

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SEMINARY

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

URBAN PASTORAL CARE OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN CATHOLICS

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On April 21, 1888, Bishop Henry Northrop of Charleston, South Carolina, received a letter from the trustees of St. Peter's Parish Church in Charleston. The letter began:

As faithful children of God and humble and devoted members of the Roman Catholic Church who are desiring to do at all times that which is right and most pleasing in the sight of God our Savior and which only can be done by a strict compliance with the law of His most holy Church, which he has commanded us to hear. We the undersigned members of St. Peter's (sic) Church and representatives of the said Congregation, having heard the reading of the "Circular Letter" which by your authority was read in the several Catholic Churches on Sunday last in which you advise and request the white Catholics of the respective churches to attend services and confine themselves to their own parish churches in the future and thus avoid any interference with the congregation of St. Peter's.1...

St. Peter's Church was the Black parish in the city of Charleston. The letter was signed by the board of trustees, 18 in number, and was written by the secretary of the board, James A. Spencer. The trustees went on to express their concern about the significance of the bishop's ruling, limiting the attendance at St. Peter's to Blacks alone. Did this mean that white Catholics living in the parish of St. Peter's could not attend mass at St. Peter's? Did it mean that the Black Catholics of St. Peter's were no longer able to attend Mass on Sunday at other churches besides St. Peter's no matter what the reason, no matter what their age or infirmity?2

The bishop replied almost two weeks later on May 3. Addressed to James Spencer, the bishop intimated that he did not want to write down anything regarding the matter that was raised. Rather a meeting at the bishop's residence was suggested so that, as the bishop put it, "...we can discuss as brethren should do or as a father (though most unworthy) with his children the very important and absorbing interest in which we all are so much concerned."3

What is most significant about this letter is the revelation that in the southern city of Charleston, a city devastated by the Civil War some 23 years before, there was a parish of Black Catholics with a board of trustees who were articulate enough and self-confident enough to address the bishop regarding diocesan policy and their position as Black Catholics. The trustee system often created problems for the bishops of the United States in the 19th century, but the system also revealed the responsibility and initiative assumed by the laity at times with good reason.4

St. Peter's parish was established in 1867, two years after the Civil War and the end of slavery. Apparently the parishioners were never shy about petitioning the bishop regarding their needs. In 1869, Bishop Patrick Lynch, who was the second bishop of Charleston and the founder of the parish, was petitioned to remove the pastor, a certain Father Folchi, an Italian, because he did not preach well in English.5

James A. Spencer (1849-1911), who wrote the 1888 letter to Bishop Northrop, had been a free Black before the Civil War. As a young man he served as a member of the South Carolina Legislature during Reconstruction for one term.6 Spencer would play a major role in the Black Catholic congresses and would deliver a major address regarding Black parish churches.

At least two parishes for Black Catholics had their origins prior to the Civil War. The first was St. Francis Xavier Church established in Baltimore in 1864 which actually began in the lower chapel of St. Mary's Seminary on Paca Street. There the worshippers were apparently people of color, mostly refugees from Haiti, who arrived in Baltimore in 1793 in the wake of the revolution that rocked that island nation. It is this nucleus of Black Catholics who would in 1857 meet in the chapel of Blessed Peter Claver in the basement of the Jesuit Church of St. Ignatius.7

In 1865, Michael O'Connor, the former bishop of Pittsburgh who five years before had resigned his see and become a Jesuit, founded a church for Black Catholics in Baltimore named St. Francis Xavier where he served as the first pastor. While he was still bishop, Michael O'Connor, had been responsible for beginning the Chapel of the Nativity for Blacks in Pittsburgh as early as 1844. Unfortunately, this first attempt in Pittsburgh at evangelization of Blacks

failed.

