



Newsletter

Summer/Fall 2017

Volume 1 Issue 4

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I know this is a rather long email, but I ask that you bear with me and read it all the way through.

Tomorrow will mark one week since the tragedy in Charlottesville, VA when 32-year-old Heather D. Heyer was killed by domestic terrorist James Fields, and so many others injured for standing up against racism and bigotry, and VA State Troopers Jay Cullen and Berke Bates were killed when the helicopter they were piloting to help maintain order crashed. In the days since those infamous events occurred, I have heard U.S. presidents, past and present, speak about it (with opposing viewpoints), I have heard members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and governors speak about it. I've heard Cardinals and bishops speak about it. And, to quote a line from the Temptations 1970 hit "Ball of Confusion"^[1]... "*And oh the beat goes on*".

What happened in Charlottesville is yet another manifestation of the festering sore, the seemingly intractable disease that has plagued our country since before it's Declaration of Independence. It saddens and sickens me to see so many of my misguided brothers and sisters still spouting the rhetoric of racial hatred, born of the fallacy of white supremacy, that has demeaned **all** of us since "*The arrival of the '20 and odd' African captives aboard a Dutch 'man of war' ship*" in Jamestown on August 20, 1619^[2]. And the beat goes on.

In 1857 Dred Scott, an enslaved man of "the negro African race" who had been taken by his owners to free states and territories, attempted to sue for his freedom. The case of Dred Scott v. Sandford (a.k.a. **The Dred Scot** case) held that "a negro, whose ancestors were imported into [the U.S.], and sold as slaves", whether enslaved or free, could not be an American citizen and therefore had no standing to sue in federal court... In a 7-2 decision written by **Chief Justice Roger B. Taney**, the court **denied** Scott's request. The framers of the Constitution, Taney wrote, believed that blacks "*had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit. He was bought and sold*



Office of Multicultural Ministries, 200 North Glebe Road, Suite 820, Arlington, Virginia 22203

Phone: 703 284-9483, Fax: 703 329-0726, Email: obcmva@aol.com

CHAIRPERSON: Deacon Al Anderson

and treated as an ordinary article of merchandise and traffic, whenever profit could be made by it." Sadly, Taney was the first Roman Catholic (and first non-Protestant) appointed both to a presidential cabinet, as Attorney General under President Andrew Jackson, as well as to the Court^[3].

The Supreme Court's decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* is unanimously denounced by scholars. Bernard Schwartz says it "stands first in any list of the worst Supreme Court decisions—Chief Justice C.E. Hughes called it the Court's greatest self-inflicted wound". Junius P. Rodriguez says it is "universally condemned as the U.S. Supreme Court's worst decision". Historian David Thomas Konig says it was "unquestionably, our court's worst decision ever"^[4]. Yet, during the Jim Crow era, statues were erected in several areas of our country to **honor** Taney and other like-minded individuals. And the beat goes on.

Some folks say that symbols like the confederate flag and statues that honor those who promoted and sought to legitimize the enslavement of Black human beings are intended to recognize our country's heritage, not hatred. If they want to recognize our country's true, complete heritage, I wonder how they would feel about erecting a statue of Harriet Tubman right next to Roger Taney; erecting a statue Frederick Douglass right next to Robert E. Lee; flying the flag of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry right next to the Stars and Bars? Do they not represent our heritage as well?

There is a song made famous by Billie Holiday in 1939 that also speaks to our country's heritage. It's called "Strange Fruit". These are the lyrics:

*Southern trees bear a strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees*

And the beat goes on.

The symbols and icons of the confederacy are held dear to the hearts of the Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazis, the Aryan Nation and the Alt Right movement. They were brandished in Charlottesville alongside swastikas. That is true.

However, I do not say these things to demonize everyone who fought for the South in the Civil War. I say them to remind us that we must remain ever vigilant against the insidious hate groups that constantly try to weasel their way into the fabric of our society. My sisters and brothers, unless we acknowledge and face up to the errors of the past, we are doomed to eventually repeat them.

My wife, Beverly, and I had the privilege of travelling with our parish's pilgrims to **World Youth Day** in Poland last year. While there, we visited the "camps" at Auschwitz I (the original concentration camp) and Auschwitz II–Birkenau (a combination concentration/extermination camp). We walked the rocky, rough, stone streets and looked into the windows of the buildings where millions of our sisters and brothers were warehoused before either dying of starvation and other forms of torture or incinerated in the furnaces. We saw the wooden frames of the gallows where they were hanged. I couldn't help but think of how the world reacted after the Nazis were vanquished and the camps were liberated; how most of the world community vowed that such an atrocity would never be allowed to happen again! And now we are contending with Neo-Nazis

and the Aryan Nation. And the beat goes on.

But all is not lost! We still have reason for confident hope for a brighter future. By our baptism into the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, we have been given the weapons necessary for the spiritual warfare that we must wage against the trickster, the deceiver, the evil one. Our Divine Brother has given us the perfect strategy, the perfect blueprint for conquering the devil and all his evil plans – LOVE! Jesus, the Light of the World, will dispel the darkness that permeates our society; will replace the pervasive culture of death with a true culture of life. But WE HAVE TO DO OUR PART! If we sit on the sidelines and say nothing, do nothing, our silence and inertia will be taken for approval. By our actions, by the way we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, reach out in love to those with whom we disagree, the Light of Christ will shine so brightly from within us that the David Dukes of the world and terrorist organizations like the KKK will have to either run for cover or be converted (preferably the latter)!

