

Volume 3, Issue 1

The Drum

The beat of Black Catholic Chicago

January 2015



Organizing Catholics
for Justice



December 10, 2014 rally at the Cook County Jail for ending mass incarceration. Director of the Office for Black Catholics, Andrew Lyke, addresses the gathering on behalf of Organizing Catholics for Justice, a collaborator with S.O.U.L. and IIRON.

From the editor . . .

This issue of *The Drum* begins the third year of this publication. I thank the writers who regularly contribute articles of interest for our readers. They play the major part in making *The Drum* an interesting, informative, relevant, and enriching publication. It's my joy each month to share their wisdom with the People of God.

I also thank you the readers for your feedback. Our purpose is to "tell our story" as black Catholics, to inform readers about events and issues that matter in our communities, to engage readers in our Catholic Faith, and to deepen in us a black Catholic identity that transcends parish affiliation. Our cohesion as black Catholics is our strength that helps us to have healthy and strong parishes. This third volume will continue that effort with your help. We want and need your feedback, and we want you to share each issue with others. Our goal in this

The Drum is a publication of the Office for Black Catholics, an agency of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Editor, layout designer, and publisher:
Andrew Lyke,
Director of the Office for Black Catholics

News about activities and events relevant to the Black Catholic Community of the Archdiocese of Chicago may be submitted before the 15th of the month. Submissions will be considered for publication under the scrutiny of the Office for Black Catholics. All submissions must be submitted in electronic formats using MS Word, MS Publisher, or PDF. All rights reserved.

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third volume is to double our subscription base. Go to www.blackcatholicchicago.org to subscribe.

The cohesion we strive for in the black Catholic community doesn't suggest single-mindedness as a goal or even a value. Ours is a community rich with diverse perspectives, experiences, and opinions. I want to make *The Drum* a voice of the community—a voice with many vocal chords. So, expect this publication to be bold and expressive of that diversity. My hope is that we will generate more dialogue and wrestle with the issues of our times so that we will be better formed and informed.

The work of the Office for Black Catholics is further investing in building power in the pews and in the homes of black Catholics. Our collaborating with Organizing Catholics for Justice (OCJ) is for the very purpose of being a more powerful and heartier community. So, expect much out of *The Drum* on the community organizing initiatives through OCJ.

If you have listened recently to the weekly radio show *God's Praises Tell: The Voice of Black Catholic Chicago*, you may have noticed a change in the music used at the top of the show, the music leading in and out of breaks, and the music at the close of the show. Following the wisdom taught to us by Sr. Thea Bowman who often reminded us that we are "fully formed" in our Catholic faith, I looked for compositions by black Catholic composers and artists. The show starts with *Let All The Nations Praise You*, by W. Clifford Petty of Mobile Alabama; the music used for the breaks is *Come Holy Spirit* by Good Ground, a black Catholic gospel ensemble from various parts of the country; at the close of the show we use the *Gloria* from the "Welcome Table: A Mass of Spirituals" by Kim Harris and M. Roger Holland, II, both notable black Catholic composers and recording artists. Tune in every Tuesday morning at 9:00 on Relevant Radio on 950-AM. You can also listen to each show by way of the podcast we have setup at www.obc-chicago.org.

We ended 2014 in a flurry of media coverage framing events that highlight tensions between police and communities. The killings of young black men by police officers in Ferguson, Missouri, New York City, Milwaukee, Wisconsin and U.S. cities across this nation have sparked protests that demand change. While I join in those protests, I also want to be clear about what we should be demanding.

We have heard sympathetic public officials talk about fixing a broken system, referring to the penal system, which includes policing, courts, institutions for incarceration, and the broad and varied web of stakeholders that make up the *Prison Industrial Complex*. I'm one who believes that the system is functioning as it was designed, and it runs deeper than the recent events that have

brought attention to police-community tensions. Rather than fixing a system evil in design we need to transform the system so that it serves every citizen regardless of race, honors the God-given dignity of every human person, and furthers the building of the "Beloved Community" for which Dr. Martin Luther King lived, worked and died.

I invite all of us to engage in the work of Organizing Catholics for Justice (OCJ) in its efforts to this end. Strategically starting with a campaign to end mass incarceration, OCJ is about engaging Catholics in the Social Mission of the Church through strategic action.

The Problem

The United States now has the largest rate of incarceration per capita in the world. With only 5% of the world's population, the US has 25% of the population of incarcerated individuals. Those incarcerated individuals are overwhelmingly men of color.

Between 1970 and 2005 the prison population grew over **700%**, far outpacing the population growth rate and the crime rate.

What are we as people of faith to conclude? At the very least, we have a system of incarceration that does not reflect or respect the dignity of the human person, as we are incarcerating individuals at an alarming rate. However, the problem is worse. Incarceration has become a system for private profit in many states, and we have local and federal policies that incentivize the incarceration of individuals by mandating that beds in prisons are filled to specific capacities. This makes it harder for individuals to find work after they have served their sentence, and leads to expanding policies that mandate longer prison sentences across the board rather than allowing judges to consider legal arguments.

Across the board in the United States we spend more money incarcerating individuals than we spend on educating children.

The Solution

We know that the compass for our policies as a society should be guided by the fundamental dignity of the human person as well as the preferential option for the poor. A prison system meant to warehouse people, and increasingly poor people and people of color, for profit does not reflect our values. We must hold our elected officials accountable to create and enact policies that reflect the dignity of each person, rather than a profit-based or racist agenda.

Organizing Catholics for Justice is bringing Catholics from across the Archdiocese together to push an agenda based on our faith values. Will you join us?

(Continued on page 3)

The Deacon Speakin'

Conflicts at Christmas

By Deacon Bruce McElrath

Christmas – that time of the year when the courtrooms are once again filled with the not-so-merry sounds of lawyers arguing about rather nativity scenes violate someone's civil rights or whether Christmas carols can be sung at a school concert.

If we aren't careful, all the litigation that seems to accompany Christmas each year could take a bit of the enjoyment out of this most celebrated of seasons.

But, if we understand that Jesus Himself told us His coming would not always lead to peace and good times, we will find it easier to understand the conflicts this season brings.

While giving His disciples their marching orders one day, Jesus told them to watch out for trouble. He said they would be hated and persecuted, and they would experience family conflicts (Mt. 10:21-23). In fact, He told His followers "Do not think that I came to bring peace on

earth. I did not come to bring peace but a

sword" (v34).

It seems like an odd message to come from the Prince of Peace, but it's true. Jesus offers peace and joy and happiness to all who trust Him. But for those who refuse His salvation, the celebration of His coming will cause conflicts – even at Christmas.

Christ Promises Peace for a World of Conflict

On the Battlefield
Deacon Bruce



(Continued from page 2)

Campaign Background

There are four people in Cook County who can take effective action to end Mass Incarceration: Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle; Chief Judge Timothy Evans; Sheriff Tom Dart; and State's Attorney Anita Alvarez. Grassroots community and faith leaders have attempted to engage each of these targets in a negotiation regarding their role and commitment to end Mass Incarceration. State's Attorney Anita Alvarez has been a particular obstacle, refusing for months to meet with leaders, and after a number of direct actions, finally meeting with us, only to dismiss our concerns and our analysis about racism at work in our prison system.

Anita Alvarez has been the largest obstacle to policy changes. She most consistently advances a narrative that we must be "Tough on Crime" without understanding the reality of racism and econom-

ic inequality that define our communities and the opportunities denied to our community members. Of the four targets of our campaign, she is the least responsive and least accountable. Moving her to acknowledge and act on Mass Incarceration is a critical step in our fight to end Mass Incarceration in Cook County. OCJ has joined CCHD grantee SOUL since May 2014 in pushing Anita Alvarez to take action.

The demands for Anita Alvarez are:

- Expand the Deferred Prosecution Program to include second and third time non-violent convictions.
- Negotiate a public process of reform of the Bail-Bond System.

After months of trying to engage State's Attorney Alvarez, with no commitment from her to meaningfully take on this issue, we continue to push her to commit to take definitive action to end Mass Incarceration in Cook County.