On the other hand, in northern Louisiana at the settlement of Isle Brevelle on the Cane River not far from Natchitoches, in the heart of a remarkable community of people of color, the church of St. Augustine was made a parish church in 1856. The church was built by the patriarch of this French-speaking, light-skinned Black community, Augustin Metoyer, in 1829. Metoyer was a son of an enterprising African slave woman and a shrewd French merchant-soldier. This community, which still exists, was before the Civil War a self-contained Catholic community, culturally and economically. Its status as parish community was unique and unusual.⁸

By 1855 in Washington, D.C., a similar phenomenon was to be found as in other urban areas of the time. The Black Catholic population assembled as a separate congregation in the basement of the church. This time it was St. Matthew's Church, the future cathedral parish, and the large Black Catholic congregation in the basement formed Blessed Martin de Porres chapel. At this time, the pastor of the parish, Charles White, began a grammar school for Black children.

Slavery was abolished in the District of Columbia in 1862. With the influx of Blacks into the district, the membership of the Blessed Martin chapel increase overnight. Initially a small brick church and school were constructed. In addition a Sunday School was established for the sake of educating adults to read and write. The Black Catholics of the district laid plans to construct a church on a site located about a mile from the White House.

In the midst of the Civil War a leading Black Catholic layman, Gabriel Coakley, went to the White House and personally approached Abraham Lincoln with petition to hold a festival on the White House lawn, between the White House building and what was then the War Department and is now the Executive Office Building. President Lincoln signed his name giving approval. The festival was held on the 4th of July, 1864. The president and first lady and members of the cabinet were present. Over \$1,000 was raised. Few if any American Catholic parishes have been built with funds raised with the personal help of the president.⁹

The question of pastoral care for African-American Catholics was openly debated after the Civil War. The debate centered about two issues: racial segregation inside the churches or churches segregated by race. In October 1866, a year after the Civil War, the American bishops met in the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, Martin J. Spalding, the archbishop of Baltimore, presided as the apostolic delegate. Spalding was very concerned about the evangelization of the freed slaves. At a special meeting of the bishops, held after the official closing of the council, the question of a national ordinary for the pastoral care of African-American Catholics was discussed. The discussion was bitter, angry and acrimonious. At the suggestion of Spalding, the Roman Curia presented the idea of an ordinary or some other type of ecclesiastical director residing in Baltimore and coordinating the pastoral care of all Blacks throughout the nation. The Curia, in fact, desired that he be a bishop.

Many of the American bishops resisted this notion because they saw it as a threat to their jurisdiction. Some even saw it as a suggestion that little had ever been done for the evangelization of American Blacks, slave or free. The proceedings of this extraordinary session, held on Monday, October 22, are preserved in Latin but were never published or translated.¹⁰ Eventually the proposal was rejected. It was decided that each bishop who had Blacks in his diocese was to be responsible for their pastoral care. Although the bishops went on to seek priests and sisters from Europe to minister to the African-American population, they had effectively neutralized any efficacious means for the evangelization of the freed slaves. Many dioceses simply did not have the resources for this ministry nor the support of the local people or clergy. Much racial animosity against Blacks was still to be found in most segments of American society.

Title X, chapter 4, of the official minutes, entitled "Procuring the Salvation of Blacks," of the Second Plenary Council spelled out the blueprint for pastoral care that the American Church adopted for the rest of the century. Acknowledging that Protestants were very busily working among the freed slaves, it was stated that action concerning ministry to the African Americans cannot be carried out in one and the same way in each diocese and so it was decided to leave the determination of what was best for Blacks in a given locality to the "zeal and prudence" of the Ordinaries.

As a result, according to the decree, if the ordinary should have reached the decision that separate churches would be of greater profit for the salvation of Blacks then they should be constructed. On the contrary, if Blacks are invited to frequent the churches already established, then the Ordinary should take care that this be done so that the Church might not be subjected to any criticism. "For this weighs gravely on our conscience that all who wish might have access to Christ, that all who minister the sacraments be present to those who ask, and that a place be provided in which all who wish might assist at the tremendous sacrifice of the Mass on Sunday and feasts."

Moreover, there was a reminder that the good shepherd is not satisfied simply to look after the sheep within the fold or "even to hold the gate open so that all might enter," but one is to go out and search for the lost sheep and bring it back. It was especially recommended that missions be celebrated for the African Americans. The Council Fathers called for schools and orphanages for the education and shelter of Black children.