We have been blessed throughout our history with people who understood that reality. I am reminded of a quote from the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: “***Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that***”.

And the beat stops here!

Your Brother in Christ,

Deacon Al

Deacon Albert A. Anderson, Jr.

Chairperson

Black Catholic Ministries

The Diocese of Arlington

Office of Multicultural Ministries

200 North Glebe Road, Suite 820

Arlington, Virginia 22203

Phone: (703) 989-5810

Email: alandersonjr@verizon.net

Website: <http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/Diocesean-Cultural-Ministries/African---African-American/Black-Catholic/Black-Catholic-Ministries/>

[1][http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/The_Temptations:Ball_Of_Confusion_\(That's_What_The_World_Is_Today\)](http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/The_Temptations:Ball_Of_Confusion_(That's_What_The_World_Is_Today))

[2] <https://newsone.com/2031761/african-slaves-jamestown/>

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_B._Taney

[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dred_Scott_v._Sandford

WE SING OUR SONGS OF FREEDOM!

By Cecilia T. Braveboy



Photo: ARCHBISHOP JAMES LYKE CONFERENCE/FR. CLARENCE RIVERS INSTITUTE (2016)

Giving all honor and praise to our Good and Gracious God... I want to give a tribute to Black Catholic music ministers (directors, choirs, cantors, musicians). Especially in this article, I want to lift up the composers of music in our Black Catholic liturgies. Composers are often times our music directors, who play a key role in our faith development (whether we are aware of it or not). Composers are our hidden evangelizers, our Good News bearers, who constantly fight the good fight in spreading the Word. They fine tune our African American spirituality into their craft, their art, their music. They listen to the Lord and speak from the heart -- touching many hearts in worship and praise.

In thinking about Black Catholic music, I recall when I was child in the 50s at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church in Arlington, VA. The beautiful Gregorian chants and the mostly English-Irish hymns were present in the liturgy. We could sing “Kumbaya”, and not much more from our African American tradition. But the civil rights movement was in full form and the spirituals and the freedom songs were our bringing-together songs of all faiths in the marches and the demonstrations in the street.

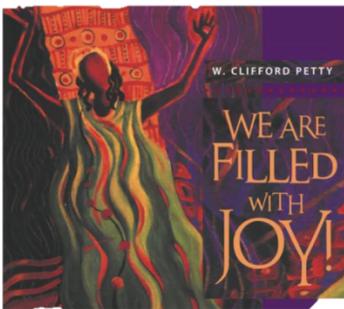
After the Vatican II Council in the 60s, the priest turned around and faced the assembly during Mass. Organ music developed into guitar-accompanied folk songs of the “People’s Mass”. It wasn’t until Fr. Clarence Rivers gave the Catholic Church the “Mass of the Brotherhood of Man” in the 60s, that we were able to sing and play our instruments (piano and drums) in the U.S. liturgies. Note that the first recording of Fr. River’s Mass was an acapella rendition.

“From the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), Father Rivers remains the first teacher with inculturation of our central worship rite, the Roman Catholic Mass,” says Bishop Joseph N. Perry, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago and Chairman of the USCCB Committee on African American Catholics. “African American Catholics and others throughout the Church will

remember Father Clarence Rivers for his pioneering artistic efforts composing congregational music that speaks to the soul of Black Catholics.”

Gradually the piano, in place of the organ, became the instrument of choice in Black Catholic liturgies. More composers came forward and their compositions were approved for Catholic liturgy: Grayson Warren Brown, Leon Roberts, Kenneth Louis, Marjorie Borroughs, Rawn Harbor, just to name a few. That team of composers (along with Sr. Thea Bowman) had been spreading the music-Word in the annual Rejoice Conferences in the Archdiocese of Washington. They became the composers who developed the Lead Me, Guide Me hymnal printed in 1987 by GIA publications. Before that, we did not have an approved collection of hymns for the people in the pews that could be used in African American worship. Thank you, Lord!

There are many songs of freedom still being shared in our Black Catholic liturgies. The 2012 edition of the Lead Me Guide Me hymnal has once gathered our songs. Let’s give honor to our composers for Black Catholic liturgies and support them by purchasing and using their works of praise –these freedom songs. Here are titles of some of their CD products to enjoy.



W. CLIFFORD PETTY. We Are Filled With Joy! (2016).
The Mass of New Beginnings (2012)
ROBERT E. PERSON. Love Divine. Carol of the Drum.
Soul Sanctuary.

JEFFREY CORRY. Jeffrey Corry Live at Nativity. God is Real.
SR. JANE NESMITH. Sr. Jane Nesmith sings with Xavier University Chorus, Vol 1-4. The Mysteries: A Soulful Rosary Experience.

KIM R. HARRIS & ROGER HOLLAND. Welcome Table- A Mass of Spirituals.
M. ROGER HOLLAND. Honey from the Rock (a collection of Entrance & Communion Antiphons, Revised Order of Mass 2010). The Sounds of My People – M. Roger Holland II (Revised Order of Mass 2010). Building Up the Kingdom.

GRAYSON WARREN BROWN. Now That the Morning Has Broken the Darkness. Greatness & Glory are Yours.

KENNETH LOUIS. We Offer Praise, Kenneth Louis, Kenneth Louis & Holy Comforter/St. Cyprian Gospel Choir, 2012. Mass of St. Cyprian (music sheet revised), Kenneth Louis & Holy Comforter/St. Cyprian Gospel Choir). Come, Go With Me.