Rev. Michael Russell of S.O.U.L. kicks off the rally at the Cook County Jail.



Maria Fitzsimmons of OCJ prepares leaders prior to the march to Cook County Jail for the December 10th rally and mock trial.

Activists demand an end to mass incarceration, expand its diversion program

On Wednesday Dec. 10 a group of about 50 activists marched from 24th Street toward Cook County Jail, flooding the sidewalks, chanting and holding signs that read “Black Lives Matter” and “90 percent of Cook County Jail is poor.”

“Too many of our Black and brown citizens are right here,” said Tara Baldridge, gesturing to the Cook County Jail with the megaphone.

Baldridge, who is running for alderman in the 8th Ward, continued speaking to the group.

“[Ninety-five] percent of inmates are not even convicted criminals, but are jailed, awaiting trial. The majority are charged with non-violent offenses. Too many have been unfairly targeted, unfairly prosecuted and unfairly incarcerated,” she said.

Members of the Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL), Organizing Catholics for Justice and IIRON organized the event and accused State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez of “racist prosecution practices and of squandering public resources”, according to their press release.

They gathered to demand an end to mass incarceration, expand its diversion program, and reform of the bail and bond system.

In 2011 the State’s Attorney’s office began implementing a diversion pilot program called the Deferred Prosecution Program specifically for adult felony offenders who have committed non-violent offenses, such as retail theft and marijuana possession.

Since its inception, the program has resulted in the dismissal of 848 cases. Currently, the program has 400 participants, said Philip Roy, policy advisor for the State’s Attorney’s office.

Alvarez is not currently considering expanding the Felony Deferred Prosecution Program to include those with prior felonies and/or those with violent felonies,” Roy said.

Under that program, the individual has to complete a year of programming that includes drug education, community service, GED courses and job skills training.

Once the program is completed and if the individual hasn’t committed additional crimes, his or her charges could get dismissed as long as the judge and victim(s) approve.

The program is not an option for those who have committed violent crimes, or have a prior felony. But community organizations and activists are putting pressure on the Cook County State’s Attorney’s office to include both of these populations.

Propping up a faux cardboard courtroom on the steps, they also held a mock trial with a life-size cutout of Alvarez in the role of offense. After hearing testimonies from community members, the judge, played by Tom Gaulke, a pastor involved with SOUL, asked the crowd if Alvarez was guilty, and was met with a forceful chant of “Guilty!”



“So if people are forever and forever burdened with the mistake they have made, it’s really hard to live a life and be a real value to the community,” said April Verrett, executive vice president of SEIU HCII, a health worker and childcare provider union.

Violent offenses include rape and battery, however, the State’s Attorney’s office also defines crimes like stalking, hate crimes and driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol as violent. According to a 2012 report by Loyola University, violent crimes account for 28.7 percent of all admissions to the Cook County Jail.

The group is also calling for reform of the bail and bond process, which they are calling unfair and structurally racist, citing poor people of color who cannot post bail and go home as they await trial.

“Imagine the pain a mother feels when her son is arrested for a minor drug offense. The suffering it will create for the young man now that he has a record and the humiliation of not being able to make bail because the family has no money,” said Rev. Michael Russell of SOUL.

Roy said that high bonds are set because a “defendant poses a public safety threat and/or has demonstrated a failure to appear in court in prior cases”.

He said they are currently reforming the bail/bond system, but would not say it involved lowering bail amounts.

In recent years, strides have been made for those with felony convictions outside of the jail.

In 2013, Illinois passed a bill called the “Ban the Box” which requires that employers remove questions about criminal history from job applications until after a person is interviewed or chosen for a position. It takes effect on Jan. 1, 2015 and will significantly aid those with felony convictions who are typically disqualified for jobs based on their record.

This article was reprinted with permission by The Gate News: Chicago Community News for Back of the Yards and Surrounding Neighborhoods. See more at: <http://www.thegatenewspaper.com/2014/12/activists-demand-an-end-to-mass-incarceration-expand-its-diversion-program/>

Organizing Catholics
for Justice



Did I hear the priest talk about “Carnation Milk” or ...?

Bishop Joseph N. Perry

The Church continues to bask in the wonder and beauty of the Christmas worship cycle through the scriptures assigned these days and the decorations that remain in our churches up to and including at least the feast of Epiphany January 4 – the arrival of the Magi or Wise Men from the East - with their mysterious gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh given the Christ Child.

In Hawaii, on one of its many islands called Molokai, was found in the year 1864 a Catholic mission. However, until very recently, it was hardly known but by a few people about the growing population of Molokai's inhabitants suffering from the disease of leprosy – Hansen's disease as it is medically known today, whereby one's flesh rots away while you're still breathing until the disease eventually takes your breath away definitively.

The bishop of Belgium who directed the mission had only a few priests. When some new recruits arrived in Hawaii, a young priest by the name of Damien deVeuster made a suggestion. He is quoted in the biographies as saying:

“One of the new priests could take my district and I will go to Molokai and work for the poor lepers whose wretched state of body and spiritual misfortune has often made my heart bleed within me.”

The assignment was a death sentence for the priest. Because, Father Damien became as they were, living with the contagion while dressing their sores, washing their bodies, blessing them, giving them the sacraments of the Church and digging their graves.

As it turned out, ten years into his mission, Father Damien contracted the disease himself. In the meantime, he continued years of work and service to a wretched people before he was buried beneath the pandanus tree whose leaves had been his first roof upon arriving in Molokai.

How does one explain it? Why does a person step down into the dark suffering of others and embrace their misery? Is it caring of a radically high order or a sense that these are my brothers and sisters or a feeling that these are my children, God's children?

The word “compassion” in our English parlance is actually two words put together: “passio” from the Latin meaning “to suffer” and from where we get the word “passion” and “passionate” and “com” meaning “with”. The two words put together mean “to suffer with”. Father Damien was already suffering with the lepers. The only thing left was to join them and become as they were.

Have you ever loved someone that much that you wanted to become as they were? Has anyone ever loved you that much that they wanted to become as you are? Such is the makings of a Christian. Such is the makings of a good priest. Such is the makings of the story of salvation that we have re-told these last days during the festival of the “Incarnation”. In the human order of things there are few stories like it. The Church takes out its story book and tells once again a story we never tire hearing. We inevitably pause in our tracks hearing stories like that of Father Damien who copied in his life and ministry the sacred story we have proclaimed from the scriptures since the final days of the purple preparatory season of Advent.

Had you or I been asked to write the script of the salvation drama I don't know that we would have come up with a story-line

like this. In this instance, of course, God the Father is the script writer, the director and producer behind this feast.

The Christian doctrine of the Incarnation is the greatest idea in history – that the Creator Intelligence of the universe would step out from heaven and clothe himself with our flesh and live as we live, suffer as we suffer and die as we die. The only difference, he was free of the contaminant of imperfection. There is no sin in him. Incarnation means that the unthinkable has happened. God in Christ

has become as we are. It is the mystery of mysteries seemingly in defiance of provincial reasoning.

In other words, Jesus came to the island of our existence and took on himself the leprosy of our condition. But, unfortunately, as the darker side of human flesh will dictate, *“He gave himself into our hands but was nailed to a cross,”* as the priest prays in the Mass. (Eucharistic Prayer Reconciliation -1).

Much of the story of Christmas is a story of light suddenly appearing in darkness. Christ is born in the night. He is born in the dark of winter. But a bright light appears in the dark sky. And the angels light up the night sky with the glory of God that surrounds them as they sing their hosannas. And most important of all, the world that has been chained in the long night of sin and error receives its awaited liberation of light. The prophet Isaiah promised it seven hundred years

in advance when he said, *“The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who dwell in the land of gloom, a light has shone.”* (Is 9, 1).

