



## Servant of God Father Augustus Tolton

(1854-1897)

Father Augustus Tolton was born into slavery in Missouri, where he escaped with his mother and siblings by crossing the Mississippi River into freed Illinois. Impressed by Augustus intelligence and piety, several priests tried to get him into the seminary which proved to be impossible. In 1880 Augustus began his priestly studies in Rome. He was ordained a priest on April 24, 1886. He is recognized as the first Black American priest. Fr. Tolton celebrated his first Mass in Quincy, Illinois before a large crowd of whites and blacks. The next day he was assigned to pastor St. Joseph Church, a small poor black parish. Although his priesthood was hampered by isolation and economic hardship, Fr. Tolton remained a symbol of fidelity and priestly dignity. Pastor of St. Monica in Chicago, Fr. Tolton became the spiritual leader of the 19<sup>th</sup> century National Black Catholic Congress. He died at Mercy Hospital, a victim of heatstroke, on July 9, 1897.

**Servant of God Father Augustus Tolton lived a spirit filled life. Let us pray:**

### ***Prayer for the Canonization of Father Augustus Tolton***

O God, we give you thanks for your servant and priest, Father Augustus Tolton, who labored among us in times of contradiction, times that were both beautiful and paradoxical. His ministry helped lay the foundation for a truly Catholic gathering in faith in our time. We stand in the shadow of his ministry. May his life continue to inspire us and imbue us with that confidence and hope that will forge a new evangelization for the Church we love.

Father in Heaven, Father Tolton's suffering service sheds light upon our sorrows; we see them through the prism of your Son's passion and death. If it be your Will, O God, glorify your servant, Father Tolton, by granting the favor I now request through his intercession (mention your request) so that all may know the goodness of this priest whose memory looms large in the Church he loved.

Complete what you have begun in us that we might work for the fulfillment of your kingdom. Not to us the glory, but glory to you O God, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are our God, living and reigning forever and ever.

Amen

Please report any spiritual or physical favors granted as a result of prayers through the intercession of Fr. Augustus Tolton to:

Office of the Cardinal  
Archdiocese of Chicago  
835 North Rush Street  
Chicago, IL 60611  
[www.toltoncanonization.org](http://www.toltoncanonization.org)