"Through the bowels of the mercy of God" priests were begged to devote themselves to this ministry, superiors of religious orders were asked to guide the subjects for this work as aids to the bishops, secular priests were asked to leave everything and give themselves to this apostolate, and especially Europe which was seen to rejoice in an abundance of priests was asked to send men who were moved to work for the salvation of the Blacks.¹¹

Eighteen years later, in 1884, the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore was held. Again the question of pastoral care for African Americans was addressed. With a quick reference to what had been decided at the Second Council almost two decades before and with an allusion to what was so frequently referred to as "accommodating to their capacity and natural disposition" - in the 19th century, latter half, disobliging references were frequently made to the capacity an

natural dispositions of Blacks - "we decree that the bishops should attend with every effort to the construction of churches, schools, orphanages and shelters for the use of Blacks whenever possible."¹²

The bishop is responsible for seeing that a place be provided in a church for Blacks but that "the sacraments be promptly administered to those [Blacks] who ask with no discrimination."¹³ The bishop should also see to it that priests, either secular or regular, be provided for the service of Blacks. Inasmuch as many African Americans are outside "the sheepfold of Christ," the bishop must find workers for the vineyard. Seminarians should be encouraged to volunteer and members of missionary congregations should be invited to take part in this ministry. Finally, the institution of catechists was encouraged.

The same chapter dealt also with Native Americans, and it closed with a mandate that every year at the beginning of Lent a special collection be made to support the missions to Indians and Blacks.¹⁴ To oversee the distribution of the monies a special commission was composed of the archbishop of Baltimore and two bishops, whose dioceses were not requesting funds, plus the assistance of a secretary who was to be a Sulpician. They formed what would become the Commission for the Catholic Missions among the Colored People and the Indians. In time this bureau would be a major source of funding for dioceses with a Black population. These annual reports and the annual applications for funding are now deposited in the archives of the University of Marquette. They are a rich and unexploited source for information regarding the growth of pastoral care for Black Catholics both urban and rural in this country.

Pastoral care, however, is not simply the operation of care givers to a passive recipient. More than any other ethnic group in this country, Blacks have played an active role in their own evangelization. Beginning in 1889, Black Catholics assembled in congresses. The initiative for these congresses came from the Black Catholic community itself, originating with a very unusual layman, Daniel A. Rudd, originally of Bardstown, Kentucky. At the time of the first Black Catholic Congress, he was a newspaper editor in Cincinnati, Ohio. Rudd edited a Black Catholic weekly newspaper; and through its columns he set in motion the organization of the first Black Catholic Congress in Washington, D.C. in 1889 and the second in Cincinnati in 1890. These congresses were not only a celebration of racial consciousness and Black Catholic pride but also a forum to address the needs of the Black Catholic community at the time. Specifically all agreed that schools were needed, particularly trade schools to train Black youths as skilled laborers. They addressed the question of churches along with the issue of education.

At the third Black Catholic Congress held in Philadelphia in 1891, where Archbishop Ryan had just bought a former Protestant church and had it remodeled to become the Church of St. Peter Claver for the Black Catholics of Philadelphia, a young Black politician from Galveston, Texas, named William Edgar Easton delivered a stirring address in which he said:

Although the importance and necessity of establishing churches are apparent the greatest need of Colored Catholics at present, is more schools and better educational facilities for their children, and while these are being secured the building of churches could for a time be stopped, in order that the energies of the people could be devoted solely to the consummation of this great project.

After pointing out the existence of Black colleges and academies established by the various Protestant Churches, Easton called for a Catholic Academy or a college in Texas for Blacks. He ended with the words ...

Let the Catholic Church which has always been first in extending a helping hand to the needy, in raising up the humble and rebuking the proud; the Church that today is so actively engaged in taking the gyves and shackles from the neck and limbs of the poor benighted African; the Church that has a deeper and more sublime breadth of humanity than all other churches combined .. but take the initiative in this great southern work...¹⁵

Easton's attitude was typical of Black Catholics of the time. Although no one else called for a moratorium on the establishment of churches, there was the perception that schools were more of a necessity than churches. Urban pastoral care for Black Catholics at the end of the 19th century and into the 20th meant Catholic education.¹⁶

The issue of parish churches, or what might be called the dilemma of such churches can be described as churches for Blacks versus churches restricted to Blacks. This dilemma, which in some respects has lasted to our own day, was treated directly at the Fourth Black Catholic Congress in 1893 in Chicago. James A. Spencer of Charleston, mentioned before as the secretary of the trustees of St. Peter's Church, delivered a very lengthy address at the Fourth Congress, entitled "The Establishment of Churches for Colored Catholics."