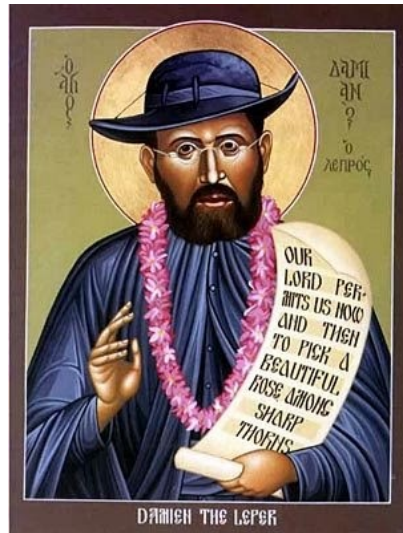
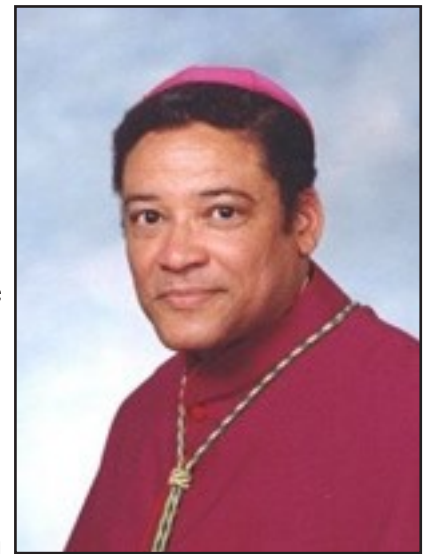
The infant in the manger is that promised light!

Measured by popular standard, however, Jesus was a failure. He was not interested in politics or the international balance of powers or putting money in people's pockets. He had an upside down-inside out view of what really mattered: the child more than the powerful, the merciful one more than the self-righteous one, the poor man over the rich man, God's kingdom more than the kingdom of this world. He would not take up arms except to oppose the defilement of the Temple. He would not even defend himself in the face of accusation.

Measured not by popular expectations but by our deepest spiritual needs, Jesus was the Savior of the world. From heavenly realms and eternal glory he came. He chose the mission field no one wanted, planet earth. He volunteered for the Molokai where you and I live. He didn't keep his distance but stepped down and touched us. He stayed with us becoming like us, assuming our pathetic condition, submerging himself into our mess. And it was our mess that killed him.

Interestingly, as the sacred story unfolds further, God did not

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

hold this against us. He raised his son to life that life might be restored back to us. St. Paul tells us, it is not entirely clear what we will later become but we will be one day like him having won mercy from God.

God taking on human flesh – the uniquely Christian story, the Incarnation – means therefore, in every instance, we are summoned to give honor and dignity to everyone's flesh for we are no longer the refuse of the earth but rescued and beloved sons and daughters of God.

The Good News we are privileged to share with the world each Christmas is that he became as we are

that we might become as he is. This proclamation provides a new charge for Christians and their behavior in the world and some renewed inspiration for our thoughts these days as we view the news reports and pick up the newspapers describing current events.

Pope Benedict XVI declared Father Damien a saint on October 11, 2009. It proved a feast of easts for the civic and Christian communities of the Hawaiian Islands.

This year's holydays and holidays, of course, were distracted by people here and around the world who perceive themselves to be lepers and the refuse of society. The Church realizes its role of pointing out the truth and necessity of Jesus our Light in a world darkened by sin. So, so many live lamentable conditions of life that fuel the outcry of the poor. The scarcity of jobs and resources push people to the sidelines to live lives of misery. And as we have seen

The prophet Isaiah promised it seven hundred years in advance when he said, *"The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who dwell in the land of gloom, a light has shone."* (Is 9, 1).

there are consequences of this misery to disturb sinner and saint alike among us, namely, the inequality that spawns violence, urban violence that gives rise to quick and unreasoned judgments about people who live on the fringes.

Consider the deplorable conditions of life and political turmoil and crime that result in the massive trek of people from their homelands looking for relief and safety and a future for their children. We think of the children in cities across the country when they explode in racially charged violence. We think of Christian communities in Syria and Iraq who are remembered for their founding back in the days of

St. Paul, but are today destroyed by unconscionable acts of fanaticism. We think of Bethlehem where the Christ savior was born mandated as a ghetto populated by a people who trace their lineage to Christ's ancestors but who are pushed to the margins of society. All of this begs for prayer and a Christian voice.

Thank you, brothers and sisters, for your faith and hope, your sober words of calm in the midst of conflict and mistaken reference. Thank you for your generosity so eloquently evident with various causes and programs that lift people to see more clearly the light of Christ in their lives.

May the star of his first coming shine more brightly for the times in which we live, is our prayer for this start of the new Year 2015. X

We need to take a collective breath so we all can continue to breathe

Dr. Keith Wilson

We are continually presented images on film and video of violence. There was a time when these acts were only implied and you would just imagine what happened when the cowboy that shot the Indian with the gunshot that made him fall off of his horse. Even the news would rarely show scenes from the battlefield of Viet Nam or streets of Chicago where much carnage certainly occurred.

But then something changed. With the advent of cable television, in short order we started seeing gunshots down to every horrific detail. To see a person's chest cavity blown to pieces was common place. It used to be that cursing of any type only occurred on cable television. Violence was muted and implied. Even on the campy Batman television series, each blow was blanked out with a colorful cartoon including words like BANG, POW etc. Our superhero evolved in both the comics and movies into the *Dark Knight*. This Batman became a calculated killer seeking revenge for the murder of his parents. His weaponry was deadly!

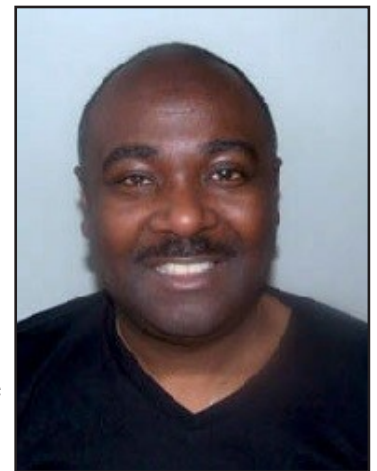
Rap music progressed from party songs like The Sugar Hill Gang's *Rapper's Delight* and the playful *The Breaks* by Curtis Blow to NWA's "Expletive" *The Police* and other gangster rap songs which glorified violence and sexual misconduct. The greater point is that in the majority of cases with these media, they generally were fictional with some basis in reality. Today's use of social media is the newest entry into the desensitization our daily sensibili-

ties. There is controversy as to whether the violence that we see in the various media of music and movies and the like are the result of its increases in our society or whether they actually cause and incite violence.

One indisputable fact is we all are much more exposed to violence whether actual or cinematic. There have been undeniable increases of road rage on our streets and misconduct of our youth. Today's news reporter is more often a smart phone operator capturing the latest brawl du jour or more tragically some unfortunate encounter with law enforcement. Rodney King's epic beat down in the 90's and Eric Garner's tragic choking in 2014 are just a few examples. Even the multiple cell phone images of Mike Brown's lifeless body in a Ferguson Street needs to be included.

We are overwhelmed with images both fictional and real of mayhem and misconduct. What is the real toll on the human psyche? As Christians, we remember the very public brutalization of

(Continued on page 7)



(Continued from page 6)

Jesus on his way up that hill to Calvary. Much like the cumulative effect public lynchings in the South over time, you have to wonder what effect that is having on the value of black life that those witnesses (both black and white) had on those people hanging from those ropes. There is an argument to be made that the occasional and apparently irrational beatings and killings of our black citizens by various police departments could be viewed in a similar fashion as lynchings.

Lynchings were typically a manner to exert control over a portion of the black population by hanging a citizen as an example of how the rest of that group would be punished if they got out of line. I certainly do not imply that this is the philosophies of police departments in general, but would like to relate this behavior to society's overall lack of restraint in general. Some police officers beat and kill our citizens much too often, but some of our citizens also need to take a "chill pill." Neither behavior should be excused, but we have all become so much angrier and reactive.

Teenagers have been fighting and arguing since the beginning of time. But when did disagreements rise to the level of lifting a railroad tie in the air and beating a fellow citizen to death while being recorded on a cell phone? This act in Roseland received nationwide attention a few years back. How many video clips of women fighting each other are there on *You Tube*? Hanging out at an area McDonald's too late might subject you to a beat down as was the case several days ago.

