

ROOTED

Volume 3, Issue 4
December 2011/January 2012

Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets, so that one can read it readily. For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint; If it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late.

~ Habakkuk 2:2-3



Black Catholic Ministries

Archdiocese of Detroit
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Yes, there is JOY in the birth of JESUS



As the song goes "It's the most wonderful time of the year!"

I know that in many ways it is hard to see the joy in this season, with the high

unemployment, lack of money and even the release of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council's recommendations; but I am reminded of Romans 8:37 that says: *"in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us."*

Last month I had the opportunity to take a silent retreat. I prayed a lot for myself, asking for

direction and guidance; but I also prayed for all in our diocese and asked the Lord to help us stay on the path he has chosen and to stick with it all the way.

As we prepare to celebrate his wondrous birth, let us bring our gifts; the gifts of our lives to pay homage to the King of Kings. My prayer for all of us this Christmas and New Year's Season is that as we close 2011 and open up another chapter in 2012 that we will find the JOY of Christ in our lives and share His love, joy and peace wherever we go.

Blessings,

John Thorne

2012 MLK weekend calls youth to service



The City Youth Leadership Team (YFACT) and Black Catholic Ministries have teamed up to call the young people of the City of Detroit to a day of service on **Saturday January 14, 2012**. Youth Ministries and Parishes throughout the city have committed themselves

to service, and they aim to "be the change they want to see in DETROIT" through acts of love and kindness.

Some of the commitments of service from Parishes are:

- Corpus Christi (Core City Clothing Store)
- Gesu (Teddy Bear Drive for Children's Hospital)
- Sacred Heart (Mobile Meals to Cass Corridor)

- St. Elizabeth (Mobile Meals to Cass Corridor)
- St. Cecilia (care packages to Nursing Homes)
- Urban Parish Youth Choir (Youth Detention Ctr.)

If your parish does not have a youth minister, but you have youth who would like to get involved in this movement, call John Thorne at (313) 596-7103 for more information.

The 2012 Eucharistic Liturgy, celebrating Dr. King's life and legacy will be Monday, January 16, 2012 at 10 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament. 9844 Woodward · Detroit, Michigan 48202.

The Most Reverend Donald Hanchon will be the presider and homilist.



National Black Catholic Survey shows “MORE ENGAGEMENT”



In July of 2011, a national Survey of African American Catholics was conducted and sponsored by the National Black Catholic Congress; Notre Dame's Institute for Church Life; and the Office of the President.

The first of its kind, the survey was intended to provide information about individual spiritual engagement as well as trends within the black Catholic population.

Said Bishop John H. Ricard, president of NBCC, “The study includes important findings about Black Catholics today. It also provides direction for setting pastoral priorities nationally and also in dioceses and parishes. The survey is a superb resource for improving evangelization efforts.”

The study clearly showed that religious engagement is very important to the spiritual life of black Catholics.

When the results of this survey were compared with other surveys of the same caliber, they showed that

black Catholics have a high percentage of engagement in the parish community, similar to that of black Protestants.

Even though black Catholics are relatively small in number, they demonstrate greater involvement in their parish than white Catholics. Another notable finding of the study is that on almost every conceivable measure of religious engagement, ranging from religious beliefs to practice, blacks are more religious than most other Americans.

The study also showed that black Catholic parishes are important to the people of the community. For those who attend them they are more than parishes, they are “families” which are both religiously and socially enriching. To this end, black Catholics who attend black Catholic parishes are more engaged and more content.

For more information on the findings of this survey, or to read the highlights as well as the executive summary, please go to: www.aodonline.org/blackcatholics.

2011 National Black Catholic Survey

Highlights

Religious Engagement

- A major finding of the NBCC indicates that, contrary to anecdotal accounts, African American Catholics are highly involved with their religion and parish life.
- The study shows that a high level of religious engagement has always been a trait of African American Catholics.
- Even though African American Catholics are relatively small in number, they demonstrate greater involvement in their parish than white Catholics.
- A remarkable and consistent finding of the study is that on almost every conceivable measure of religious engagement, ranging from religious beliefs to practice, African Americans are more religious than most other Americans.