VALIMAR JANSEN with friends. Turn My Heart, Marty Haugen/ Susan R. Briehl (other song leaders ValLimar Jansen, Msgr. Ray East). Catholic Classics, Vol. VII African American Sacred Songs, Derek Campbell & Roberts’ Revival. Get on Board, ValLimar Jansen & Tom Kendzia. Cross Culture: Songs of Faith from Near and Far, ValLimar Jansen, Mary Preus, Donna Pena, Tom Witt, Jose Antonio Machado.

JAMES ABBINGTON. 49 Hidden Treasures from the African American Heritage Hymnal. 46 More Hidden Treasures from the African American Heritage Hymnal. Treasured Favorites from the African American Heritage Hymnal

LEON C. ROBERTS. Mass of St. Augustine (see #164-thru 169, sheet music in hymnal Lead Me, Guide Me II)“Mary’s Canticle”, (sheet music in hymnal , #689, Lead Me Guide Me II). Listed in I Call Upon You, God, Mass of St. Martin dePorres (before 2010), Leon C. Roberts & the Music Ministry of Roberts’ Revival. Songs of Faith from Lead Me, Guide Me, Vol. I & II. God Has Done Marvelous Things, David Haas, Leon C. Roberts & Friends. Come, Bless the Lord. God Placed a Rainbow: A Dedication, Music of Leon C. Roberts, Performed by the Music Ministry of Roberts Revival.

The photo at the beginning of this article depicts the participants at last year’s Archbishop James Lyke Conference. While I was not there, you and I benefitted from their deliberations. At these annual conferences Black Catholic composers, directors, musicians, and singers gather to praise God and share their work for the spiritual development of parish and religious communities. Last year the conference participants decided it was necessary to include in the agenda a strong stance for the Black community. That is, they advocated for the bishops and leaders of the Catholic Church to break the silence, speak out against violence towards black people, and to visibly work for racial healing in our country. The “Heal Our Land” hymn (Oscar Williams arrg.) was suggested for liturgies and prayer services.

The bishops responded by encouraging prayers services to be held on the feast of St. Peter Claver, September 13, 2016 all across the country. Suggested works of justice were also made through the bishops’ social justice committees. In July 2017, over 2,000 Black Catholics (including a number of bishops) came together for the National Black Catholic Congress in Orlando, Florida. Recently , too, the U.S. bishops have created a special task force on racial justice. There is a new pastoral letter on racism being drafted by the bishops. We look forward to their leadership in action steps to be taken by our parish and religious communities.

In closing...We as Black people in this country experience and bear a lot of trauma in our daily living. In that physical and mental grief, though, there is joy that “God Is the joy and the strength of my life...” Do we really believe that Jesus died for us and has given us the victory? Yes! And, that we thrive in the Spirit of the Living God. Yes! Then no matter what debilitating circumstances or spikes of evil that roll down our paths, what we can count on is our never ending loving God to renew our strength in our being the disciples of Christ. We can lean on the Lord and build the Beloved community all around us. Let us continue to constantly proclaim and live: God is Good, all the time God is Good!

OLQP/UJAMAA 25th Anniversary Annual Scholarship Awards Program

Veronica Dabney

The 2017 Annual Scholarship Awards Program sponsored by Our Lady Queen of Peace (OLQP's) UJAMAA ministry, marked its 25th anniversary year at the program held on June 24, 2017. The program featured a student spokesperson, guest speaker and musical selections by Callie Terrell, a member of St. Joseph's in Alexandria. A brunch was served, followed by the presentation of scholarships and awards.

The 2017 student spokesperson and past scholarship recipient was Keren Charles, who received OLQP/UJAMAA scholarships in 2009 and 2010, to do postgraduate work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Keren, an active member of OLQP and UJAMAA, also received a Community Service Award in 2015. She imparted uplifting words for the scholarship recipients with her message of encouragement and perseverance.

Deacon Al Douglas Turner was the 2017 keynote speaker. Deacon Turner is the former Director of the Office of Black Catholics for the Archdiocese of Washington. He was ordained a permanent deacon for the Archdiocese of Washington in 2000 and is currently assigned to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Largo, MD. He delivered an inspirational message focused on character building and giving back to the community.

Scholarships and Awards:

In its 25 years, OLQP/UJAMAA has awarded, with funds granted by the Diocesan Black and Indian Fund, more than 320 scholarships, valued at over \$300,000. OLQP/UJAMAA has for the past 25 years provided tuition assistance for students to attend Catholic elementary and high schools, trade schools, colleges and universities throughout the country.

In this special anniversary year, 22 scholarships and 2 community service awards were presented. Two of the scholarships were special awards to college students who submitted outstanding applications. Also, as part of the 25th anniversary celebration, Veronica Dabney, President of UJAMAA, was honored with an award for her many years of service.

Again this year, UJAMAA received donations to be used for its scholarship program. The donations in 2017 were received from Mrs. Madelyn Humenay in the name of Warree Green (d), Bob and Gail Meghan, and Phillippa Johnston. OLQP and UJAMAA acknowledge and thank all of the families for their generosity.

2017 Community Service Award Winners



Kezia Charles



Dr. Robert Efimba

Some of my best friends are Sisters.