The police certainly as of late have shown some troubling behavior when arresting the public they serve. Sometimes it appears they shoot too quickly or possibly are too rough. However, in my mind, as much as I hate some of the outcomes we have seen involving the police, I can't say I don't totally understand. I don't understand how you can shoot a 12 year old so quickly or a brother with a BB gun in a Wal-Mart. But I do unfortunately understand irrational fear and behavior. The police probably need better training and a more diverse membership. But black and brown officers sometimes make the same mistakes with black and brown citizens. The fear of black men and the thought that we are criminals is very real and needs to be addressed by all!

When I watch an episode of *The Wire* or just view a *You Tube* clip, I put myself in a police stop that someone like my sister may

be involved in and I think about her. Please get home to your husband and kids and do what you have to do for that to occur! As hard as it is to say, there is some honest soul searching when I say I mean WHATEVER you need to do to get home. How many families of police officers feel the same way? Most crime occurs with and to people of the same race. We black people are no more criminal than any other group, just more aggressively pursued and prosecuted. Could there be just a little truth that WE are angrier? I don't want to rationalize and justify our anger because I think we have the right to it!

I think about the anger that sometimes wells up in me just from a car cutting me off in traffic. It's at that moment that a choice must be made. I then take a breath and ask myself does this person in the car that I want to run off of the road or get in their view to extend a single fingered salute to have a gun? Are they crazy? Will they hurt me? So the new me doesn't even make eye contact and drive on. I literally have to think about what to do now. If I get shot to make a point—now what? My wife is still a widow and I am still dead!

Who amongst us did not take that deep breath before going postal? I don't excuse bad behavior by some police officers and I believe that they do treat black citizens less equal, but then I drive around OUR neighborhoods, and listen to OUR music and look at OUR television shows. In the back of my mind even if just for a moment, I think that we have brought at least some of this on ourselves. That is not self-loathing or self-hate, but reality! I never want to be racially profiled (again), or be afraid to go into some of my own communities (again), but I am certain that I will find myself in one of those crazy situations AGAIN,

So now what, tomorrow is coming? I will take that breath when it happens and pray (not figuratively) that I will continue to breathe. I CAN'T BREATHE....unless I take a moment to take a breath!

Keith Wilson is an engaged Catholic leader at Holy Angels Parish in the Bronzeville Community. He has a dental practice in Frankfort, Illinois. Keith is a regular contributor to The Drum.



CONNIE'S CORNER

Bring In the New Year With Jesus

By Connie Redden

With the birth of Jesus we are reminded of God's continuous love. He sent his only Son to be our redeemer because our sins diminished our chances of being with our heavenly Father. We are blessed that the season of Christmas begins the journey of Jesus as a human. In human form He would feel the same emotions as we. He would feel the emotions of happiness, sadness, and pain. We don't know much about His early years as a boy until He was 12 years old speaking to the Pharisees. Can you imagine Him making friends with neighbor boys, playing games and looking forward to growing up? When He was born His mission was to save God's children from their sins and the loss of eternal life. This mission would be full of obstacles, doubters, and personal enemies, but He was victorious. The new year of 2015 should recall His journey to fulfill His mission. The season of Christmas and the New Year also reveal the impact of Jesus' birth



Connie Redden

on the world and the loving mercy of His heavenly Father.

The life of Jesus would be a life of love, humbleness, generosity, and obedience. He thought of others before He thought of Himself. This was an important part of His mission. There were constant examples of His care for the young, old, the sick and the sinful. This brings to mind the question we should ask ourselves as a new year approaches. Are we a caring people or selfish people? We sometimes forget His love for us should generate love within us for others. When we follow Jesus' journey for a new year we must remember our blessings are daily and there is someone inside us who prods us to say thank you. It is the Holy Spirit.

We should not have celebrated how many gifts we received for Christmas, but how much love we have shown and given to others. We should want to walk this journey with Jesus with the humbleness he displayed to everyone. He was not born in a 5 star hotel with jewels and fabulous robes. He would grow into manhood without the riches of the world. His riches were His teachings and His ability to bring people together. Reading the Bible and praying for others can begin to exemplify our humbleness.

With humbleness we gather strength to overcome temptation. We can look to God to fight any battles we may encounter. We can talk with God as we would talk to our earthly father. We can have a contrite heart when temptation overcomes us. We can walk with God hand in hand to lead us to the Promise Land. I like this journey and when it comes to the end of my journey I hope the beauty of heaven is mine.

In the name of the Father who loves me, the Son who lives within me, and the Holy Spirit who empowers me. Amen, Amen, Amen



Office for Black Catholics
Archdiocese of Chicago

The Drum



In Africa, tribes used the drum to bring the community together to celebrate, to mourn and to communicate. The drum kept the community connected, informed and in harmony.

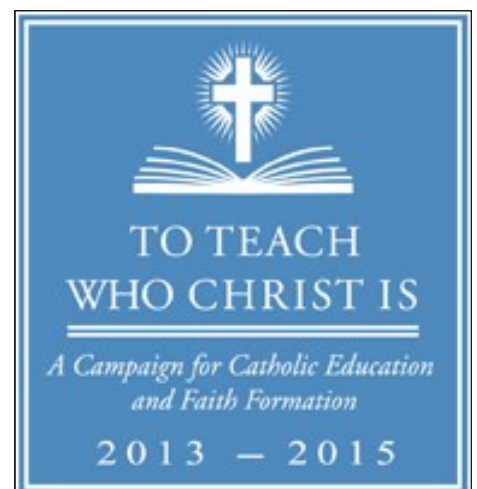
The Drum, today, is a publication of the Office for Black Catholics, an agency of the Archdiocese of Chicago, edited and published by Andrew Lyke.

The Drum contains news, events and insights relevant to the Black Catholic community of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

As it did for our ancestors in Africa, the Drum connects us to one another as a community in faith and action. Stay with the beat. Hold on to your faith.

Subscribe to the Drum. Go to www.blackcatholicchicago.org to subscribe today.

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Alright! It's time to stand up and be a black Catholic voice!!

Willie Cobb

While trying to find a catharsis for the anger that has enraged my soul and invaded my existence over the injustices that have occurred to the black and African-American communities in the last few years, I was indulging myself in one of my favorite pleasures – listening to Chicago's only black talk radio station. I overheard one of the callers mention Father Michael Pfleger.

He called in to ask him why Father Michael Pfleger was friends with the Mayor. A few minutes later, another caller called in and said some very derogatory things about Father Mike. This is a response to those who would criticize Father Pfleger. In this case I am an apologist. I realized that he takes criticism from all sides. He gets criticized from Catholics and non-Catholics alike. What they do not recognize is that he is the official respondent to violence in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

I just so happened to be in a meeting at Saint Sabina a few weeks earlier where I saw a remarkable event. Fr. Mike would not talk about it and he might be upset with me for bringing it up, but the fact is, he reaches out to those people who others refuse to even associate with. He was holding a meeting with African American teenage gang members; these are people others would be afraid of; Father Pfleger was having dinner with them.

His parish has built senior citizens' housing. His parish feeds the hungry and they meet the needs of poor people on a regular basis. He speaks out for justice anywhere. And every day he puts his life on the line as he receives death threats for fighting the just and right causes. He didn't just arrive at this occupation; he's been doing it since I was a teenager. He has adopted homeless children; he has dinner with the wealthy and with the homeless alike.

He is living the teachings that Christ himself told us to live. Feed the hungry, house the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. Father Mike does what most in our Catholic Faith refuse to do. Why would he be friends with the Mayor? Because it is his Christian obligation. Jesus was friends with the wealthy and the poor. Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy man who buried Jesus in his own grave as Jesus did not have a grave. Jesus ate dinner with sinners and those who would be Saints. Jesus did not judge.

Father Mike cannot and should not be the only response to violence from the Catholic Church. We must join him now; other Catholic ministers need to stand up for justice. We wonder what we should do about violence and about our children murdering each other; we already have the example.