Cultural Effect

- Compared with other religious and racial groups, African American Catholics participate in their church like all other African Americans.
- For years, African Americans had to withstand being unwelcomed in churches. They fought to be included and acknowledged as equal parishioners.
- African American Catholics clung to their Catholicism as a means of comfort and solace from harsh societal realities.
- They consider faith and its institutions vital to their survival.
- The same marginalizing forces that produce a religiously engaged African American community also affect African American Catholics.

Racism and the Church

- On direct questions of racism and the Church, African Americans overwhelmingly do not consider the Church racist.
- African American Catholics do, however, perceive challenges of inclusiveness in the Church.
- They express some dissatisfaction in the areas of emphasizing black saints, promoting black leaders, targeting black vocations, supporting issues like affirmative action, calling attention to problems in Africa and promoting racial inclusiveness.
- About one in four African American Catholics report some form of personal intolerance in their parish, such as being avoided because of their race, the reluctance of others to shake hands and insensitivity and indifference of priests and leaders on issues of race.



Cause for canonization opened for Fr. Augustine Tolton

In a discussion of heroes today, household names like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Harriett Tubman may make our short list, but I doubt that Augustine (Augustus) Tolton would immediately come to mind. I invite you to look at the heroes of our faith and understand that as Black Catholics, we have contributed — and continue to contribute — significantly to our faith.

Although I was a cradle Catholic and brought up in Catholic school, Tolton's name never came up in any of my religion or Theology classes. However, in my own searches I have found his story to be one of persistence and perseverance.

Augustine (Augustus) Tolton was born into slavery on April 1, 1854 in Brush Creek, Missouri. His parents, Peter Paul Tolton and Martha Jane Chisley, wanted a better life for their children. Thus the journey from slavery to freedom began.

The Tolton family re-settled in Quincy, Illinois. It was here that Augustine began his Catholic education and became an altar boy. His dedication



to serving the Lord became the heart of his ministry. An encounter with his parish priest led him to want to become a priest.

Unfortunately, no Seminary in the United States would accept Augustine. On several occasions his application was denied and the return letter stated the seminary was not ready to educate a black for the priesthood. As discouraging as these letters were, Augustine always remembered "the goodness of the Lord" and believed that his desire would come to pass.

Finally, Augustine was admitted to a Pontifical Seminary in Rome where he was educated and ordained a priest for the United States in 1886.

As a priest he served in Quincy and founded a Black Catholic parish Chicago, Illinois. Fr. Tolton died in 1893 at the age of 41.

The Archdiocese of Chicago started his cause for canonization in 2010.

For more information on the cause for Fr. Tolton's Canonization go to: www.toltoncanonization.com/

Give the gift of music this holiday season

A perfect gift for this holiday season—and any season—would be the Black Catholic Ministries Gospel Choir's new CD *Been Good to Me*.

The CD has earned national acclaim, and has been praised on National Black Catholic platforms as a collection that is inclusive of the life of Black Catholics in the United States.

Featuring the 150 voice Black Catholic Ministries Gospel Choir, the project also features some of the best soloists and musicians from Detroit's Black Catholic community.

CDs are \$15.00 each and proceeds benefit the music programs of 15 Parishes in the City of Detroit. To order a copy today, call Black Catholic Ministries at (313) 596-7103.

SAVE THE DATE: The 2012 Black Catholic Ministries Gospel Choir concert will be: Sunday, February 26, 2012 @ 4 p.m.. **See page 6 for details!**





National Black Catholic Congress convenes Congress XI, July `12

The National Black Catholic Congress establishes the national agenda for the evangelization of Black Catholics in the United States. The Congress works to improve the spiritual, mental, and physical conditions of African Americans, and is committed to the freedom and growth of African Americans as full participants in the church and society.