Spencer stressed the need for national parishes along ethnic lines, such as German or Polish churches. Black parishes, he continued, are to be considered as such. He then pointed out the changes and progress that American Blacks had made since the end of the Civil War. Each people have their specific genius. For Blacks the Black parish church was a way of preserving unity. In light of the progress made by the Black community since emancipation, the Black parish church enabled Blacks to display their gifts and abilities.

On the other hand, Spencer pointed out that the establishment of a Black Catholic church should not be the same as creating a segregated church. Taking great pains to show that racial discrimination is contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church and criticizing specifically setting aside a certain area in the churches restricted to Blacks, Spencer reluctantly came to the conclusion that "the establishment of churches for colored Catholics in this age of progress and freedom has proven itself detrimental to the faith as the opportunity is thus offered for discrimination ..."¹⁷ In fact, although Spencer saw the value of all Black parishes, he finally concluded:

... let us for the present, as a preventative [sic] to the growth and encouragement of this church discrimination, be contented with the present number of

churches now in existence for the special use of colored Catholics, and recommend in their stead the establishment of Catholic schools 7le Negro needs every possible avenue of education that can be opened which will aid in making him the equal of every other individual citizen."¹⁸

Racism within the American Catholic Church was the concern of all Black Catholics at the end of the last century and the beginning of this one. This prompted the members of the Third Black Catholic Congress to draw up a questionnaire that was circulated among the American bishops. This questionnaire was directly related to the pastoral experience of Blacks within the respective dioceses. The bishops were asked among other things whether Blacks were discriminated against by any churches in their dioceses. Do Black Catholics have the same "freedom accorded white members" of the Church? Are Black Catholics forced to sit in the gallery or in the rear in any of the churches of the diocese? The bishops were asked whether Blacks were admitted to the Catholic hospitals and were Black students educated in the parochial schools and Catholic colleges. Finally, they were asked who was responsible for these measures if they existed.¹⁹ Over two-thirds of the bishops responded to the questionnaires. At the time there were 82 dioceses and four vicariates. Unfortunately, copies of the responses have not been preserved. Their significance is the importance Blacks placed on the problem of racism.

Writing to Blessed Katherine Drexel, the first Black priest in the history of the United States - that is the first Black priest whom everyone recognized as Black - Augustus Tolton spoke about his own pastoral concerns at St. Monica's Church in Chicago, the first Black Catholic Church in the city.

... I must confess that I have done well here only 7 years and a half. I have together 260 souls to render an account of before God's majesty. There [are] all together 500 souls but they have become like unto the dead limbs on a tree ... because no one had taken care of them. Just Sunday night last I was called to the death bed of a colored woman who had been 9 years away from her duties because she was hurled out of a white church and even cursed at by the Irish members. Very bad indeed!²⁰

The racial animosity at the end of the last century, the bitter feelings between whites and Blacks, the firm belief in Black inferiority, all of this was reflected in the Catholic Church and its cultural milieu in this country at the turn of the century. All of this is likewise part of the history of pastoral care in the United States. It is precisely this lack of pastoral care for American Blacks that prompted a curt, critical correction from the Roman Curia. The Prefect of the Congregation of the Propaganda, Girolamo Cardinal Gotti, O.D.C., wrote to the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Diomedeo Falconio, in January 1904 with instructions to inform Cardinal Gibbons, the archbishop of Baltimore, so that he might make its contents known to the American bishops.

