

Blessed Eugénie Milleret de Brou

Born: 25 August 1817, Metz, Moselle, France

Died: 10 March 1898, Auteuil, Hauts-de-Seine, France

Eugénie was born in the family castle. Her father was a prominent politician but by the time she was thirteen he had lost his fortune and her parents had divorced. Her father and brother moved to Switzerland, while Eugénie accompanied her mother to Europe. Five years later, her mother was dead of cholera.

Until then Eugénie had been indifferent to religion. Her friends and family regarded these beliefs, but at the age of twenty, she was deeply moved by a Lenten sermon at Notre Dame Cathedral. For the first time she felt a profound desire to know God. She began studying theology with Father Marie-Theodore Combalot, who saw her potential before Eugénie saw it herself. With his support, she founded the Sisters of the Assumption of Mary (Assumption Sisters), dedicated to educating young women. Summarizing her philosophy, Eugénie wrote: *“How great it would be if characters were imbued with the power of the Gospel; if souls were set on fire with zeal for God’s truth, and with the desire that his kingdom should come; if the wisdom revealed by the Son of God himself, and the knowledge of all united to him, became the philosophy, the principles, the end of all education!”* The motto of her Assumption Sisters became “Thy Kingdom Come”.

Eugénie proved to be a brilliant teacher and she advised: *“To educate is to allow the good to break through the rock that imprisons it and bring it to the light where it can bloom and shed its radiance.”* Her students mastered both science and culture and emerged as well-rounded women who were prepared to play a serious role in society. Today the Assumption Sisters are at work in twenty-nine countries on four continents.

The Genius of Eugénie Milleret de Brou:

Eugénie could write: *“I believe that each one of us has a mission on this earth. We must seek how God can use each of us for the spread and the realisation of the Gospel.”*

Reflection:

“As Christ’s sufferings overflow to us, so through Christ does our encouragement also overflow.”

2 Corinthians 1.5