

Inside This Issue

- Food for the Spirit at NCCYM . 2
- Now Is the Time 2
- Our Culture, Our Heritage 3
- Vocation Stories: Be Yourself! . 3
- February is Black History Month 3
- Calendar of Events 4



The Office of Black Catholic Ministries

OBCM identifies and fosters the rich diversity of the Black Catholic community, particularly in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Our mission is to evangelize, highlight, enhance and celebrate the contributions of the Black Catholic community as it shares its gifts in the Church and society.

Proudly Supported By



What a Blessing! By Dr. Ansel Augustine

At 6:25 AM on Monday, January 12, my phone rang. The voice on the line said, "Sorry to call you so early, bro, but I have some news for you."

In my raspy morning voice, I replied, "What's going on Fr. Ferd?"

"I'm going to be appointed the new Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans," said Fr. Fernand Cheri.

His response had me thinking I was still dreaming! I was ecstatic! That morning, "everyone and their momma" was calling and texting to confirm if what they were hearing about Fr. Ferd was true. Later, when I arrived at the Chancery for the press conference announcement, Archbishop Aymond greeted me with a big smile on his face knowing that I heard the news.

This is truly an exciting time in our archdiocese! Bishop-Elect Cheri will be an asset to not only Black Catholics, but to the archdiocese as a whole. He is passionate about vocations, the welfare of his brother priests and education of the laity, just to name a few. His ordination on **March 23 at St. Louis Cathedral (2pm)** will be a joyous celebration for our community. Now, it's up to us to step up and support him in his new role. With this year marking the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Bishop Harold Perry, the first African-American Bishop, this is truly an affirmation that God is still in the "blessing business!"

Pictured: Bishop-Elect Fernand Cheri, Archbishop Gregory Aymond and Ansel Augustine.



Brother & Friend: Bishop-Elect Fernand Cheri

By Friar Benedict Gerard Kelley, FBQ

At a retreat in St. Louis, MO for the St. Alphonsus Catholic Church choir, I encountered a little man clad in a brown robe who gave a wonderful presentation on the history of negro spirituals and contemporary gospel music. It was clear that this man possessed a passion for Black Catholic spirituality. It was here that Friar Fernand Cheri and I became friends. Over the years, he has given me much wisdom and insight. Ultimately, it was Friar Cheri who encouraged me to seek the Lord in discerning His will for my life and vocation. As a result of Friar Cheri's great witness to the Franciscan life, I have joined the ranks of many who follow the poor man from Assisi. It is with great peace and joy that I commit to pray for and support my brother and friend Bishop-Elect Fernand Joseph Cheri, OFM. Hallelujah!

Brother & Friend

Friar Benedict Gerard Kelley
and Bishop-Elect Fernand Cheri



Food for the Spirit at the NCCYM

By Vanessa C. Matthews and Veronica Davis

The National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry was held in San Antonio, Texas this past December 2014. As first-time conference attendees, we knew this was going to be a special experience from the opening Mass, which included English and Spanish elements in the praise and worship. It was wonderful to see so many different cultures and age groups celebrating their faith and their ministry to young people.

Our souls were really fed by the workshops and the participants. We were inspired by the way attendees shared their successes and challenges in their ministry and their own personal journeys to Christ. It broke down all territorial and cultural boundaries. We shared new and innovative ways to reach our young church through non-traditional forms of worship like contemporary music, spoken word, drama and interpretive dance, just to name a few. We look forward to attending future workshops to feed our spirits and those of the youth to whom we minister!

Vanessa Matthews is a DRE at St. Mary of the Angels. Veronica Davis is a DRE at St. James Major

Now is the Time

By Matthew J. Broussard and Kionne Lear

“Now is the time.” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. used this phrase repeatedly in his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. His words were a call of hope and a call to action. As young adult African-American Catholics, there is no better time than today to answer God’s call to discipleship.

It’s easy for us to lose hope when we hear about the senseless daily violence that plagues our communities - the deaths of unarmed black men and police officers while on duty; the recent terrorist atrocities in Nigeria, France and the Middle East. However, we must reject hopelessness and answer God’s call to change the world around us, share the Gospel and spread Jesus’ love.

We believe that God is doing “a new thing” in the young adults of the Archdiocese of New Orleans that will manifest itself in our Parishes, our communities, our families, our marriages and most importantly, in our hearts. Now is the time!

Matthew Broussard is a parishioner at St. Maria Goretti Parish. Kionne Lear is a Registered Nurse at Children’s Hospital and a parishioner at St. Peter Claver. They are members of the OBCM Young Adult Outreach team.



Our Culture, Our Heritage

The Original Pinettes Brass Band

This year, when you’re on the parade routes, be on the look-out for the world’s only all-female brass band – the Original Pinettes Brass Band. Founded by Jeffrey Herbert in 1991 at St. Mary’s Academy, the band is comprised of St. Mary’s Academy alumni and others from various public and Catholic schools in New Orleans. The band’s unique style of music is synonymous with New Orleans’ second line tradition. They have presented their unique New Orleans sound across the country and abroad in Turkey and Switzerland. The Original Pinettes have also been recognized both locally and nationally for their spirited and talented musical contributions. Learn more about the Original Pinettes Brass Band at www.originalpinettesbrassband.com or find them on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter! *Several of the band members serve in music ministries at Black Catholic Parishes throughout the archdiocese!*

Institute for Black Catholic Studies Summer 2015

Masters Degree in Pastoral Theology | Continuing Education Units in Youth/Young Adult Ministry | Catechesis | Leadership | Eldership Retreat

June 29 – July 17, 2015

Xavier University of Louisiana, 1 Drexel Drive, New Orleans, LA 70125

For more information contact the IBCS office, 504 520-7691, ibcs@xula.edu



Be Yourself!