Deacon Curtis Turner • September 8, 2009

Seriously, some of my best friends were called to religious life. One in particular, Sister Marcia Hall, OSP, helped me to discern my call to the diaconate. She is truly gifted at walking with those who have a desire to follow Christ. Fittingly, she is helping several people in discerning God’s call as the director of vocations for her community.

I just wanted to share her story:

The Oblate Sisters of Providence taught me in elementary school at Our Lady of the Divine Shepherd School in Trenton, New Jersey. However, I did not feel called to the community until I was in my late 20s and in graduate school. *One day I had a vision of myself in an Oblate habit.* At the time I wasn’t interested, so I finished my PhD in sociology and went on to work at the college level, as a teacher and administrator.



Feeling unsatisfied and realizing the “Hound of Heaven” had never let go, I started to visit Baltimore, to see what it really meant to be a sister. My discernment took eleven years – if you look up “stubborn” in the dictionary, you’ll see my picture! I finally entered the community on my 42nd birthday. In December 2008 I celebrated 10 years as an Oblate Sister of Providence.

As a sister still young in religious life I have only been missioned a few places. As a junior sister I was interim principal at St. Benedict the Moor School in Washington, DC for a year. The next three years I spent as assistant principal at The Seton Keough High School, an Archdiocesan school where Oblates had never served. Next, I was principal of our high school, St. Frances Academy, also for three years. During my time at Saint Frances I made my final vows to God and the community. Now I happily serve as US vocation director.

There are certainly ups and downs in this life, as there are in any other way of life. But I stay because I have never been more satisfied. I know God called me, and I am glad I answered the call. Can my life get any more exciting? I’ve been photographed for a national magazine {December 2008 EBONY} and interviewed for a national radio program (Tell Me More, NPR, December 26, 2008). I can’t wait to see what else God has in store for me!

Sr. Marcia L. Hall, OSP

Please pray for Sister Marcia and for all who are discerning a call to religious life.

The Challenge is to Silence the Mind

By Deacon Al Anderson, Jr. & Ed Jones

October 23, 2017

We recently attended the 14th annual National Black Catholic Men's Conference, held in Miami, FL October 5th – 8th. The conference is presented each year by the Bowman Francis Ministry Project, under the leadership of three Society of Divine Word (SVD) priests: Reverend Charles and Chester Smith SVD, and Reverend Rev Ken Hamilton SVD



In answer to the question "Why a Black Catholic Men's Conference?" the brochure states "*We are committed Black men, principally Catholic, who recognize our need for God's help! We gather in Christ's presence in an atmosphere of trust, equality and anonymity, to share personal feelings and experiences. We unconditionally accept one another and prayerfully support one another. We feel encouraged by the Holy Spirit to share with one another..... Men to Men!*"

The theme of this year's gathering was "*The Challenge is to Silence the Mind*". The goal was to provide a holistic and healthy approach to rid ourselves of the negative "noise" (i.e. self-doubt, low self-esteem, rage, etc.) that inhibits us from successfully contending with the psychological and spiritual warfare that many African American men and boys face in today's society; to provide tools for effectively dealing with pervasive violence, drugs and mass incarceration.



Fr. Sydney Speaks gave very powerful reflection titled "*Authority is in the Air*", at the opening session on Thursday evening. He reminded us that true authority comes only from God and those in positions of authority should use it with a servant's mentality; glorifying God, rather than themselves. Fr. Sydney also exhorted us to not shy away from the authority that we have been given but to eagerly embrace it; while constantly praying for God's wisdom and seeking the counsel of our brothers and sisters. He has a very active youth ministry and was the primary speaker at the various youth tracts that were presented at the conference.

Each day began with Praise and Worship, led by the dynamic Gospel music group Men in the Fire. Afterwards, there were many excellent workshops and keynote addresses on a wide range of topics including: "*The History of Black Catholicism*", by Fr. George Kinitba; "*Urban Education in the Black Community*" by Dr. Donald Edwards, Ed.D; "*All Green/and No Black-Environmental Activism is Social Justice Activism*" by Dr. Griena Knight-Davis, LPC; and many, many more (Too many to list here)!

We attended several very good workshops. One that particularly impressed me was titled “*The Stigma Associated with African American Male Incarceration*” by Dr. Wylie Tidwell, PhD. Dr. Tidwell outlined several root causes, historical and current, of Mass Incarceration in the African American community:

- Reconstruction after slavery – the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery except as punishment for a crime. Reconstruction also gave birth to Jim Crow laws.
- Lack of Civic Participation – Placing of barriers, such as gerrymandering, designed to exclude Black folks from participation in the political process.
- Breakdown of Black Families and Communities
- Deformation of the Black Church and the rise of impersonal / cold mega churches.

The workshop “*Where are all the Black Men*”, presented by Msgr. Fredrico Britto addressed concerns faced by many churches regarding male absence from the congregation and church activities. The presenter stated that the average Black Church is made up of 75% female and 75% elders, which posed the question, “what happened to them?” This spawned a lively and interesting open discussion on possible reasons that may have brought about the lack of participation. The suggested list of reasons was endless but very insightful and enlightening. Some suggested approaches to getting them back involved included:

- Men need to hear other men witness to them about the goodness of Jesus
- Have men to men support groups that include prayer, Bible study, Men’s Day Program and service to the church
- Ask them for their help (using their professional skills)
- Mentoring program, Rites of Passage program

The closing Mass for the Conference was held on Saturday evening at the Notre Dame d’Haiti Mission in the heart of Miami’s “Little Haiti”. Bishop Burchell McPherson, a former pastor of the parish (for 18 yrs.) was the celebrant for the Mass. Concelebrating were many African American and African priest from around the country. Fr. Stephen Brown, SVD gave a rousing homily on the conference theme of “*The Challenge is to Silence the Mind*”. Men in the Fire provided the music ministry for the Mass. The conference ended on Sunday morning with a Healing and Commissioning Service led by Fr. Hamilton.

