



National African American Catholic Youth Ministry Network

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MISSION STATEMENT

Calling together African American Youth Ministers on a diocesan, regional, and national level, NAACYMN sets as its mission:

- To implement the youth component of the National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan.
- To enhance the professional development of African American Catholic youth ministers.
- To foster a support system for African American Catholic youth ministers and to nurture African American youth.

The NAACYMN Newsletter is published several times a year. To submit an article, please e-mail to Michael Youngblood at myoungblood@toledodiocese.org. Mike can also be reached at the Diocese of Toledo, 419-244-6711 ext. 511.

The Network Mailing Address is Post Office Box 608, Louisville, KY, 40202.

We hope you will find the newsletter a useful tool in your ministry with African American youth. We welcome your comments and suggestions, as well as input for future issues.

JOIN THE NAACYMN

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

\$30.00 INDIVIDUAL
\$100.00 DIOCESAN

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERS (NACYML)

By Deloris (Dee) Hawthorne

Over two-hundred youth ministry leaders attended the National Association of Catholic Youth Ministry Leaders' kick-off membership meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at the National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry (NCCYM) this past December. The newly formed National Association of Catholic Youth Ministry Leaders (NACYML) promotes the profession and practice of Catholic youth ministry.

This association is a member driven organization. All tasks and expectations are going to be inspired, created, developed, worked and completed by the membership. It is an exciting venture for all those who minister to youth. It is an opportunity to hear directly from the membership what happens in youth ministry by networking using the NACYML membership directory, participating in writing articles for the newsletter or helping to design the website.

At the kick-off meeting there was an air of excitement as the newly formed membership began brainstorming their concerns, ideas and expectations for the new association. Many folks came by the NACYML booth that was set up in the NCCYM's exhibit hall to explore questions about the association and to sign-up.

I am a Charter member and a part of NACYML's leadership team. It is a great opportunity to get involved on the ground floor. This is also an opportunity to create, form and shape an association that would not only help me as a parish youth minister, but help other's as well to share resources, find commonalities in working in urban youth ministry, and to help promote competent faith-filled leadership.

I feel the association is for those folks who work in this ministry in a leadership capacity, who have a passion for youth, and a desire to help with the association's growth and development through the collaborative efforts of its membership.

For membership information and a more detailed summary of NACYML click on the following link www.nacyml.org

Deloris (Dee) Hawthorne is the Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at St. Bernardine's Parish in Baltimore, Maryland.

National African American Catholic Youth Ministry Network

2004-05 BOARD REPORT

Goals for the Network:

- Continue to address the Pastoral Plan of Action from the National Black Catholic Congress IX
- Increase membership (individual and Black Catholic Offices)
- Strengthen communication efforts (website, emails)
- Develop a National African American Catholic Youth Summit (2008)

Network Efforts:

- Working with a Baltimore-based company to develop a website for youth ministers serving the African American community. This website will be launched in late spring.
- Secretariat for African American Catholics: USCCB
 - African American Catholic HIV/AIDS Task Force
 - Educational materials for Youth Ministers
 - World AIDS Day promotion (December)
 - Black History Month materials with focus on Africa
 - Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS (March)
- The Network is a collaborative member of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM). Darren Foster is our At-Large member of the NFCYM Board.
- National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life, member of the board with promotion of various activities throughout the year. (Kwanzaa for Life, National Day of Prayer for the African American Family, Black Catholic Vigil for Life, Black Catholic Rosary Across America for Life, Respect Life Month) www.blackcatholicsforlife.org
- We are working to develop a website. The website will be online in late Spring 2005.

- Newsletter/Email Alerts:
Our newsletter is published three/four times per year. It is a useful tool for your ministry with our youth. We invite youth ministers to write articles on various issues affecting our youth, and to give praise to successful models in our community. We have also begun to email information to youth ministers when events/concerns happen around the country.

Future Directions of Network:

- Increase Network membership
- Network Website and email alerts
- Continue implementation of Congress IX Plan of Action
- Plan for youth focus with National Black Catholic Congress X for 2007 in Buffalo, NY
- Regional Contacts/Coordinators for Network (5 people)
- Continue to support Institute for Black Catholic Studies
- Continue collaborative efforts with National Black Catholic organizations and agencies/organizations with youth ministry (NFCYM, etc)
- Establish Board position for Network on NBCC Board of Trustees
- Develop National African American Catholic Youth Summit (2008) as a follow-up to Congress X.
- Increase the number of Black Catholic youth and youth ministers at national gatherings: NCYC, WYD, NFCYM Adult Conference

Black History Month 2005 (Celebrate 365!)

- Schedule a trip to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. www.freedomecenter.org
- View the film “**Hotel Rwanda**” at a local theatre. **Hotel Rwanda** is a true story about the Rwandan conflict of the 1990s which marked one of the worse chapters in recent African history. This genocide was made more tragic as most of the world chose to ignore the cry of the Rwandan people. One man made a promise to protect his family and save over 1200 people. Hotel Rwanda tells the story of this real life hero Paul Rusesabagina, a hotel manager. While the rest of the world closed its eyes, Paul opened his heart and proved that one good man can make a difference.

