



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER



BLACK CATHOLICS IN THE ROCKIES

St. Josephine Bakhita
Feast Day February 8
Canonized - October 2000

St. Katharine Drexel
Feast Day March 3
Canonized - October 2000

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Deacon receives first Bakhita-Drexel Award

Deacon Guffie Menogan, 79, who was ordained to the diaconate in 1996, received the first St. Josephine Bakhita-St. Katharine Drexel Award at a dinner held at St. Ignatius Loyola Church the evening on October 2. The award honors a Catholic who has shown extraordinary leadership in evangelization in the black community. More than 100 guests attended the inaugural event.

Deacon Joseph Donohoe, director of the Diaconate Office, spoke about the diaconate and praised Deacon Menogan's ministry. "The deacon is...known as an icon of Jesus Christ the Servant," he said. "In other words, when one peers into the heart of a deacon, they see Jesus washing the feet of his apostles and obediently adhering to the direction of the Blessed Mother when she states, 'Do whatever he tells you' (John 2:5)." Later, he added: "Deacon Guffie is a model of the diaconate. He is my brother (deacon) and he emulates these qualities. I am grateful to God for his presence in the Archdiocese of Denver and our common association as deacons."

Denver Catholic Register
October 14, 2009

Director's Note



Mary Leisring

Our First Annual St. Josephine Bakhita—St. Katharine Drexel Award Dinner was a huge success. You will get the criteria for nominating someone for the 2nd Annual Award Dinner. We look forward to sharing with the community another person who is outstanding in their evangelization in the black community.

Please mark your calendars and attend this event. The date is October 22, 2010.

LOCAL NEWS

NOVEMBER IS BLACK CATHOLIC HISTORY MONTH
 Visit the Cardinal Stafford Library
 John Paul II Center
 1300 South Steele
 Or
 Your local library and check out some books on Black Catholic History and share with others.

BLACK and INDIAN MISSION COLLECTION
 February 21, 2010

Established in 1884, this collection is the only annual appeal mandated by the Third Plenary Council—and distributes these funds as diocesan grants back to the community.

NATIONAL NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS Oblate Sisters of Providence

The oldest order of African American Sisters, as they celebrate their 180th anniversary.

(Full Story in *Servant of the Poor* published by Sisters of the Holy Family and Friends of Henriette Delille—Summer, 2009)

Mere Henriette Delille's Cause for Canonization moves forward

(Full Story in *Servant of the Poor* published by Sisters of the Holy Family and Friends of Henriette Delille—Summer 2009)

October

2009 Josephite Calendar

- 2 Morgan State University
Baltimore, MD founded in 1872
- 4 Respect Life Sunday
- 4 New Orleans Tribune, first Black Daily newspaper began in 1864
- 9 Dutch Morial, 1st Black Mayor of New Orleans, born 1929
- 10 St. Francis Xavier Church, first Black Catholic Church, Philadelphia 1794
- 11 National Negro Catholic Congress met in Baltimore, MD 1894
- 14 Rev. M.L. King, Jr. awarded Nobel Peace Prize 1964
- 21 John H. Conyers, first black admitted to U.S. Naval Academy 1872

November

- 3 St. Martin de Porres
- 4 St. Charles Borromeo
- 5 Negro History Week initiated by Carter G. Woodson 1926
- 6 Edith Sampson, first Black Chicago Municipal Judge 1962
- 7 Knights of Peter Claver founded Mobile, AL 1909
- 8 U.S. Bishops endorse NBCC Pastoral Plan 1989
- 17 Henriette Delille, foundress Holy Family Sisters in 1842, she died 1862
- 29 100 years of Josephite Evangelization in La.-Lebeau 1997

December

- 1 Rosa Parks refused to ride in back of the bus & arrested in Montgomery, AL 1955
- 5 Mill Hill Fathers arrived in Maryland to minister to Black Catholics in 1871
- 10 Bishop Desmond Tutu received Nobel Peace Prize 1984
- 17 Pierre Toussaint declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II. 1996
- 18 13th Amendment abolishing Slavery in U.S. went into effect 1865
- 21 Montgomery Buses integrated 1956