We have attended several of these conferences in the past and have always come back renewed and refreshed in the Spirit and given much information and counsel on how to better serve my own diaconal ministry. We look forward to next year!



Photo taken by Phyllis L. Johnson

Prayer Request

Oblate Sisters of Providence

- ✠ Sr. Magdala Marie Gilbert
- ✠ Sr. Katharine Brent
- ✠ Sr. Marina Kelly
- ✠ Sr. Veronica de los Santos
- ✠ Sr. Margarita Musquera
- ✠ Sr. Ricardo Maddox

- ✠ Mrs. Nettie Anderson
- ✠ For immigrants
- ✠ Aborted Children
- ✠ Those with HIV/AIDS
- ✠ Those in Prison

“And if we know that he hears us in regard to whatever we ask, we know that what we have asked him for is ours.”
 ~1 John 5:15~

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BOOK SHELF

- “Madame President: The Extraordinary Journey of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf”, by Helene Cooper
- “Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America”, by Michael Eric Dyson
- “Just Mercy”, by Bryan Stevenson
- “The History of Black Catholics in the United States”, by Cyprian Davis
- “Oblate Sisters of Providence, A Pictorial History”, by Sharon C. Knecht
- “A Journey of Faith”, by Sr. Magdala Marie Gilbert, OSP
- “This Little Light: Lessons in Living from Sister Thea Bowman”, by Michael O’Neill McGrath
- “From Slave to Priest, The Inspirational Story of Father Augustine Tolton”, by Caroline Hemesath, S.S. F
- “A Servant of Slaves - The Life of Henriette Delille”, by William Kelley

Manassas African American Heritage Festival

By Stephana Miles



The Black Catholic Ministries of the Arlington Diocese representatives spreading the word about Black Catholics and Saints at the Manassas African American Heritage Festival.

The **African American** Foundation of Prince William County provided The Annual **African American Culture Arts Festival**. It was family friendly celebration of **African American** arts and culture that was free and held at the Metz Middle School in Manassas, VA. It commemorated the rich diversity in the African American culture. The **African American Culture Arts Festival** has been held on the first Saturday in August for the past 26 years. This year, the festival was August 5th and it was one of the best summer days to have an outside event. The weather was just a little

warm, with a breeze and there were a few clouds in the sky to keep the sun rays from beaming directly down on us.

There must have been over a thousand people of all ages who attended and enjoyed this fun filled event. There was music, games and free school supplies for children, various exhibitors, all kinds of food, arts and crafts vendors, church organizations, fraternities, sororities, politicians, and children groups of all ages, a health fair, various businesses, and a classic car show. Much of the entertainment was provide by bands, several church choirs and other groups from the local areas. All this for free.

The Arlington Black Catholic Ministries, Sisters in the Spirit, and the Knights of Peter Claver (KPC) and Ladies Auxiliary Counsel and Court 398 had tables of displays and information for their organization, the Catholic Church and Black Saints at the Festival. There are always some faithful people from the various Black Catholic organizations who help setup display tables and distribute information about the Catholic Church, Black Catholics, saints and organizations in the diocese.

I greeted people walking by the display tables with “Hi, How are you? I’m Stephana, do you know any Black Catholics or know of any Black Catholic organizations?” If you are like me, you would think that this would be a peculiar question because, you may think that most people know a few Black Catholics. However, there are many people who do not know one Black Catholic. Every year I’ve helped at this festival, I am surprised of the number of people I speak with who are not aware of or know of any Black Catholics or organizations. It surprises me because I am a Black Catholic and was raised Catholic.

I was born and raised in Mobile, Alabama, where there were at least one Black Catholic school and church in each region of town. The Knights of Peter Claver and the Ladies Auxiliary originated in the parish (Most Pure Heart of Mary) I attended as a child. My mother was a member of the KPC Lady Auxiliary and I was a Junior Daughter, I am currently a member of the KPC Lady Auxiliary, Mother Mary Lang, Court #398, and my brothers and two sons were Junior Knights. Most of my family were Catholics. So, being and knowing Black Catholics was and is the norm for me.

The majority of the people I introduced myself to at the Festival told me that they did not know one Black Catholic. So, I said they know one now, me. There were also a few Catholics who had not attended a Catholic Church in a while. I continued talking with them about the most recent Blacks and Africans Catholics to be canonized. Each person was very interested in hearing about them and

welcomed the information on the cards and pamphlets I gave them. I also informed every one of some of the Black Catholic organizations, churches and choirs in the area. They were surprised and happy to hear that there were some in the vicinity. And of course, I told them about my current parish, St. Joseph Catholic Church in Alexandria, VA that originated as a Black Catholic Church and I invited them to come and worship with us.

This experience reminded me that I as a Black Catholic, I need to be a better representative of the Catholic Church and to continue spreading the Word.

I had a lot of fun talking with people, shopping and eating the delicious food from the different vendors and listening to the various bands, choirs and dance groups.

