1/3 free people of color and 1/3 slaves. During the 1950's the church was designated as a white parish and African Americans were restricted to the last 3 pews in the back. Among the members of the St. Augustine Church were civil rights activist Homer Plessy, civil rights lawyer A.P. Tureaud, and Henriette Delille, who would go on to found the Sisters of the Holy Family, an order of black nuns that still exists today. The church suffered very little damage following Hurricane Katrina but its effects on parishioners is still felt today. Attendance and thus collections are down, Nearing 180 years old, the church is facing new challenges in keeping up with the building. To find out how you can preserve this church, please visit <https://staugchurch.org/restoration-project>