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- Take a trip to an African American museum, historic site or sponsor a movie night with films such as Amistad, ROOTS, and Passing Glory.
- Sponsor an Evening of Prayer to remember our ancestors. Ask the young people to bring names from their family and those throughout history who have been witnesses to the Good News of God's love and have challenged us to live out the gospel. There is an African proverb that says, "A person is not truly gone until they are forgotten".
- Invite a person from the community to share their personal witness.

What's happening in Parishes:

- Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Washington, DC: Planning a Legacy Program with a salute to Women. They will also provide a study packet for youth with a Black Jeopardy game.
- Black Catholic Input, Diocese of Cleveland: The Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver will honor African American men with the Archbishop James P. Lyke African American Male Image Awards.
- Catholic Relief Services has just published a resource for Black History Month, "Celebrating the African Family Tree". This resource has prayer services, Sunday School resources, a mini-retreat, a diocesan day of reflection, and more to help us connect with the richness of Africa. Contact Catholic Relief Services at 410-234-3183 for a copy or www.crs.org



Bishop Gregory Named to Atlanta

Bishop Wilton D. Gregory of Belleville, Ill., has been named by Pope John Paul II to head the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Archbishop Gregory was the bishop of the Diocese of Belleville, IL, and former president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

When he was elected, he was the first African American to head the conference. One of nine active U.S. black bishops, and the third African American to be named archbishop of Atlanta.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta includes 69 counties in the northern part of Georgia. It has about 371,000 Catholics in a total population of nearly 6 million.

Congratulations Archbishop Gregory!!!

National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC)

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is an exciting, biennial four-day experience of prayer, community, and empowerment for Catholic teenagers and their adult chaperons. The theme is "Winds of Change". The schedule includes general and concurrent sessions addressing a wide variety of topics including forgiveness, Catholic spirituality and prayer, global issues, sexuality, and leadership. There are also opportunities for liturgy and special activities such as a concert and exhibits.

WHERE: Atlanta, Georgia

WHEN: October 27-30, 2005

WHY: Youth and adult participants attend the NCYC because they want to:

- Gather on a national level.
- Learn more about themselves and their relationship to the Catholic Church.
- Celebrate their Catholic Christian faith.
- Meet thousands of other Catholic youth.
- Share beliefs and experiences.
- Recognize their role in the larger Catholic Church.

For more information, contact your local Youth Office or on the web at www.nfcym.org/ncyc.



25th Anniversary of U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Racism

November 2004 celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the U.S. Pastoral Letter on **Racism: Brothers and Sisters To Us**. On Monday, November 15, 2004, the Bishops gathered in Washington, DC, for their annual meeting in a Eucharistic Liturgy to commemorate this document. The liturgy was celebrated by the Most Reverend Wilton D. Gregory. Bishop Gregory stated that racism is a sin and that much more needs to be done. Racism is a spiritual blindness and keeps us from seeing Jesus. Throughout 2005, each diocese is asked to discuss and celebrate this historical document.

Excerpts from Brothers and Sisters To Us, The United States Bishops Pastoral on Racism In Our Day

“Racism is a sin; a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father.” Page 3

“Racism is anti-life. Racism is anti-Christian.” Page 38

“This is the mystery of our Church, that all men and women are brothers and sisters, all one in Christ, all bear the image of the Eternal God. The Church is truly universal, embracing all races, for it is “the visible sacrament of this saving unity.” Page 7

“As individuals we should try to influence the attitudes of others by expressly rejecting racial stereotypes, racial slurs, and racial jokes. We should influence the members of our families, especially our children, to be sensitive to the authentic human values and cultural contributions of each racial grouping in our country.” Page 10

2005 Sr. Thea Awards

**Honoring African American Women
In the Spirit of Sr. Thea Bowman, FSPA**



Sister Thea Bowman a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, lived life with hope, love and justice for all people. A tireless advocate, Sister Thea always educated and preached about the need to break down racial and cultural barriers. Her spirited presentations combined singing, gospel preaching, along with prayer and story telling. She

inspired all to live deeply the Christian values of justice and peace. Sr. Thea died on March 30, 1990 of cancer.

The Office of Ministry to African American Catholics and the Pastors and staffs serving the African American Catholic Community have collaborated to honor African American Women in the Spirit of Sr. Thea Bowman, FSPA. The awards will be presented at a luncheon, Sunday, March 6, 2005.

The “Rising Star” Award (young women 13-21) will be presented to young women who are developing a sense of commitment to the social teachings of the church, is a role model for her peers, share of her time and talent with the larger community and is active in her parish and community, while maintaining an outstanding grade average.