If you have time the first Saturday in August next year, I hope that you will come to **The African American Culture Arts Festival to enjoy the festivities and to also help share the word.**

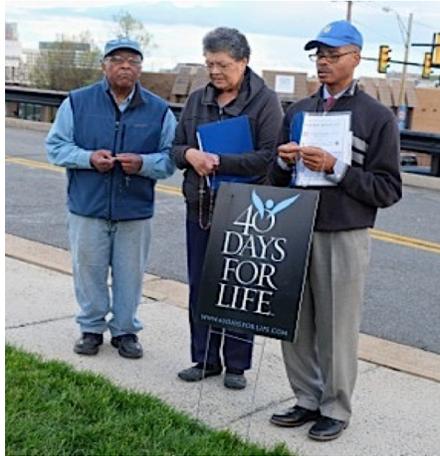
Hope to see you next year!



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CHOOSE LIFE



Gabriel Project Arlington (GPA) helps pregnant women with long or short-term needs by offering assistance at the parish level.

For help call 1-866-444-3553 or email: GabrielProject@arlingtondiocese.org

Interested in volunteering go to https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/familylife/gabriel_volunteer.aspx

Monday Holy Hour -
St. Joseph Catholic Church
711 N. Columbus Street
Alexandria, VA

Time: 7:00 pm – 8pm

Monthly Holy Hours
7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, for Eucharistic adoration at St. Mary of Sorrows Historic Church, Ox Road & Fairfax Station, VA 22039 Station

OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration)

1400 N Uhle St # 704
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 228-7030
<http://www.oaronline.org>

Project Rachel is post-abortion healing ministry open to anyone who seeks healing after abortion. We want to reach out to you with the mercy and love of Christ and help you be at peace with yourself and God.

1-888-456-HOPE or email projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org

St. Joseph Catholic Church,
Alexandria VA
Pro-Life Crochet and Knitting Circle
Last Sunday of each month at 1pm in St. Joseph Parish Hall.



All photos taken by Phyllis L. Johnson

UPCOMING EVENTS

Minkisi's 20th Annual Mini-Retreat (Saturday, November 11)

Join us Saturday, November 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church in Arlington for the 20th Annual Minkisi's Mini-Retreat. The retreat will be led by Therese Wilson Favors, the former director (19 yrs.) of the African American Catholic Ministries in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and will include lunch. Pre-Registration is required by Nov 3. Send your name, email/phone and indicate regular or vegetarian lunch to: Cecilia Braveboy, jisaac3@verizon.net, 703-979-5389.

Black Catholic History Month Mass

November 11 at St. Jude Catholic Church, Fredericksburg, VA

To commemorate Black Catholic History Month, St. Jude's will celebrate Mass at 5:00 p.m., November 11, 2017. Liturgical music will be performed by the Ghanaian Choir, and a reception will follow the Mass. All are welcome to join and honor the long and robust history of Black Catholics throughout the world!

Black Catholic History Month - Day of Reflection And Unity Mass (Saturday, November 18**)**

Join us Saturday, November 18 at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church in Vienna, VA for our annual Black Catholic History Month Day of Reflection And Unity Mass. This day-long event will include a recap of the 12th National Black Catholic Congress and a keynote address by Msgr. Ray East. The closing Unity Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Roy E. Campbell, Jr.

Health benefit of Praying

Prayer is one of the leading pastimes in self-reflection and gratitude. Having the ability to draw inward and speculate is a fundamental skill if one wishes to grow and achieve an unlimited number of goals and grow spiritually. Praying, specifically, provides such benefits as not coming to understand oneself, but promotes virtuous ideals and personal character growth.

Better sense of self – Praying brings you closer to yourself as well as the higher power you pray to. A study by conducted by Columbia University shows that prayer reduces ego and promotes humility. This makes one more concerned for a greater good rather than just themselves, improving selflessness.

Good for your heart – Prayer helps regulate your heartbeat, making it stronger and less stressed. Though it is a mental and spiritual activity, prayer has been known to speed up the recovery of the heart following heart attacks and cardiac surgery.

Increase lifespan – By minimizing all the life-threatening effects of stress and environmental factors, praying helps your body heal more efficiently and age more smoothly. All this put together helps the body heal faster and live longer.

Improves attitude – Prayer helps you be humbled. Through prayer we come to realize how large the world is and how minor our problems are compared to it. When praying for other people we tend to sympathize to others’ problems rather than be selfish. When praying positively, we tend to see a change in our overall attitude making us feel happy both mentally and socially.

Gain forgiveness – Prayer helps us to open ourselves to forgiveness. It is important we are all humans who make mistakes and that praying help us forgive ourselves for those past mistakes made so that we can move on. Also, during prayer you may be able to gain some insight and sense of direction.

Gives us hope – When going through a very emotional phase, prayer helps us believe that there is hope in getting through situations. Praying helps us believe that there is a higher being that we can help us shoulder our burdens. Although having hope may not mean that things will turn out the way we want it to, trusting someone with our problems helps get a burden off our shoulder.

Relieves stress – We live in a pressure-filled world where we are constantly being rushed to take on responsibilities, succeed and be at the top of everything. Reflecting on our problems through prayer helps relieve the initial stress of the situation. Leaving our problems up to a higher being.

Stronger mindset – While prayer also promotes hope in the future, faith is also what keeps a religious Person centered and strong. Through their belief they have the strength to overcome both trivial and major worries.