I had two other encounters recently that struck me tremendously. I was at a parish doing a presentation with a few of my fellow lay ministers, powerful individuals who are trying to help save the black Catholic Church. Another powerful lay minister at that parish moved me when she informed us that the reason why her parish was struggling is because the religious order that runs her parish moves the pastor every few years. A pastor cannot speak to any injustice if he is only at the parish for a few years.

Father Mike is so successful because he has established roots and developed a community around him. I am on a committee with some of the most influential lay ministers that I know. I am proud to be on the committee with them. I realized while sitting in the room with them that we all had something in common, Father Mike; he influenced most of us in one way or another. I realized that no other priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago has formed more black lay leadership than Father Mike.

The call from Vatican II was the need to develop lay leadership in the Church. No parish has developed more Black Catholic lay leaders than Saint Sabina. He doesn't just hold on to the reins of the power of his community, he hands them over to the Black Catholic

leadership.

The fact is, Father Mike cannot continue to be the only voice speaking out from the wilderness about injustice in the black community.

Other Catholic parishes need to follow his example by simply developing black lay

leadership. Parishes need to encourage their lay leaders to go out and bring other people into the church. Pastors need to speak out against injustice from the pulpit to the streets. Then maybe we would have an answer or a response to our children being murdered in the streets; maybe we'll have a constructive response to the murder that happens in our communities. Maybe insane individuals would not kill police officers.

Now is the time for more clergy to develop more Catholic lay leaders, to get them trained, to get them some education, to teach them a passive nonviolent response. Now is the time for us to recognize what Father Mike has done and how we can spread that to other parishes. He can no longer be the only voice of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago to speak out against injustice; we can no longer allow others to randomly attack him because he's doing God's work and God's Will, because he's living up to the Corporal Works of Mercy. We can no longer stand silent while we let someone else speak for us and not stand united with those who have dedicated their lives to our cause. The time for the Church to recognize the contribution that Father Mike has made to the black community has long passed. Now is the time for the Church to stand with him and to scream about the injustice that has occurred in our community. We must do something about the guns on our streets. We must do something about the violence that occurs in our communities. We must open up a dialogue between the police and our young people. We must begin to stand with people like Father Michael Pfleger. He should no longer be the lone voice crying out from the wilderness. We must begin to recognize his contributions to the Black Catholic community and to the Church.



Willie Cobb is Theology teacher and Campus Minister at Notre Dame College Prep High School and a regular contributor to The Drum.



BLACK CATHOLIC DEACON STATEMENT 12-21-14

Homicide is the number one cause of death for African Americans and the second leading cause of death among Hispanics between the age of 10 and 24 years old. Our country has one of the highest rates of interpersonal violence of any industrialized country, and violence is the major cause of non-fatal injuries among youth. These facts should disturb our souls and cause us to act in bold unprecedented ways. This reality ruptures the fabric of our families and our communities on a daily basis.

Over the past several months, communities across the United States have been ripped apart by anger, frustration and distrust as black men and black boys have been victims of violence by those who vowed to serve and protect them. The tragic incidents in Ferguson, Missouri, Staten Island, New York and Cleveland, Ohio have devastated families, destroyed communities and left us all questioning if Black lives matter to civil servants, local and national government officials.

The Black Deacons of the Archdiocese of Chicago once again stand united as a result of Ferguson, Staten Island and Cleveland recognizing that violence, distrust and prejudice are not restricted to any one city or community. The events of the last several months require our prayers and focused action.

Citizens of all faiths, races and walks of life have taken to the streets to stand against violence and to ensure that Black lives matter on the streets and in our legal system.

With troubled hearts, many have taken to the streets in Chicago and other cities across the United States to voice their frustration, concern, and, importantly, their belief that **ALL LIVES MATTER**. Priests and Deacons of the Archdiocese of Chicago have walked with their parishioners in the streets and prayed in the pews for the lives lost and the end of prejudice and racism. The Black Deacons of Chicago will continue to walk, pray and take action to comfort our communities and advocate for peace.

We humbly raise our hands and our voices to ask that you add your voice and prayers with ours. We know that no meaningful change is possible unless we come together to take action toward systemic changes nationally and locally.

We encourage you to speak with local and state politicians, as well as, police officers and other civil servants in and around the Chicagoland area to reinforce that **ALL LIVES MATTER** and action must be taken to ensure equality, dignity, and trust in Chicago.

We pray to the risen Lord for a safe and joyful Christmas and a better New Year!
God bless,

National Association of Black Catholic Administrators (NABCA) Statement on Injustice

December 13, 2014

The National Association of Black Catholic Administrators (NABCA) join our voice with other faith-filled people who are concerned about the recent tragic events that have plagued the Black community. As a result of these recent events, it seems that all we do is protest against the violent acts against our young black people without taking any other actions. We are flooded with comments about civil rights violations, racism, legalized murder and so many other negative remarks about Blacks in our society. This is not the norm of our nation that we should accept. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated that “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”.

Black life does matter. Our ancestors fought hard for our civil rights. Now we are fighting another injustice, a more cultural injustice. It is thanks to our ancestors for having the courage to stand in the midst of injustice, to be steadfast in their conviction to make this country a better place for us. It is because of their unwavering spirit, their sacrifices, that we too unite and rally together to bring an end to the violence that has eroded in the Black community.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement and a reminder of other significant Civil Rights achievements. Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, Archbishop of Louisville and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, released a statement on this important occasion to address racism and the value of continuing to press forward. We are reminded of the accomplishments of many individuals in the fight for equality. We are all made in the image of God and we should respect the life and dignity of every human person. We are all responsible for the well-being of one another. Yes, recent events are very discouraging and they go against Catholic Social Teaching. But we should not be discouraged, for there is hope. God is with us.

It has been 30 years since the pastoral letter from the Black Bishops of the United States, “What We Have Seen and Heard” and we are in need of their spiritual guidance just as much now if not more. Our community is in turmoil. Our family bond is being tested. As our bishops put it, “Community means social concern and social justice”.

With one voice we need to go beyond the walls of our homes, our offices, our schools, our parishes. We need to answer the call of our bishops from their pastoral letter and take the lead in the Church’s work within the Black community. As a community we can be “instruments of peace”.

As Catholic Christians we are a people of unity and reconciliation. We are a people who believe in solidarity. Fr. Bryan Massingale, a priest in the Diocese of Milwaukee and Associate Professor of Moral Theology at Marquette University wrote, “Solidarity moves us to have a concern for those who are different from us and to see them as fully sharing in our humanity”. What does this mean? We need to stand with our brothers and sisters who are victims of violence, of injustice.

We need to do more than just go out into the streets with our raised hands and signs. We need to approach our local officials by going to city hall and State Legislatures. We need to dialogue with our officials about the policies of the local enforcement departments. We need to hold them accountable. We need to be at the voting booths on Election Day for all local, state and national elections. Exercise your right to vote and be a voice for your community. When we make a difference at the local and state levels we will see that effect ripple to the national level. It will unite all of us to stop the injustices that infect our nation. There is an urgent need for change and with a united voice let us go out and make a difference. Let us stand in solidarity with our young adults who are leading the movement today.

From the Convent to the Streets: Discernment during the Movement

By Megan Graves

“What’s his name?”
“DONTRE HAMILTON!!!!”
“How many shots?”
“Fourteen!!!”

This chant is one of many that we have shouted throughout the streets of Milwaukee. The case of Dontre Hamilton, the young unarmed Black male who was executed in a downtown Milwaukee park last April has made national news. When I arrived to Milwaukee only a few months ago, one of the first things I did was research about parts of the Black experience in Milwaukee, WI. Statics prove that Wisconsin is the WORST state in the nation to raise a Black child due to poor housing, lack of jobs, police brutality, and being the leading state of mass incarceration of Black males. Also, Milwaukee has been proven to be one of the top segregated cities in the United States. All of this being said, the tragic narrative of Dontre Hamilton is not a new narrative. Therefore, the murders of our Black brothers and sisters has sparked a new movement within the USA, from marches to “die-ins” our voices are loud and clear: BLACK LIVES MATTER!