Receiving the “Rising Star” award: Melinda Jennings a senior at Cleveland Heights High School, maintains a 3.38 grade point average, sings in four choirs at school, received the Altar Server of the Year 2004 award, serves as a lector, cleans the parish and answers the telephone at the parish. Marlynda Harland is a freshman attending Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin High School, an altar server, a member of the Children’s Choir, a drummer, member of Ujima Youth Group, member of the Knights of St. Peter Claver, currently serving as Treasurer for the Junior Daughters Division, and assists at the St. Paul A.M.E. Hunger Center. Marlynda has excelled in the sports of basketball and track. Alicia Ramona Jordan has been active at The Thea Bowman Center since its inception. She completed the Conflict Mediation Course, she assists with the Summer Lunch Program at the Center. She’s a member of the band at the center. Alicia is honest and dependable, she maintains a G.P.A. of 4.1. Well-done “Rising Stars”

Vanessa Griffin Campbell is the director of the Office of African American Ministry for the Diocese of Cleveland.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2005

February 6

**National Day of Prayer
for the African American Family**
www.blackcatholicsforlife.org

April 29 - May

Sankofa Youth Summit VIII
Raleigh, North Carolina
The Sankofa Youth Summit is a national youth conference hosted by the Ambassadors of the Word and sponsored by the Bowman Francis Project.

For more information, contact:
JoAnn Perou (516) 485-0122
Martha Bailey (919) 821-9762
Bowman Francis Ministry (317) 917-8538

June 9 - 12

**Fifth (5th) Biannual Interregional African
American Catholic Evangelization and
Ministry Institute**
**Theme: "On Solid Rock We Stand:
It's Our Time, Let Us Grow"**
Marriott Memphis East
Memphis, Tennessee

June 23 - 26

**Archbishop James Patterson Lyke
Conference**
Adam's Mark Hotel and Resort
St. Louis, Missouri
Hosted by the Diocese of Belleville

For more information, contact:
Fr. Fernand Cheri, III, OFM
(618) 482-5570
Email: ferdofm@aol.com

June 26 - July 16

**Institute for Black Catholic Studies (IBCS)
Graduate Degree Program**
New Orleans, Louisiana
The Institute for Black Catholic Studies (IBCS) founded in 1980, offers programs in various pastoral ministries to prepare lay men and women and clergy, for the task of effective ministry and skillful leadership within the Black community. The Institute will convene their Graduate Degree and Certificate and Enrichment (non-degree) Programs in the Summer of 2005.

July 21 - 24

Unity Explosion 2005
Intercontinental Houston Hotel
Houston, Texas

Also featuring the "Roderick Bell Institute for Sacred Music" - July 20 and 21, 2005

Sponsored by the Diocese of Galveston
Office of African American Ministries
713-649-5461, ext. 406
dladet@diogh.org

July 17-24

**African American Catholic Youth
Leadership Institute**
University of Notre Dame
South Bend, Indiana

August 16 - 21, 2005

**WORLD YOUTH DAY/
WELTJUGENTAG 2005**
"We have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:2)
World Youth Day is an international event for young people from every continent with Pope John Paul II every two years. The 20th World Youth Day gathering will be held in Cologne, Germany on August 16-21, 2005

For more information, contact your local Youth Office.

For more information,

**National African American Youth Ministry Network,
contact Michael Youngblood, Director,
Black Catholic Ministry, Diocese of Toledo
at (419) 244-6711 ext. 511
or email to myoungblood@toledodiocese.org.**

Lenten Prayer for the Healing of HIV/AIDS

African Americans account for more than half of the new United States HIV cases reported annually but represent only 13% of the general U.S. population.

African American teenagers account for approximately 66% of new AIDS cases among teens, although they make up only 15% of the U.S. teen population.

These statistics are based from the Kaiser Family Foundation, CDC.

Take time this Lent to talk with our young people about HIV/AIDS. Sponsor a prayer breakfast or pizza party to educate and pray for our brothers and sisters living with AIDS. Listed below are some suggestions for a gathering.

- Scripture Suggestions:
Acts 9:26-34; Matthew 14:34-36;
Matthew 11:25-30; Psalm 13:1-6; Mark 1:40-45
- Invite a speaker from a local AIDS organization

- Outline for Prayer
 - Welcome by Pastor/Youth Minister
 - Opening Prayer
 - Song of Praise: “I Need You to Survive” by Hezekiah Walker or NAS video: “I Can”
 - Scripture
 - Reflection or personal testimony
 - Liturgical dance by youth
 - Closing remarks and prayer

For resources, go the Secretariat for African American Catholics website at www.usccb.org/saac/hivawareness.htm. Sponsored by the National African American Catholic Taskforce on HIV/AIDS.

“Prayer can reach where the pen fails to go.”

St. Katharine Drexel

Michael Youngblood (NAACYM)
P.O. Box 985
Toledo, OH 43697-0985