Recovery – After a situation leaves you emotionally or physically distraught recovery is a timely process. Prayer serves as a way to deal with the aftermath and keep one’s faith. Your mind and body are focused Solely on healing while prayer keeps you centered and hopeful.

Maintain a positive outlook on life – Day-to-day issues affect our stress levels and mood. Daily prayer keeps religious people looking forward to a better tomorrow. By being thankful for every day and every day to come praying changes one’s outlook on life as a whole.

Information obtained from: <http://www.healthfitnessrevolution.com/top-10-health-benefits-praying/>

DAHLGREN DIALOGUES

Confronting Racism in our Hearts and in our Nation

By Anthony J. Johnson

On November 13, 2017 at Georgetown University's Dahlgren Chapel of the Sacred Heart a large group of people gathered into an over-flowing chapel to hear Representative John Lewis and Archbishop Wilton Gregory speak on confronting racism. They spoke to us in the form of a panel:



Representative John Lewis is a U.S. representative (D-GA) and an iconic leader of the Civil Rights Movement.

Archbishop Wilton Gregory of Atlanta is a leader in the African-American and Catholic community and served as a past president of the United States Congress of Catholic Bishops.

Dr. Marcia Chatelain, an associate professor of history and African American studies as well as a member of the working group on Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation at Georgetown.

Rev. Jim Wallis, president of Sojourners and the author of *America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America*.

Mr. John Carr moderated. He is the Director of Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life. His opening he praised the president of Georgetown University for their 'head on' approach to White Privilege – making reference to the sale of human life to support Georgetown University. He offered him high praise in this area where morale principles and leadership are needed.

Archbishop Gregory spoke first (since Representative Lewis was delayed). He stated that we must learn a better way to deal with the "R" word. In our polarized society - We seem to have lost the ability to speak civil to one another. He went on to say that question of race is (ultimately) a spiritual one... a conversion for all of us, so much so that what we thought we possessed, we do not. He was asked what the public response to this spiritual conversion is. He answered that we have had moments, like Barrack Obama but confused a civic event with human conversion. We must understand the complexity of life. He stated that events introduce doubt – crossing the bridge. He was asked what's the role of religious institutions; Pope Francis. Specifically, what can we learn from his message. Archbishop Gregory's answer: The role faith is to accompany the people. (We must) Invite people to conversion.

Mr. John Carr (our moderator) pointed out Rev. (Dr.) King spoke to our spiritual values being ignored. He pointed out slavery and memory of it, and reconciliation. He mentioned the fact that Fr. Melany (spelling), American Catholic, and leaders who made the choice to sale over 270 African-Americans to settle Georgetown's debt; a devotion to things rather than spiritual conversion. He stated a fundamental choice and said Isaac Hawkins was the first name on the Bill of Sale. Anne Marie Craft (an Oblate Sister of Providence) was also named. He posed the

rhetorical words; attitude. Actions and reality today. He then turned his comments to Rev. Jim Wallis.

Rev. Wallis stated that we are not going to get there talking politics. He posed the question to his students; have you ever heard of racism being a sin – from the pulpit? His white students said ‘no’, while on the other hand ‘all’ of his black students (males) had to have the ‘talk’. That is, they had to be told how to behave when a police officer pulls them over; how to hold their hands and how to ensure they are not threatening. He pointed out that this is the kind of slavery that states you have to say they are not people.

Representative Lewis arrived and we stopped and gave him a standing ovation. Our moderator pointed out that he is the only and last living member of those who spoke in the march on Washington. He was asked for his feelings on what the church should do given these times. He first stated (addressing the times) the past few months have been like hell on wheels. Sometimes I feel we have lost our way. With regard to the church; the church should be a head light not a tail light. It should give the young a sense of faith – he stated that we will overcome. He was asked how you pull people together. His answer was all of us are children of God. ... All are created in the image of God almightyjust love everybody.

Our moderator commented on the amazing risk that Representative Lewis and other like him took and he asked the panel what are the things that you would do and what are the things that you would not do. Archbishop Gregory said one thing to ‘Do’ would be to love you. He stressed that your worth should not be and is not dependent upon standing on someone else. We must be convinced that God made me (you) loveable. Dr. Marcia Chatelain said her don’t would be “Do not forget the women”. It was pointed out that no women spoke at the march on Washington. She stated quite eloquently another don’t would be and is don’t try to silence the anger. Sit with it. The grief should not get shut out. Commit. We just want those we love to come back to us. Representative Lewis chimed in, “Do love”. He remembered a trip he took to Rochester, NY. He visited a group of nuns that took care of them and are now retired. He hadn’t seen them in a long time. He said that when they saw each other they all just cried. They instantly connected to love and said hate is too heavy a burden to bear.