For me, being a part of this movement in Milwaukee with a social justice group known as The Coalition for Justice, which was formed after the murder of Dontre has been a blessing. I have only been involved with this group for a short time, but I have formed friendships and bonds within this community in more ways than one. As we have blocked off highways, shut down malls, and spent the night outside of jails, this group has helped me to delve even deeper within the meaning of my discernment. Being a Candidate with the Sinsinawa Dominicans Sisters here in Milwaukee during



this time, I feel is providential. I say this because many of my Sisters have and continue to stand for justice and journey with those who are on the margins. It is within our 800 year old Dominican heritage to “speak truth with a compassionate heart” and to also speak truth to power. I myself as a young Black woman within this era of “Black Lives Matter” is both inspiring and saddening to me because as I discern Religious



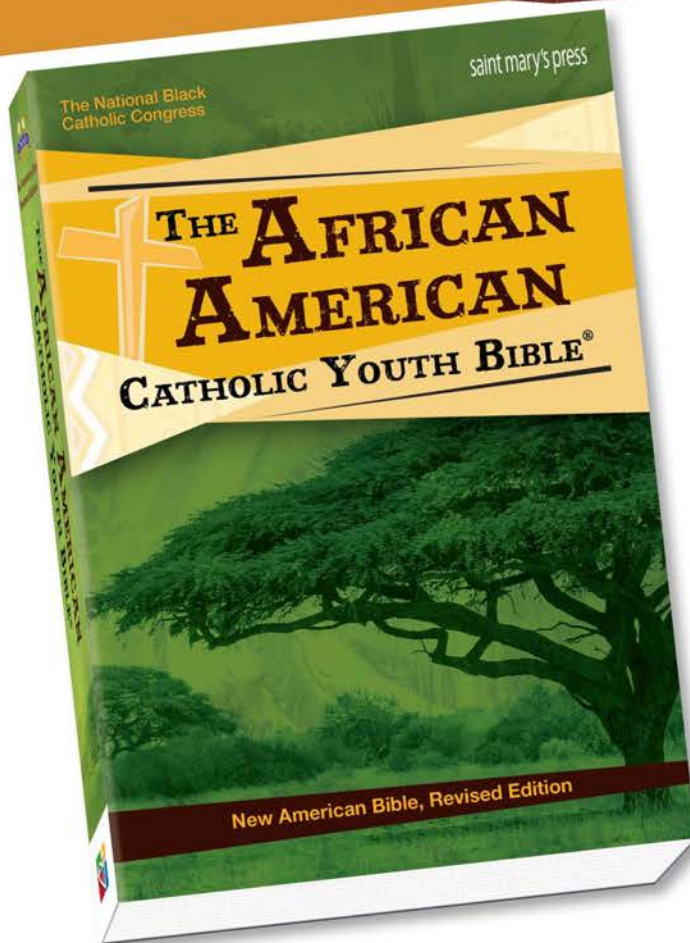
Life, I ask if the Catholic Church has taken a stand within this movement, and sadly I have yet to see that as a strong collective. It is not a criticism, it is a challenge. I could insert a ground breaking quote by Dr. King, Pierre Toussaint, or Sr. Thea Bowman, but I leave you with this chant, as it has become a prayer for me:

*I can hear my neighbor crying “I can’t breathe.”
Now I’m in the struggle and I can’t leave.
Calling out the violence of the racist police.
We ain’t gonna stop... til people are free.
We ain’t gonna stop... til people are free!*

Megan Patrice Graves is a native Chicagoan who is passionate about her Catholic Faith, fired up over the Church’s Social Mission, and vibrant personality. She graduated from Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois in 2014. Now she is a campus minister at Dominican High School in Milwaukee. She is currently discerning religious life with the Sinsinawa Dominicans in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin.



The First Catholic Bible Designed Especially for African American Youth



"We are pleased and honored to present to the Catholic faithful of the African American community The African American Catholic Youth Bible®, which is the culmination of several years' collaboration between Saint Mary's Press and The National Black Catholic Congress." . . . By making the Word of God more accessible and attractive to our youth, they will grow to a deeper appreciation of the Word in their faith journeys and everyday lives."

Most Rev. John H. Ricard, Bishop Emeritus of Pensacola-Tallahassee

Most Rev. Joseph N. Perry, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago

Most Rev. Martin D. Holley, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington

Available January 2015!

Special Contributors Include:

Ansel Augustine, D.Min

Dr. Camille Brown

Rev. Cyprian Davis, OSB

Mrs. Therese Wilson Favors

Dr. Kirk Gaddy

Mr. Vincent Guider

Rev. Maurice Nutt, CSsR, D.Min

BLACK, CATHOLIC, AND FAITHFUL

"Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?"
Matthew 27:32

In the providence of God, Simon, an African from Cyrene, a town in present Libya (North Africa), helped Jesus to carry his cross. The condemned person had to carry the cross to the place of crucifixion. Jesus, having much, was so weak the soldiers fled before the actual crucifixion, so they compelled Simon to bear his cross. Thoroughly pained, Simon bore the cross willingly that Simon received thereby the grace of discipleship, for Mark mentions a Simon of Alexander and Rufus" (Mark 15:21), perhaps well known to Mark's readers as a man of African descent, we share in Simon's service and in some sense "in

Crosses borne with grace and endurance for the sake of Christ bear abundant fruit. African American Catholics

a look inside

TAKE IT TO GOD

"Make Disciples of All Nations"
Matthew 28:16-20

Dear Jesus, you told us, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." We should be faithful disciples drawing others to you and making the world around us subject to you. All social structures should conform to your will. You call us to witness to your marvelous goodness and to reach out to those who do not yet know you. You desire us to be your face of love and forgiveness in the world around us.

Loving Jesus, make me more sensitive to the needs that are around me. As I go about my business, open me to opportunities to share your love with the people I meet. Give me the boldness to speak up for you, the courage to work to transform whatever is evil and unworthy of you. Kind Lord, make people's hearts receptive to the Good News. Amen.



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touching hearts. enlivening minds.

Free in-service training events co-sponsored by *Saint Mary's Press* and the *Archdiocese of Chicago*

Three in-service training opportunities

When: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 (1:30 - 3:30pm)

Where: St. Anselm - 6045 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60637

When: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 (6:30 - 8:30pm)

Where: St. Catherine of Siena-St. Lucy - 38 North Austin Blvd.,
Oak Park, IL 60302

When: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 (10:00 - 12:00pm)

Where: St. Martin De Porres (gather in Church) - 5112 West Washington Blvd.,
Chicago, IL 60644

Plan to attend?

It is free to attend, but please RSVP to Lois DeFelice or Jackie Herrera.

By mail:

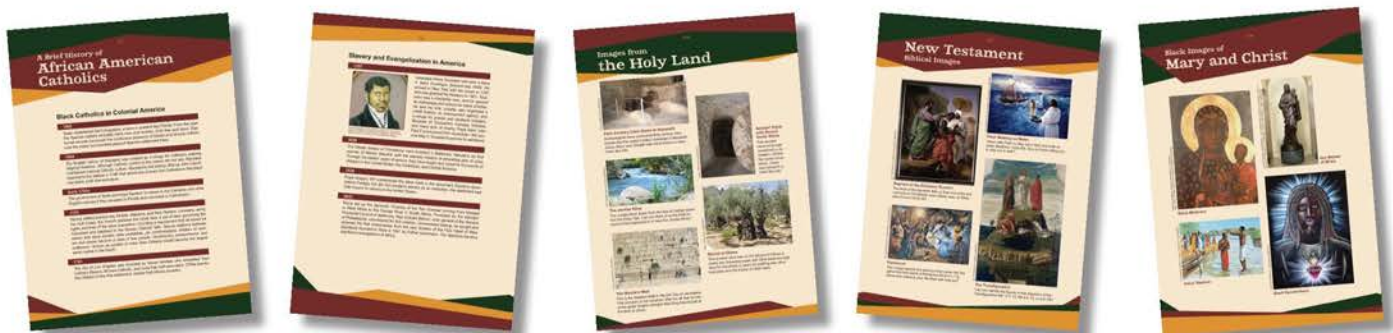
Lois DeFelice or Jackie Herrera
3525 South Lake Park Ave., Chicago, IL 60653

By phone:

Lois: 312-534-8052 or Jackie: 312-534-8044 or

By fax: 312-534-3801

By email: ldefelice@archchicago.org (Lois) or jherrera@archchicago.org (Jackie)



St. Elizabeth Catholic Church & School

Host

"The Krewe of Tolton"



Annual Masquerade Ball with a Mardi Gras "Twist"

Saturday, February 7, 2015

Chicago Lake Shore- Hyde Park Room

4900 So. Lake Shore Drive-Chicago, IL

Reception 7:00 pm - Open Bar - Dinner 8:00 pm

Donation: \$100.00 ~ Raffle tickets: \$5.00 per ticket or 3 for \$10.00
For ticket information & reservations please call: 773-268-1518

Pastor: Rev. Antoine Leason, S.V.D.

