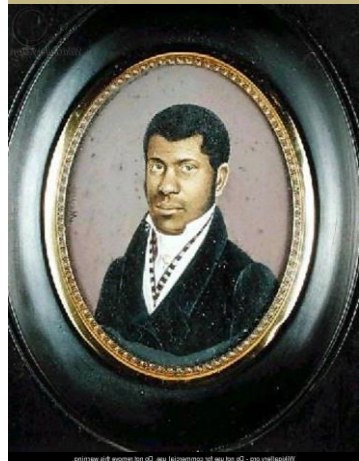


We Have Been Called: Wisdom from Black Catholic History

Webinar follow-up document

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Black Catholic History 101

- Black people have been present throughout Church history
- Often times, the presence of Blacks in the Church has been a muted one – important figures but anonymous
- Throughout history, Black Catholics have seen themselves as an integral part of Mother Church, “stamped in the image of God”
- The story of evangelization of Blacks in the United States has been the work of both White Catholics and Black Catholics
- Lay people have taken proactive and significant roles in education and evangelization
- From the beginning there has been a struggle to get Black priests (the root cause has changed over time)
- The gift of Black spirituality is unique and valuable – it’s what the world needs in 2017!

Where can I go to Learn More?

Resources:

- National Black Catholic Congress website (www.nbccongress.org)
 - Valuable content includes: Registration & Information about the July 6-9, 2017 Congress in Orlando
 - 2012 Pastoral Plan of Action (The “Roadmap” to driving our legacy)
- Sign up for online courses from Saint Joseph College of Maine (www.sjcme.edu) 1-800-752-4723
 - Affordable degree programs (undergraduate and graduate) including an online Pastoral Ministry to Black Catholics program
 - In Philadelphia, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary School of Theological Studies (www.scs.edu)
- Read and share what you’ve learned:
 - *What We Have Seen and Heard*
 - *The History of Black Catholics in the United States* by Cyprian Davis
 - *Stamped with the Image of God: African Americans as God’s Image in Black* by Cyprian Davis and Jamie Phelps
 - *African Saints, African Stories: 40 Holy Men and Women* by Camille Lewis Brown

The Pastoral Plan of Action from 2012 Congress - Summary

1. Holiness of Life
2. Life and Dignity of the Human Person
3. Walking with the Saints
4. Engaged in Parish Life and Evangelization
5. Faith Informed
6. Schools Too Valuable to Sell
7. Reaching Out to the Next Generation
8. Vocations - Every Catholic's Priority
9. Getting Married and Staying Married
10. The Social Apostolate

Holiness of Life

We affirm our faith in Jesus Christ, true God and true man, and the Holy Catholic Church, his bride and mystical body. We strive for holiness of life and health of mind and body. We affirm the Holy Eucharist as the “source and summit” of our lives as Catholics (CCC¹ 1324), empowering us to spread the Good News.

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- A. Commitment to conversion and holiness
 - B. Renewal of sacramental life

¹ CCC = *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

As Catholics, we believe that “God’s creative action is present to every human life and is thus the source of its sacred value.” We are called to protect the sacredness and dignity of all human life from conception to natural death. We believe that human dignity does not depend on accomplishments or talents, nor is it rooted in race, age, gender, wealth, social status, or legal status. Each and every person has dignity that deserves our respect, for that dignity comes from God.

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- A. Confront the culture of death
 - B. Work with the National Black Apostolate for Life
 - C. Increase involvement in pro-life activities at all levels
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Walking with the Saints

In the Catholic tradition, we learn to live faithfully through the example of holy men and women before us – the saints who are both role models and intercessors.

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- A. Promote knowledge and veneration of Black saints
 - B. Support guilds for the causes of canonization
 - C. Promote pilgrimages
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Engaged in parish life and evangelization

All Christians are called to spread the Good News through word and deed. Catholic Church documents powerfully challenge us to “go and make disciples” and to “evangelize the modern world.”

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- A. Review existing evangelization documents¹
 - B. Invite fallen away Catholics back to the Church
 - C. Improve planning and communication concerning mergers and closures
 - D. Improved pastoral application of post-closure process

¹ For example, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975), *What We Have Seen and Heard* (1984), *Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization* (1992), *Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization* (2012)

Faith Informed

We cannot engage our faith without understanding it. The catechism, Pope Benedict XVI wrote, is “fascinating because it speaks to us of our very destiny and that is why it concerns each and every one of us very closely.”

A. Better catechesis

B. Observe Black Catholic History month in November

Schools Too Valuable to Sell

Catholic Schools continue to be critical means of evangelization. Whether parish, regional, independent, or some new variation, the critical characteristic is a Catholic environment, where the values of hope, charity, prayer, service, sacrifice, and respect for the dignity of every human person are taught and reinforced.

A. Better support for Catholic schools in our cities

B. Support of the NBCC Catholic Education Foundation

C. Support and highlight Xavier University of Louisiana

Reaching
Out to the
Next
Generation

We commit ourselves to the spiritual needs of our youth and young adults. Their participation in the life of the Church is vitally important to us. We especially commit ourselves to addressing the critical issues that challenge our youth in the areas of human sexuality, educational opportunities, social and professional development, and conflict resolution.

A. Use technology as an evangelization tool

B. Promote leadership development among youth and young adults

Vocations - Every Catholic's Priority

Keeping our beloved parishes and schools open requires keeping them staffed. Every Catholic who loves the Church must pray for, believe in, and encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life. This is not just the job of vocation directors.

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- A. Promote vocations to the priesthood
 - B. Support all callings to ordained and religious life
 - C. Increased outreach by vocation directors to the Black Catholic community
 - D. Support Black Catholic schools, institutions and religious communities
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Getting Married and Staying Married

We affirm the sanctity of marriage, a sacramental bond between a man and woman. We embrace each and every human being without exception and we are committed to assisting each person to live out his or her life in accordance with the universal call to holiness, rooted in the natural law and the virtue of Christian chastity as that virtue shapes each and every state of life.

- A. Promote participation in pre-marriage programs
 - B. Educated young people to reject the sexually permissive culture that pervades music & media
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The Social Apostolate

We affirm that the social teaching of the Church is fundamental to Catholicism. That teaching calls us to act in the modern world to defend human life and dignity, to act in solidarity with those who are poor or vulnerable, and in all other ways to promote the common good and defend the universal destination of goods. That good also affirms the grave immorality of racism and any “attitudes of prejudice and bias against any individual for any reason.”

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- A. Promote moral and universal healthcare
 - B. Support the Dream Act and comprehensive immigration reform
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