Your Excellency,

It has been referred to this Sacred Congregation that in some of the dioceses of the United States the condition of the Catholic negroes, not only in respect to the other faithful but also in respect to their pastors and bishops, is very humiliating and entirely different from that of the whites. As this is not in conformity with the spirit of Christianity which proclaims the equality of all men before God that equality which foment charity, and tends to the increase of Religion by multiplying the number of conversions, I ask your Excellency to call the attention of His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons to this matter...

One bishop who took very seriously the pastoral care of Blacks was a marvelously dear-sighted and open-minded Southern prelate who was originally born in Holland. Francis August Anthony Janssens was 45 when he was moved from the See of Natchez in Mississippi to New Orleans in 1888.

Janssens became convinced that there had been a steady leakage of Black Catholics from the Church since the Civil War. Janssens was also convinced that as long as Blacks remained as parishoners with whites there would be no opportunity for them to share in the normal activities of parish life. Blacks and white had traditionally attended the same churches in Louisiana, but Blacks were often forced to sit in segregated areas and to receive communion last. Blacks were also prohibited from belonging to parish organizations or to participate in the choir. Janssens' remedy for this was the creation of national parishes for Blacks, leaving them the freedom, however, to continue to belong to the territorial parishes.

The main opposition to his plan came from the French clergy in the diocese and the Free People of Color, the descendants of white men and their Black and Native American concubines. The French clergy in most instances paid little attention to their Black parishoners, still they did not wish to lose them because they were the ones who contributed to the parish. The light-skinned Blacks, Free People of Color, resisted the notion of a Black parish in New Orleans because they had achieved a certain privileged status in the church and even owned pews in their own name; these positions they were unwilling to lose.²⁴

With money from Blessed Katherine Drexel, Archbishop Janssens established St. Katherine's Church for Blacks in New Orleans. He also established the Josephites in the rural area of his diocese.

Janssens died in 1897. The second successor of Janssens, Archbishop James Blenk, S.M., (archbishop 1906-1917) took up the work of establishing Black parishes. There was one important change, however. Janssens had created these parishes as an option for Black Catholics, an opportunity for those who wished to create a worship- ping community without any constraint. They retained, however, the right to remain in the territorial parish. This situation changed under Archbishop Blenk. He created many Black parishes both in the rural areas and in New Orleans, but by 1915 Blacks were practically forced to belong to these parishes.

The formation of all-Black parishes took place not only in Louisiana and other places in the South but also in northern cities, especially as more and more Blacks abandoned the South in the wake of discrimination and racial violence at the beginning of the century. Many of these parishes were guided by extraordinary pastors, who were often very independent, very resourceful, not very conventional, and inclined at times to be rather paternalistic. Often the object themselves of the same racial prejudice that was imposed against Blacks, white pastors in Black parishes had to learn to be self-reliant. These were

men like William Markoe, S.J. of St. Elizabeth's Parish in St. Louis, Monsignor Alonzo J. Olds of St. Augustine in Washington, D.C.; and Pierre LeBeau, S.S.J. of Louisiana.²⁵

One such parish and pastor was Father J.R. Matthews of St. Cyprian's Church in the center of Washington, D.C. on capital hill. Founded in 1893, with a church constructed with contributions from the Black parishoners themselves, St. Cyprian's Parish in 1915 numbered about 3,000 people. Along with the regular parish societies of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Name, there were 11 benefit and aid societies--such as the Knights of St. Augustine, Knights of St. Vincent, Knights of St. Cyprian, etc. These societies provided mutual aid for sickness benefits and burial fees.²⁶ The pastor took charge of the monies. There was a night school attached to the parish for adults to learn basic reading and writing skills, a parochial school with almost 400 students conducted by the Oblate Sisters of Providence, which was free of charge for parish members, a Sunday School for religious instruction for the children, and, a choir.²⁷

St. Cyprian's was a well organized Black parish with a very competent pastor. Similar organizations were found in many urban parishes. Further detailed research is needed to give a more complete picture of the pastoral urban landscape in the '30s, '40s and '50s. Future research will probably reveal that an enormous effort was made in the northern cities to provide a thriving parish with a diversity of services. Most of this would depend upon the competence and energy of the pastor who often enough would have a lengthy period of service in the Black community.