By Megan Graves



There are so many experiences that led me to a discernment of a religious life, but when it comes down to it, there was something pulling at my heart that I needed to explore.

The challenges that I face by being young, black and religious are never easy. There are days when I do question my calling, but I know that it is a healthy questioning. I never know what God has in store for me, but I keep hope in the fact that providence can provide, providence did provide, and providence will provide.

For youth and young adults who are thinking about their calling in life, my advice would be to get to know you! Understand your history and your roots, both culturally and historically. Keep an open heart to where God is calling you. Also, don't think that you have to change who you are when you discover your call to holiness whether that is a religious life, lay life or married life. Just be yourself!

I have always received so much love and support from so many, but I still ask them to "Just gimme some more love!" as I continue on my path of discernment.

Megan Graves is a first year candidate with the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters. She is a recent graduate of Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois with a B.A. in Black World Studies and Pastoral Ministry. She is currently serving as a Campus Minister and Religious Studies Teacher at Dominican High school in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin. She is an active member in the Milwaukee community, especially in her Graduate Chapter of Alpha Kappa alpha, Sorority, Incorporated.

February is Black History Month

Check out some of these Black History sites in New Orleans!

Congo Square Records from the early 1700s document that freed and enslaved Africans gathered here to share and perpetuate traditional African cultural practices. Visit the square located just outside the French Quarter in Louis Armstrong Park. Black musicians and artists continue to gather here. *700 North Rampart Street, New Orleans.*

Backstreet Cultural Museum Just a few blocks from Congo Square, the Backstreet Cultural Museum pays tribute to Mardi Gras Indians, Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs, and other important African-American cultural institutions in New Orleans. *1116 Henriette Delille Street, New Orleans.*

Homer Plessy Memorial In 1892, the Citizens Committee, a group of black New Orleans community leaders, decided to engage in direct action against the state's "white only" railcars. Homer Plessy, a member of the group, was arrested for defying the law, which led to the U.S. Supreme Court case Plessy v. Ferguson. A memorial to Plessy's brave action has been erected by the train tracks where he boarded. *Corner of Royal and Press streets, New Orleans.*

Tomb of the Unknown Slave Tomb of the Unknown Slave is a memorial built at St. Augustine Church in the heart of the Treme neighborhood. St. Augustine was built by free Africans in the 1840s. *1210 Gov. Nicholls Street, New Orleans.*



HABARI GANI # 7

APRIL 17 - 19, 2015

WILLIAM J KELLY SVD RETREAT CENTER
510 N 2ND ST
BAY SAINT LOUIS, MS 39520

Cost: \$140/person
The money is due to the CYO office by March 27, 2015

The Habari Gani retreat is designed:

- To build strong leadership skills that can be used both in the community and in church.
- To instill and build up self-esteem and self worth - toward becoming "the best you can be."
- To assist you in defining your purpose in life and the gift you can offer the world.
- To assist you in developing a spirit of self-confidence.
- To reinforce your call as disciples and people of faith.
- To attain all of these goals from a black spiritual perspective.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Ansel J. Augustine
Director
Office of Black Catholic Ministries
Phone: 504-861-6207
Email: aaugustine@arch-no.org



Sunday **MARCH 1** 2015

Mass Against Violence & Racism

St. Augustine Catholic Church | 1210 Governor Nicholls St. NOLA



Mass starts at 3:00 p.m.

SPONSORED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS
CYO YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY OFFICE AND
THE OFFICE OF BLACK CATHOLIC MINISTRIES

For More Information, please contact The Office of Black Catholic Ministries at
504-861-6207 or bcatholics@arch-no.org



ARCHDIOCESE OF
NEW ORLEANS

Office of Black Catholic Ministries

7887 Walmsley Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70125-3496



Upcoming Events with the Office of Black Catholic Ministries

For more information or to get involved, contact us at
(504) 861-6207 or bcatholics@arch-no.org

February 28, 2015: Sankofa: Lenten Day Of Reflection

St. Mary's Academy, New Orleans, LA

March 1, 2015: Mass Against Violence

St. Augustine Church, New Orleans, LA
3pm ALL ARE WELCOME

March 23, 2015: Ordination of Bishop-Elect Fernand Cheri

St. Louise Cathedral, New Orleans, 2pm

April 17-19, 2015: Habari Gani #7

High School Leadership Retreat
William J Kelly SVD Retreat Center, Bay Saint Louis, MS

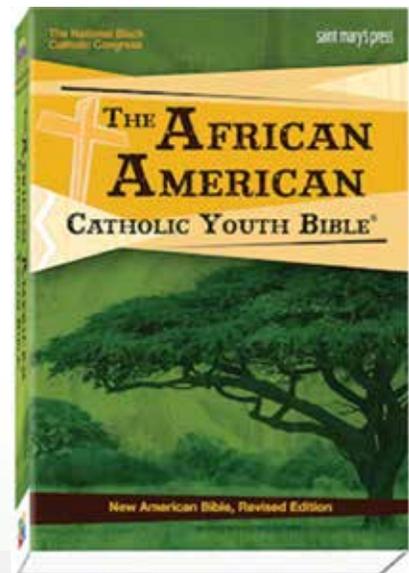
May 8-9, 2015: St. Martin de Porres Catholic Conference

Baton Rouge, LA

June 23-27, 2015: Archbishop Lyke Conference

"I am Black, I am Catholic, I am Here"
Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX
www.lykeconference.com.

Now Available!



With contributions by Dr. Ansel Augustine
and Fr. Maurice Nutt C.Ss.R. of the
Archdiocese of New Orleans
The bible can be ordered at www.smp.org