**Pastoral Letter: “What We Have Seen and Heard”
Celebrates 25th Anniversary**



(Seated, left to right: Most Reverends-Joseph A. Francis, SVD; Harold R. Perry, SVD; Joseph L. Howze; Eugene A. Marino, SSJ; James P. Lyke, OFM; Standing, left to right- Most Reverends Wilton D. Gregory; Emerson J. Moore; Moses B. Anderson, SSE; J. Terry Steib, SVD; John H. Ricard, SSJ)

In each generation, the Spirit gives a specific assignment to its spiritual leaders. The assignment given usually is a unique, yet prophetic call to move God's people to a higher level of mission. This is what happened twenty five years ago (1984) when the African American Catholic Bishops acted in unison to speak about evangelization within the African American Catholic community through the Pastoral Letter, "What We Have Seen and Heard". This was a Letter to **us** about **evangelization**.

In its Introduction, the Black Bishops speak... "Within the history of every Christian community there comes a time when it reaches adulthood. This maturity brings with it the duty, the privilege and the joy to share with others the rich experience of the 'Word of Life.' Always conscious of the need to hear the Word and ever ready to listen to its proclamation, the mature Christian community feels the irresistible urge to speak that Word ... We write to you, Black brothers and sisters, because each one of us is called to a special task. The Holy Spirit now calls all to the work of evangelization."

At that hour, the Black Bishops called to memory a quote of Pope Paul VI to the peoples of Africa when he said to them in Kampala in Uganda: "You are now missionaries to yourselves"... And Pope Paul VI laid out for all sons and daughters of Africa the nature of the response: "You must now give your gifts of Blackness to the whole Church." (The Pope Speaks, 1969 Symposium in Kampala, Uganda)

Twenty five years ago, through this landmark document, the Black Bishops speak of the role that culture plays in the ministry of evangelization. "There is a richness in our Black experience that we must share with the entire People of God." A discussion on the universality of the Catholic Church follows the previously mentioned statement. The Bishops then remind us that to be "universal does not mean to be uniformed", instead a sharing of the gift of Blackness is our part of building up the whole Church. They continue..."We have heard with Black ears and we have seen with Black eyes and we have understood with an African heart". It is through this understanding of culture and the universality of the Church that the Black Bishops call forth the specific task of African American Catholics to evangelize among our own... "it is our way to witness to our brothers and sisters within the Black community that the Catholic Church is both one and also home to us all."

The Pastoral Letter, "What We Have Seen and Heard" also discusses and provides other strategies for evangelizing. They include...

- Understanding that African American spirituality is based on Sacred Scripture and the hope it promises .
- Proclaiming that the "good news" is a message of liberation and that evangelization calls for forgiveness and reconciliation... "Without justice, meaningful reconciliation is impossible."
- Placing special interest and outreach on the family and the extended family. Church is extended family, that is why we call each other Brother and Sister. Our Parishes can evangelize just through family outreach and being family to one another, especially when family-hood is threatened.
- Confronting racism as it particularly impacts Black men and at the same time calling forth Black men in their role of fostering a "vocation of fatherhood" and to assert their spiritual strength.
- Supporting the role of women as sources of strength and examples of courage.

Promoting Black values, “especially new life within the mother, has always been a value to Africans and to African Americans... as a people of faith, it is our task to fight for the right of all of our children and in all the circumstances of their existence”.

- Nurturing Vocations Sr. Thea Bowman said, “if you want vocations then each family and individual must raise them within our families.” We’ve got to place into the imagination and heart of our young ones the awesome blessing and joy of serving God and God’s people as Priest, Brother, Deacon or as Religious Women.
- Honoring Ecumenism within our evangelization efforts.

“What We Have Seen and Heard” was issued on the feast day (September 9,) of St. Peter Claver, who compassionately worked among Africans who were enslaved. In the coming months, let us examine this wonderful and inspiring Pastoral Letter with prayerful review and assess our evangelization efforts within our parishes and organizations.