Principal: Nakia Garcia-Thurmond

TICKET DEADLINE: JANUARY 23, 2015

Holy Angels parishioner Robin D. Shoffner appointed to Circuit Court

On November 14, 2014 the Illinois Supreme Court appointed Robin D. Shoffner, a parishioner at Holy Angels in the Bronzeville community, to the 5th Subcircuit vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Shelli Williams-Hayes.

At the time of her appointment Shoffner was working for the City of Chicago Department of Law. She has been licensed as an attorney in Illinois since 1990. Shoffner's appointment was effective December 3, 2014. It will terminate December 5, 2016.



Congratulations, Honorable Robin D. Shoffner

On your appointment as Judge
of the 5th Subcircuit of the
Cook County Circuit Court!



Honorable Robin D Shoffner with Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne M. Burke, and Cook County Circuit Court Chief Judge Timothy Burke



Being sworn in by Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne M. Burke, Judge Shoffner is joined by family members.



Newly appointed judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County Robin Shoffner with her daughter

MAWUSI - "Telling God's Story with Artful Voices" - A Winter Retreat

USML Conference Center, Mundelein. January 16 & 17, 2015.

This year's Mawusi retreat for the Black and African American community, those who minister to or would like to learn more about Black Catholic spirituality will have presenters share God's Story. We will hear God's Story through Sacred Scripture, in prayer, in dance, in art, in word and in song. Deacon James Norman, Beverly Ann Stewart and Yolanda Lariece will share their artful voices. The retreat begins at 4 p.m. on Friday and ends with 4:00 Mass on Saturday. This is a great start to Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend. For more information, please check www.catechesis-chicago.org You can find a link there to register through events.org. Looking forward to sharing with you. Mawusi means in the hand of God in Ewe language. Are you Mawusi? See you in Mundelein!

Coming in February: St. Mary's Press will be providing workshops on the first Catholic Bible designed especially for African American Youth which will be available in January of 2015. They have worked in collaboration with the National Black Catholic Congress to present this Bible. Dates and places will be announced as soon as they have been guaranteed. Watch the www.catechesis-chicago.org for more information as it becomes available.



SCHEDULE

When: 4:00 p.m. Friday, January 16 to 5:30 p.m. Saturday, January 17, 2015

Friday:

4:00 p.m. Meet & Greet

Dinner Promptly at 6:00 p.m.

Prayer

Opening Session

Hospitality & Catholic Trivia

Saturday:

Rosary in the chapel

Breakfast promptly at 8:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. Prayer

Telling Our Story with Artful Voices

Mawusi Family Photo

4:00 p.m. Mass

Check website for update on who will be presenting.

www.catechesis-chicago.org

Directions to University of
St. Mary of the Lake
Conference Center
1000 East Maple Avenue
Mundelein, IL 60060-1174
Directions to USML

If you are heading NORTH on Interstate 94
To reach the seminary from Interstate 94, take the Hwy 176 exit and turn right at the foot of the ramp to head west (the ramp loops around). Go approximately 4 miles. Soon after passing Marytown on your right, you will see the signs for the University, which will also be on your right.

If you are heading SOUTH on Interstate 94
To reach the seminary from Interstate 94, take the Hwy 137 exit and turn right. Go approximately 3 miles and turn left onto Hwy 21. Go approximately 2 miles and turn right onto Hwy 176. After approximately 2 miles, you will see the signs for the University on your right. Soon afterwards, you will see the signs for the University on your right.



Cancellation Policy: The Office for Catechesis and Youth Ministry reserves the right to cancel the retreat if there are fewer than 25 registrants. If OFCYM cancels the retreat, a full refund will be given to registrants. Registrants who cancel on or before the registration deadline will, upon request, be given a refund of the total amount, less a \$5.00 processing fee. Registrants who fail to attend the retreat are not entitled to a refund due to expenses incurred for each participant. Any registration that is cancelled within 10 business days of the event will incur a \$5.00 processing fee and the reduction of the cost of meals.

Telling

God's Story

With

Artful Voices



Winter Retreat Mawusi

January 16-17, 2015

USML

Conference Center —

Mundelein, IL.

For more information www.catechesis-chicago.org

Mawusi, in Ewe, a language from Ghana and Togo, means "in the hand of God." The Mawusi retreat is designed for those who serve, worship, experience or seek a greater understanding of Catholic spirituality from the Black perspective.

God's story awakens our spiritual calling and enriches us as we gather to listen to speakers, pray with each other and be filled with the Holy Spirit so that we can go forth praising the Lord and sharing God's story with all we meet.

Where: St. Mary of the Lake
Conference Center
1000 East Maple Avenue
Mundelein, IL 60060-1174



Churches are doing great things but we don't know each other!!!

Stories are told in many different ways. Through story telling those who have fallen away might come back. Your story could influence someone who needs it. Maybe you are capable of telling great stories with electronic media, like power point, YouTube, or other???? Bring a flash drive or email ldefelice@archchicago.org and put Mawusi committee in the subject line.

Bring pictures or stories and fliers about your upcoming Parish events.

POETRY

Storytelling **DANCE**
Testimony

Action
Prayer
Praise
ART
TRANSFORMATION
ONE
FAITH
LISTEN
STILLNESS
Singing



Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Parish/Agency: _____

Registration includes room, meals and materials

(Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch)

Single Room: \$150.00

Double Occupancy (per person): \$80.00

Roommate's Name: _____

Commuter Rate: \$75.00
(also includes all meals)

Special Dietary Needs: _____

Registration Deadline: January 5, 2015

Late registration fee \$25.00 additional

Registration available online at

www.catechesis-chicago.org

Please make checks payable to Office for Catechesis and Youth Ministry and send to:

Office for Catechesis
and Youth Ministry

Mawusi

3525 South Lake Park
Chicago, IL 60653

312-534-8046

Fax 312-534-3801





SAVE THE DATE

*37th Annual Archdiocesan Black Heritage Prayer Service
(formerly African American Prayer Service)*

Friday, February 20, 2015 at 9:30am
Holy Name Cathedral
735 N. State St, Chicago, IL 60611

*THIS IS OUR STORY: WE NEED EACH OTHER TO SURVIVE
Celebrating the African Diaspora*

For more information contact

Ms. Julie Welborn, Office of Catholic Schools (312-534-8321) or
Mr. Andrew Lyke, Office of Black Catholics (312-534-8376)

Website: www.blackcatholicchicago.org

Catholic Social Ministry Gathering 2015



www.catholic-social-ministrygathering.org



February 7 – 10, 2015

CSMG Diversity Scholarship
Application Deadline: November 21, 2014

To Go Forth: Encountering Christ in the Heart of the World

The Catholic Social Ministry Gathering's (CSMG) Diversity Outreach Initiative is proud to offer scholarships to the Gathering February 7 – 10, 2015, in Washington, DC. Application due November 21, 2014. Scholarships are open to leaders or emerging leaders from under-represented ethnic, cultural and disability communities who are also active in Catholic institutions, parishes, schools, and social service agencies. Scholarships made possible by departments of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and CSMG's collaborating organizations.