Celebrating Black Catholic Community

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Alexandria, VA

Annual Rainbow Tea

June 04, 2017

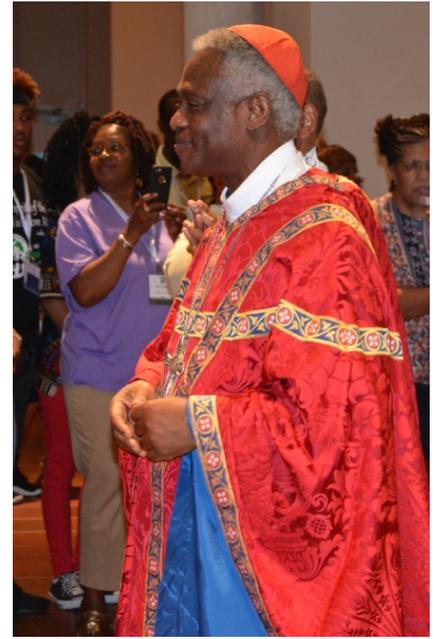


Congress XII - The National Black Catholic Congress

July 6 – 9, 2017

Orlando, Florida





**2017 The Racial Divide in the United States
Listening to the Signs of the Times
July 16 -19, 2017**

Oblate Sisters of Providence Motherhouse, Baltimore, MD

Participants: Oblate Sisters of Providence (OSP) and Immaculate Heart of Mary Nun (IHM)



Holy Family Catholic Church

Dale City, Virginia



Members of the Black History Ministry Pat Brooks, Emelda August and Linda Edward was invited to Holy Family School 2017 Prayer Breakfast for Twenty- one Graduates and their parents. We gave out Gift cards along with prayer card and share our Black History with their Parents. It has been a blessing over the years to share our Black History with the students at Holy Family School.

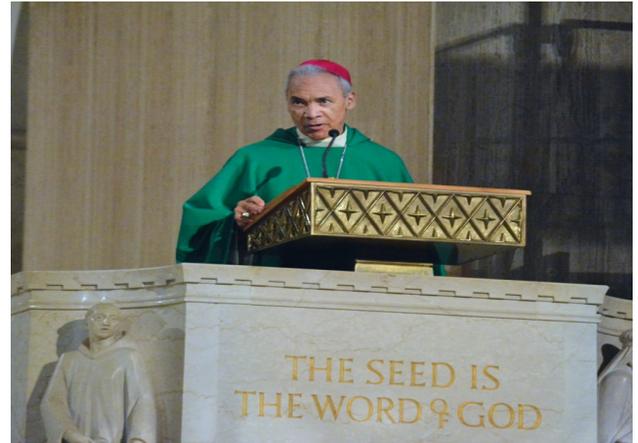
Back to School Party

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Alexandria, Virginia

August 19, 2017



**20th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Chapel of Our
Mother of Africa
September 17, 2017**



**Knights of Peter Claver Bishop Paul S. Loverde Council 398
Annual Spaghetti Dinner
September 29, 2017**

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Alexandria, VA



2017 Tea Time with the Oblate Sisters of Providence

Oct 21, 2017

Oblate Sisters of Providence Motherhouse, Baltimore MD



Crypt Church TV Mass

Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception,
Washington D.C

TV Mass for our Homebound Brothers and Sisters.

Oct 26, 2017



**The Rite of Ordination to the Diaconate of
Kingsley C. Ogbuji, S.S.J**
St. Luke Catholic Church, Washington, DC
October 28, 2017

Deacon Kingsley C. Ogbuji, S.S.J.
St. Joseph Catholic Church,
Alexandria, VA
October 29, 2017



**Sisters of the Holy Family at St. Joseph Catholic Church
Alexandria, VA
October 22, 2017**



Celebrating 175th Years

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Twenty years before the Civil War of the United States, and before it was legal for such a Congregation to exist, the Sisters of the Holy Family were founded in New Orleans, Louisiana by Henriette Delille, a free woman of color. Co-foundresses of this religious community of African-American women were Juliette Gaudin and Josephine Charles.

Destined by the mores of the time to live a life of ease in the tradition of their female ancestors, Henriette, Juliette, and Josephine dared to break away from that pattern of life. Instead, these women chose to follow God's call. In following Him, they taught the slaves, cared for the elderly, and shared what they had with the poor and the needy.

For over 170 years, the Sisters of the Holy Family, in the spirit of their foundresses and early predecessors, have continued to serve the youth, the elderly, and the needy members of society. The Sisters have not only served the New Orleans community, but also many people throughout cities in Louisiana; Texas, California, in Washington, D.C., Oklahoma, Alabama, Florida, Belize, and Panama Central America; and Benin City, Nigeria, Africa. Of course this has changed in recent times.

During the history of the community, numerous noteworthy events have been documented. On November 21, 1842, the community was established. In 1843, catechism classes were conducted for adults and children. In 1847, a group of free men and free women of color formed the Society of the Holy Family to give the Sisters moral and financial support. On October 15, 1852, Henriette, Juliette, and Josephine pronounced first vows in St. Augustine Church. When children were left homeless by the pestilence in 1853, the Sisters cared for the orphans. Thus, in 1892, the St. John Berchmans' Orphanage was dedicated.

The Sisters cared for the sick during the yellow fever epidemic in New Orleans in 1897. The Sisters arrived in Stan Creek, British Honduras on Palm Sunday in 1898.

For \$10 an acre, Mother Austin Jones purchased 123 acres of land in the Gentilly area. This 1906 purchase formed the cornerstone for the ministries at St. Mary's Academy, St. Paul the Apostle Church and School, the House of the Holy Family, Delille Inn, Lafon Day Care Center, Lafon Nursing Facility of the Holy Family, and the present Motherhouse. In 1988 Henriette Delille's Cause for canonization was opened.

The Sisters have spent over 170 years of loving, caring, and sharing with and for the people of God, for their own sanctification, for spreading the word of God, and for improving the life of the people they serve.

The Sisters of the Holy Family praise and thank God for their years of service and ask His blessings for the continuance of their mission.

http://sistersoftheholymotherhouse.com/Historyforreview.html?_id=1470966776142