The Spirit that moved among the ten Black Bishops of yesterday to compose this Pastoral Letter still has a potent force today, seeking to stir the souls of those who strive to please God. Let’s “report for duty!” For a copy of the Pastoral Letter call 410-625-8472.

~ Mrs. Therese Wilson-Favors ~
Director
Office of African American Catholic Ministries
Archdiocese of Baltimore

November is Black Catholic History Month

Richness of African American Faith Heritage is Poignantly Expressed in Song

By Mary L. Leisring

One of the significant ways that African Americans express their spirituality is through song. This characteristic was recognized by Rev. Clarence Rivers, a black Catholic priest who paved the way for liturgical enculturation and inspired black Catholics to bring their artistic genius to Catholic worship.

Archbishop James P. Lyke, O.F.M., did a great service in serving as the coordinator of the African American Catholic Hymnal "Lead Me, Guide Me," which was published in 1987. In the preface to this hymnal we read: 'Lead Me, Guide Me' is born of the needs and aspirations of black Catholics for music that reflects both our African American and our Catholic faith. In the reflections which follow, references are to the hymn numbers in this hymnal.

The thoughts which follow are inspired by "Black and Catholic: the Challenge and Gift of Black Folk," which was edited by Dominican Sister Jamie T. Phelps. Of special note is Chapter Five, titled "Foundations for Catholic Theology in an African American Context" by M. Shawn Copeland.

If we go back to the years of slavery, it is remarkable that an enslaved people were optimistic their God would lead them to freedom as he had led the Israelites. They expressed their optimism in lyrics like:

*The Lord told Moses what to do
Let my people go;
To lead the children of Israel through
Let my people go.
Oh let us all from bondage flee;
Let my people go;
And let us all in Christ be free;
Let my people go. (No. 298)*

In the midst of overwhelming pain the enslaved found solace as they turned to Jesus, who understands what it is to suffer:

*In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
When my heart is almost breaking,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me. (No. 263)*

Slaves refused to accept their condition. They knew they were meant to be free:

*Oh Freedom, Oh Freedom,
Oh Freedom over me:
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave.
And go home to my Lord
And be free. (No. 298)*

When the physical chains of enslavement had been removed, African Americans were still not free. They knew that the nation where they lived had declared: "All men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights." They continued to sing and pray to God that the rights promised them would truly be theirs. It took a man of faith, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to lead them in

Dr. King, African Americans looked forward to the "Promised Land" where there would be joy.

*Come and go with me to my Father's house
Where there's joy, joy, joy. (No. 250)*

There was a conviction that in spite of conditions and prejudice:

*I've got a feeling, ev'ry thing's gonna
Be alright. (No. 252)*

Even though King was assassinated, they knew that his dream would come to fruition. Nothing could stand in the way of Christ, the "King of Kings."

*He is King of Kings,
He is Lord of Lords,
Jesus Christ the first and last,
No one works like Him. (No. 86)*

In this new millennium there is a conviction that every African American Christian can lay claim to all that Jesus has promised them. With joy in their hearts they sing:

*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long. (No. 199)*

Within the fold of the Catholic tradition it is precious to share in the banquet of God's children and sing:

*One Bread, one Body, one Lord of All,
One cup of blessing which we bless.
And we, though many, throughout the earth,
We are one body in this one Lord. (No. 139)*

It is such a grace to have faith in Jesus and to walk in his presence.

*He touched me, O, He touched me;
And O the joy that floods my soul;
Something happened and now I know
He touched me and made me whole. (No. 167)*

Black Catholics will continue to sing and celebrate their faith as they move forward in a time of hope.

Mary L. Leisring is the director of the Office of Black Catholic Ministry for the Archdiocese of Denver.