In 1889, Daniel Rudd called together the very first National Black Catholic Congress. This meeting was held in Washington, DC Distinguished men of African descent came from all over the United States to participate in this historic event. President Grover Cleveland invited them to the White House for a meeting. Fr. Augustine Tolton was present and celebrated High Mass.

Today the Congress still convenes every five years and includes workshops, prayer services, Masses and enrichment opportunities for Black Catholics throughout the United States.

The Theme of the 2012 National Black Catholic Congress (July 19-21, 2012) is "Faith Engaged." We know that God invites us to do greater works as we consider the needs of our time. Faith that is engaged recognizes that active disciples in the Church need to be renewed and alienated disciples

need to be reconciled. All are welcome to experience deeper faith in Christ, actively following Him within the fellowship of the Church. How do we raise the consciousness of each generation within the Church to be actively engaged within it? How do we help one another to discover our distinctive vocation (i.e., married life or committed single life; consecrated religious life, diaconate, or priesthood) and remain faithful to it?

As Our economy struggles to recover from high unemployment and rising poverty we need a **faith** that is engaged and addresses practical needs. Faith is a message of hope that will bolster individuals, married couples, and families up when circumstances would break them down. Faith that is engaged also advocates for policies that promote the common good, respecting the dignity of every human being.

We invite you to join the Detroit delegation to the 2012 National Black Catholic Congress (July 19-21) as we engage our faith with Black Catholics from all over the country!

For more information or a registration packet go to: www.aodonline.org/blackcatholics or call (313) 596-7103.

Gesu kicks off celebration of its 90th Anniversary

After 90 years, the parishioners of Gesu parish and school are still singing, "We've come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord."

Fr. Robert Scullin SJ, pastor of Gesu said, "we are excited to celebrate the one for whom our parish is named after: JESUS!"

Gesu was founded in 1921, under an arrangement with the bishop of Detroit that stated that if University of Detroit ever moved from downtown, the Jesuits would form a parish in the area surrounding the university's new site.

Gesu started in a small farmhouse chapel and rapidly saw new growth. The complex started with a school which continued to grow and spark new life in the community and in 1926 the permanent church was built.

Gesu parish and school continues to be a beacon of light to the community in the 6 Mile (McNichols) and Livernois area. True to their beginnings the parish maintains its relationship with University of Detroit Mercy.

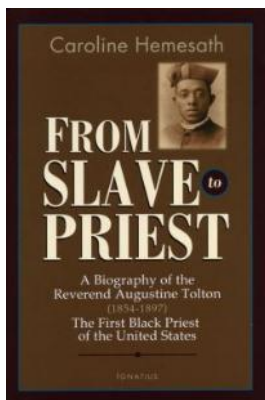
For more information on Gesu's 90th go to: www.gesudetroit.com





John's Black Catholic Books To Read

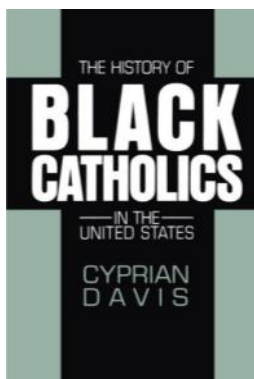
There are so many great books on the market now! I invite you to consider the following books that are on my "Black Catholic Books to Read List." These books tell our story, struggles and triumphs; it is worth your time and money (or use of your library card) to read them.



From Slave to Priest by Caroline Hemesath is the biography of Fr. Augustine Tolton the first Black Priest of the United States.

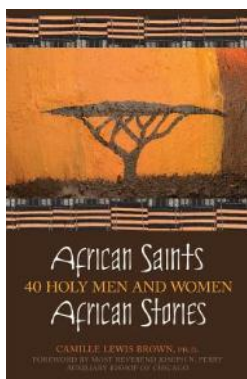
This book is an inspiring story of faith and of one man's desire to serve God, even when so many doors of the Church were closed to him.