CSMG is an annual event organized through the collaboration of 17 national Catholic organizations. We are rooted in the Sacraments, the Word of God and the Church's living Catholic social tradition. The gathering builds solidarity, knowledge, and skills among social ministry leaders. When we gather as one, we animate the Church's social mission for the evangelization of the world.

CSMG diversity scholarship recipients bring a richness of perspectives, skills, voices and vision to Washington D. C., enhancing the interaction of Catholic social ministry colleagues from around the country and the world. We are committed to fostering these meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships that nourish all of us in our ministry, for the good of our Church and the world.

Early registration is \$330 and hotel at \$213 per night. CSMG's Diversity Outreach Initiative is offering scholarship to cover registration and hotel or a portion thereof. Recipients pay for travel expenses. We hope to see you there!

Application and recommendation forms can be downloaded from CSMG at: www.catholic-social-ministrygathering.org, or by contacting Nicole Germain (ngemaine@uscpcb.org) or call: 202-541-3185, fax: 202-541-3339. All forms must be signed, dated, and submitted by e-mail, fax or post by November 21, 2014. Scholarships will be awarded and recipients notified by December 19, 2014.

Introducing the Governors State University Concert Chorale

GSU | CONCERT
CHORALE

Debut Gala Performance

Sunday, January 18, 2015

4 p.m.

GSU Center for Performing Arts

The 130-member Concert Chorale thrives as Chicago Southland's premiere symphonic chorus in its new home, Governors State University. Continuing under the directorship of Albert M. Jackson, the former South Suburban Chorale builds on its long tradition of excellence in choral performance with a new season of great performances.

VIP tickets available. For tickets: www.CenterTickets.net, 708.235.2222

GSUCC 2014 - 2015 Season

Works by Beethoven, Vierne, Copland and others

Sunday, October 12, 2014 • 4 p.m.

St. Lawrence O'Toole Catholic Church, 4101 St. Lawrence Ave., Matteson, IL

Past and Future – A Chorale Retrospective

Sunday, October 26, 2014 • 4 p.m.

First United Methodist Church, 103 Franklin St., Valparaiso, IN

Christmas at St. Victor's - Annual Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 7, 2014 • 4 p.m.

St. Victor Catholic Church, 553 Hirsch Ave., Calumet City, IL

Debut Gala Performance with VIP Reception

Sunday, January 18, 2015 • 4 p.m.

Center for Performing Arts, Governors State University

Troubles and Triumphs - Franz Joseph Haydn's "Mass in Troubled Times"

Sunday, May 3, 2015 • 4 p.m.

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church, 768 Lincoln Ave., Calumet City, IL



Al Jackson at 708.235.6921 or Ajackson13@govst.edu

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ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office for Black Catholics
Director: Andrew Lyke
alyke@archchicago.org



Cardinal Meyer Center
3525 S. Lake Park Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60653
(312) 534-8376
Fax: (312) 534-8119

Press Release

Mass & Welcome Reception with Archbishop Cupich in Vicariate VI

December 1, 2014: Archbishop Blase J. Cupich will celebrate Mass in each of the six Vicariates of the Archdiocese followed by a welcome reception. Archbishop Cupich will visit Vicariate VI on Tuesday, January 27, 2015 at St. Jude Parish, located at 880 E. 154th St., South Holland, Illinois. Mass will be at 7:00 P.M.; a reception will follow.



LOVIN' LIFE IN CHICAGO

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL MARCH FOR LIFE CHICAGO JANUARY 18, 2015, 2-4PM

STARTS AT FEDERAL PLAZA (50 W ADAMS)

SPEAKERS

Erika Harold, *Miss America 2003*

Joe Schiedler,
National Director of Pro-Life Action League

Dr. Erwin Lutzer,
Senior Pastor of Moody Church

Representative Dan Lipinski (D), IL-3

Representative Peter Roskam (R), IL-6

Pastor Mark Jobe,
Pastor of New Life Community Church

MarchForLifeChicago.com
marchforlifechicago@gmail.com



*Friends of Sister Thea Bowman
Humanitarian Legacy Award*

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Saturday, March 28, 2015

Lexington House 7717 West 95th Street

12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Tickets \$45.00

For more information contact:

Vivian Clark 708-642-9402

Michelle I. Tines 312-213-3851

stmartin176@yahoo.com





LIFT-Chicago Social Justice Internship

4554 N. Broadway, Suite 329, Chicago IL 60640

Start and end dates can be negotiated based on school schedules.

What is LIFT?

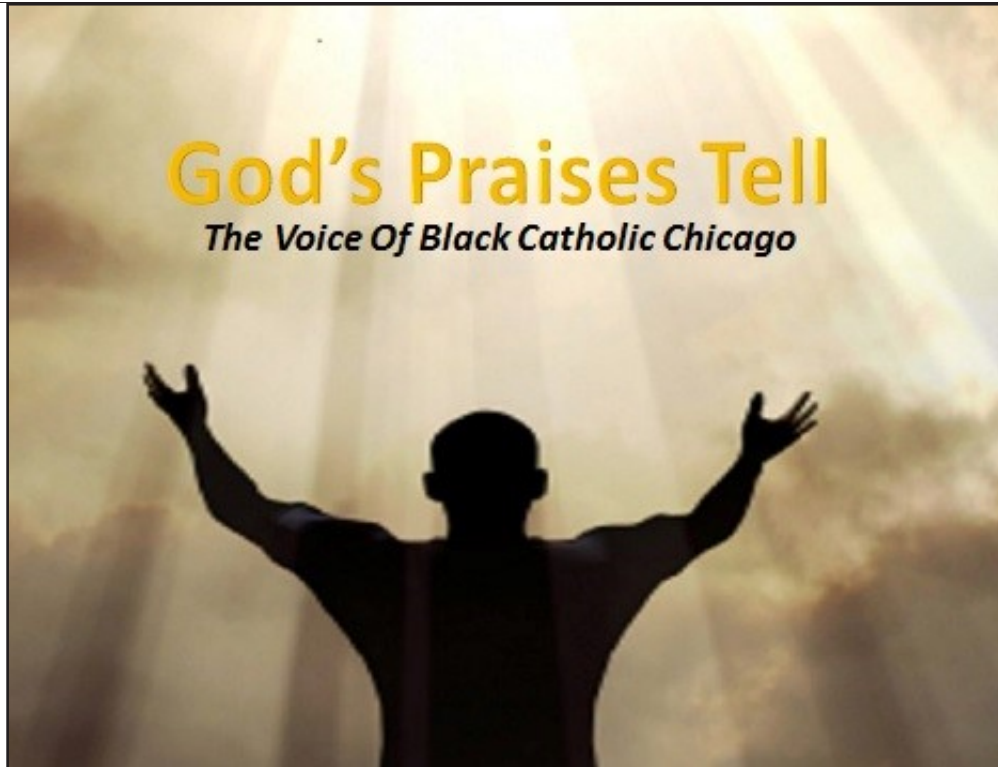
LIFT's mission is to help community members achieve economic stability and well-being. LIFT recruits and trains a diverse corps of advocates (volunteers) who make a rigorous and sustained commitment to service. This volunteer corps operates a national network of service centers, where advocates work **side by side** with low-income individuals and their families to find employment, secure safe and stable housing, as well as make ends meet through public benefits and tax credits. LIFT has offices in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, DC, which have all together served more than 40,000 members in its 14-year history.

Reasons to LIFT

- Getting involved in your community and truly helping others achieve their potential
- Better understanding of city systems including housing, public benefits and DHS
- One-on-one direct service with members
- Skills for your resume that transfer to ANY job, ANY major
- Networking with other major non-profits in Chicago
- Building life-long friendships with other advocates and interns from all Universities/walks of life in Chicago!

Qualifications and Expectations:

- Strong communication skills with ability to convey ideas in written and spoken English
- Commitment to LIFT's mission and vision
- Fluency in other languages not required but a plus
- Organized, punctual and responsible
- Dedicated to fighting in poverty in the US and Chicago and desire to serve
- Computer Literacy in all Microsoft Office programs



Tuesdays 9-9:30 a.m.
Relevant Radio 950-AM
Hosted by Andrew Lyke

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