SUGGESTED READINGS



African Americans of Denver
 Ronald J. Stephens, Ph.D., La Wanna M. Larson and the Black American West Museum
 ISBN: 978-0-7385-5625-3

Songs of Our Hearts, Meditations of Our Souls
Prayers for Black Catholics
 By Cecilia Moore, Ph.D., Rev. Paul M. Marshall, S.M. and C. Vanessa White, Ph.D.
 You will find liturgical prayer, prayer for families and communities, meditations, prayers of healing, prayers of inspiration, prayers of consolation, prayers of freedom and prayers of reconciliation.
 ISBN: 978-0-086716-694-1



From Slave to Priest
A Biography of the Reverend Augustine Tolton (1854-1897). The First Black Priest of the United States
 By Arthur L. Miller
 ISBN: 978-1-58617-097-4;
 ISBN: 1-58617-097-X

The Journey to Chatham
Why Emmett Till's Murder Changed America, a personal story
 By Arthur L. Miller
 ISBN: 1-420807544-2(sc)
 ISBN: 1-4208-7545-0 (dj)

Uncommon Faithfulness
The Black Catholic Experience
 M. Shawn Copeland, editor with LaReine-Marie Mosely, S.N.D.
 Albert J. Raboteau
 ISBN: 978-1-57075-819-5 (pbk.)



Five Points Neighborhood of Denver
 Laura M Mauck
 ISBN: 978-0-7385-1870-1

What We Have Seen & Heard
Essays and Stories from Black Catholics of Baltimore
 By Office of African American Ministries, Archdiocese of Baltimore
 ISBN: 1-885938-33-0 (pbk.:alk. paper)

Aunt Clara Brown
Official Pioneer
 Linda Lowery
 Illustrations by Janice Lee Porter.
 ISBN: 13: 978-1-57505-045-4 (lib.bdg.:alk. paper)

SAVE THE DATE

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade
 January 18, 2010
 City Park
 Denver, CO

Day of Reflection
 January 30, 2010
 9:00 a.m. to Noon
 John Paul II Center

Taste of Italy
 February 20, 2010
 Renaissance Hotel

SAVE THE DATE

Living the Catholic Faith Conference
Theme: "I Have Chosen You"
 February 26-27, 2010
 Denver Convention Center

Black Catholic Retreat
 Deacon Art Miller
 March 19-21, 2010
 Sacred Heart Jesuit Retreat House

2nd Annual St. Bakhita-St. Drexel Award Dinner
 October 22, 2010
 Location—TBA

DID YOU KNOW?

- In Acts 8:26-40 the "Ethiopian Eunuch" was baptized by Phillip, the Deacon, and was the first Black to enter the Christian faith.
- November 17—St. Dionysius of Alexandria, Alexandria, Egypt
- November 25—St. Catherine of Alexandria, Alexandria, Egypt

BLACK CATHOLIC RETREAT NEWS

**Annual Black Catholic Retreat
March 19-21, 2010
Retreat Director: Deacon Arthur Miller
Archdiocese of Hartford, CT.
Sacred Heart Jesuit Retreat House
4801 N. Highway 67
P. O. Box 185
Sedalia, CO 80135
303-688-4198
Fax: 303-688-9633
www.sacredheartretreat.org**

Deacon, author, radio host, revivalist, and retired businessman, Deacon Miller is director of the Office for Black Catholic Ministries for the Archdiocese of Hartford. In addition to his assigned parishes, he is also the Catholic chaplain at Hartford's Capital Community College.

A nationally known preacher of God's Holy Scripture, he has traveled throughout the country raising the need of conversion of "Radical Love." The kind of self-denying love that can only be accomplished through the grace and power offered to us through Jesus Christ. From New England to the Katrina-ravaged Gulf Coast of Mississippi, from the Rocky Mountains of northern New Mexico, to the south side of Chicago, Deacon Miller teaches and preaches Christ's call to His life changing "Radical Love".

At public forums, houses of worship, schools and universities across the country, Deacon Miller addresses issues of social injustice. With firsthand knowledge he speaks to his audiences from the perspective of an African American who grew up on the south side of Chicago in the 1940's and 1950's. Deacon Miller was 10 years old in 1955 when his schoolmate Emmett Till, age 14, was brutally murdered in Mississippi for allegedly whistling at a white woman—an incident that energized the nascent Civil Rights Movement. His recently released book "The Journey to Chatham", details the historic events seen through the eyes of Emmett's friends.