Fr. Tolton gave his all to ensure that blacks had a home in the Catholic Church even at the cost of his untimely death at 43. *This is a JT must read!*



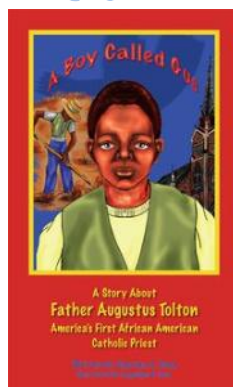
Can classics ever become old? In Fr. Cyprian Davis' **History of Black Catholics in the United States**, Fr. Davis tells the story of Black Catholics in the U.S. over the past 300 years, while painting a historical image of Black Catholics in general.

Fr. Davis has proven himself as the foremost historian of Black Catholics in the United States.

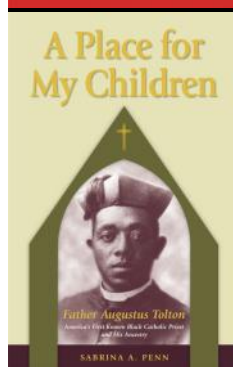


African Saints, African Stories: 40 Holy Men and Women by Camille Lewis Brown is a wonderful book that tells the stories of Black Saints. We often wonder about, but never study, our Black Saints. This is a great book to learn how God's mercy and grace has worked throughout the ages!

Kid friendly!

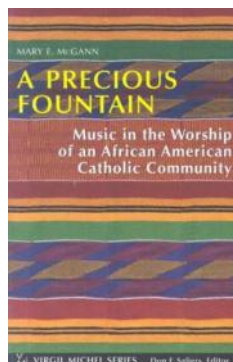


Sabrina Penn, a relative of the late Fr. Augustus Tolton recently penned a children's book **A Boy Called Gus**, to make sure that even a youngest generation has an opportunity to know the story of Fr. Augustus Tolton.



Sabrina Penn also has written a biography on the life of Fr. Augustus Tolton, called **A Place for My Children**.

This book not only tells Fr. Tolton's story from both a historical perspective, and with regard to his ancestry.



A Precious Fountain by Mary McGann is a fun read. It is Mary's account of her own transformation and experience in a Black Catholic Community, and the music that not only made her heart sing, but also brought healing and peace to the community through the years.



Uncommon Faithfulness is a collection of essays edited by noted theologian M. Shawn Copeland. The essays tell the story of the Black Catholic experience in the Church, the contributions we made, and the challenges we faced.

Features our own: Fr. Clarence Williams, CPPS.

All of these books are available at The Catholic Bookstore 313-962-4490, or visiting <http://spiritofbooks.com/cbs>



Archdiocese of Detroit

**BLACK CATHOLIC
MINISTRIES**

presents

"In Total Praise"
A CELEBRATION OF SONG AND DANCE

FEATURING:

The Black Catholic Ministries Gospel Choir
The Urban Parish Youth Choir
Corpus Christi Liturgical Dancers
Dearing Detroit Dance
and The Iyawo Dance Theatre



FELLOWSHIP CHAPEL
7707 W. Outer Drive
Detroit, MI 48235

**SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 26, 2012**

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Tickets:

Adults: \$10.00 / Youth (ages 5-17): \$5.00



For more information call: John Thorne (313) 596-7103

Reservations & payments available online at: www.aodonline.org/bcmgc

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Archdiocese of Detroit

TICKET RESERVATION FORM

"In Total Praise"
A CELEBRATION OF SONG AND DANCE

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

NUMBER OF YOUTH TICKETS _____ X \$5.00 (AGES 5-17)

NUMBER OF ADULT TICKETS _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

MAIL TO:

Black Catholic
Ministries
305 Michigan Ave.
Detroit, MI 48226

Reserve and Pay Online or Make Check Payable to: Archdiocese of Detroit