Today, Deacon Miller addresses 21st-century examples of the same intolerance. He is the Hartford Archdiocese representative to the Connecticut Coalition to Save Darfur, a group formed specifically to influence state, national, and internationally officials and institutions to use their political clout to stop the conflict in Darfur Sudan. Deacon Miller sees such racial divisiveness as an example of "human hatred that is the result of what happens when one group seeks power by dehumanizing." Echoing the thoughts of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., he believes that as part of the great human experience, no one can sit idly tolerant of the great injustices that happen anywhere in the world.

"If God were to give us an 11th commandment," Deacon Miller proposes, "I believe it would read" Thou shall not be a bystander."

KWANZAA—December 26—January 1

Principles of Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa celebrates what its founder called "The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa," or *Nguzo Saba* (originally *Nguzu Saba* - "The Seven Principles of Blackness"), which Karenga said "is a [communitarian](#) African philosophy" consisting of what Karenga called "the best of African thought and practice in constant exchange with the world." These seven principles comprise *Kawaida*, a [Swahili](#) term for [tradition](#) and [reason](#). Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of the following principles, as follows:

- *Umoja* (Unity) To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.
- *Kujichagulia* (Self-Determination) To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.
- *Ujima* (Collective Work and Responsibility) To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together.
- *Ujamaa* (Cooperative Economics) To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.
- *Nia* (Purpose) To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
- *Kuumba* (Creativity) To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
- *Imani* (Faith) To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

INSTITUTE FOR BLACK CATHOLIC STUDIES

XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA

Sr. Jamie T. Phelps, O.P. Director

1 Drexel Drive Box 49

New Orleans, LA 70125

Email: IBCS@xula.edu

IBCS OFFICE: (504) 520-7691

www.xula.edu/IBCS

Summer Session—June 25—July 17, 2010

The Master Degree Program (ThM)

CERTIFICATE and ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

C & E Programs are non-degree components that offer ministerial and program planning and skill development for ministry in the Black Community in the areas of:

Catechesis

Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Leadership in the Faith Community

Liturgy for Pastoral Ministers

Campus Ministry

The C & E programs are offered in three one-week modules. The students also participate in Black religious expression workshops in the areas of drama, art, music and dance.

INTERNET SITES

CATHOLIC NEWS AGENCY

CNA strives to provide free, up-to-the-minute news affecting the Universal Church, giving particular emphasis to the words of the Holy Father and happenings of the Holy See, to any person with access to the internet.

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com>

KNIGHTS OF PETER CLAVER

The knights of Peter Claver, Inc. and Ladies Auxiliary is the largest African-American lay Catholic organization. The organization is located in 34 states. It has 298 Councils (men’s divisions) and 312 Court (ladies divisions) with 123 Junior Councils (young men) and 208 Junior Courts (young ladies between the ages of 7-18 years old. The organization was founded by four Josephite priests and three lay Catholic men in Mobile, Alabama in 1909.

<http://www.kofpc.org>

PAPAL ENCYCLICALS

Your guide to online Papal and other official documents of the Catholic Church.

<http://www.papalencyclicals.net>

(For full listing of additional Internet Sites see the National Black Catholic Congress website: <http://www.nbccongress.org>)

Archdiocese of Denver

Newsletter – Black Catholics
In The Rockies

Editor.....Mary L. Leisring

Resources & Credits

Mary L. Leisring

Contact the Office of Black Catholic Ministry:

Mailing Address:

Office of Black Catholic Ministry
Archdiocese of Denver
1300 So. Steele St
Denver, CO 80021-2599

Office Location:

John Paul II Center for the
Evangelization
1300 So. Steele St.
3rd Floor - #314
Denver, CO 80210-2599

E-Mail Address:

Mary.Leisring@archden.org

Visit us at <http://www.archden.org/blackcatholicministry>

The Office of Black Catholic Ministry would like to hear from you, please use the space provided to send your comments to the above mailing address or email Mary.Leisring@archden.org.