Today the urban pastoral scene for Black Catholics has changed considerably. With the passage of the Civil Rights Bills in the 1960s and the ending of legal sanctioned segregation, many dioceses did away with Black churches. In some places the change was immediate; in others it was done more gradually. In almost all instances there was the suppression of the Black parish with the expectation that the Black members would move into the white parish. In almost all instances this meant the suppression of a vital, active faith community with a history of worship and activities centered in the church. In almost all instances the move of Blacks into the white church meant the submergence of this community and a gradual loss of a sense of corporate identity. For some this also meant a loss of identity as Catholics. The white parish too often neither wanted, nor welcomed, nor accepted the Black Catholic community.

With the end of neighborhood segregation patterns, many white inhabitants abandoned older, stable neighborhoods in the city and moved to the suburbs. These areas were peopled by Blacks in most instances, most of whom were stable families. As time went on, the stable Black neighborhoods became unstable, unstructured neighborhoods. This meant that the large, imposing churches erected by diverse ethnic groups lost their members as the second and third generation moved away. The numbers shrank, the cultural milieu changed, but the real estate remained the same. This did not mean that the parishes ceased to exist. Many have again become vital, active, resourceful centers of worship and Catholic life. What has changed is the demographics and the economy. As a result many dioceses are in the process of amalgamating parishes and selling off church buildings. At times this has been done without consulting the community itself, without assessment of historical meaning, and without acknowledgment of the relationship of church building to the human environment, the people living next door and across the street.

As mentioned already, the issue of urban pastoral care for Black Catholics has always included the question of schools. The demographics of the Catholic schools shifted also as the neighborhoods changed. The presence of the school took on new meaning. The students became Black and brown for the most part. The number of Catholics significantly diminished. Nevertheless, the value placed on an education that stressed religious ideals and discipline along with academic excellence remains of paramount importance to Blacks as it did to the children of immigrants. Parochial schools left a profound imprint on American Catholicism. They are doing the same for the Black Catholic community. According to a recent article in *The New York Times*, 40 percent more Black Catholics graduate from college than other Black Americans. The survey taken by two professors of the City University of New York showed that "black Catholics are more likely than all Americans to complete high school and college." The article went on to say that "regardless of their religion, many [Black] families who want to overcome the problems of poverty and to integrate themselves into mainstream America enroll their children in Catholic Schools..." The article concludes by pointing out that Catholic schools do "expect and reward academic diligence and personal development."²⁸

Where the Catholic parish and the Catholic schools have remained in the central cities of our country, they have become what the Church must always be a beacon of hope and a sign of peace. Still the Church is more than stones and mortar; the school more than desks, chairs and concrete. The Church is a people; a parish congregation is the living member of the Body of Christ. Today in our cities the Church is African American, Hispanic or other minority groups. Today in our cities the Body of Christ is black and brown instead of white. It is torn and tattered, battered and poor as well as middle class, prosperous and successful. In a sense the Church of the Inner City prefigures the Catholic Church of the 21st Century, a Church that is no longer European or North American, no longer Western or first world, it is a Church that more than ever in its history is truly Catholic in all the majesty of that word.

Footnotes

St. Peter's Trustees to Bishop H. P. Northrop. April 21, 1888, 2-R-11 and 2-R-11 in Josephite Archives, Baltimore, MD.

Ibid.

Northrop to James Spencer and others. May 3, 1888, 2-R1k in Josephite Archives, Baltimore, MD.

Patrick W. Carey, *People, Priests, and Prelates. Ecclesiastical Democracy and the Tensions of Trusteeship*. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987).

Richard C. Madden, *Catholics in South Carolina. A Record*. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 104-105.

The Reconstruction legislature of South Carolina was exceptional in many ways. See George Brown Tindall, *South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900*. (Columbia University of South Carolina Press, 1952), 8-10 and Thomas Holt, *Black Over White: Negro Political Leadership in South Carolina during Reconstruction*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974).

In 1855, the Black Catholic community, about 600 people, worshipped in St. Frances' chapel with the Oblate Sisters of Providence on Richmond Street. See

The Metropolitan Catholic Almanac and Laity's Directory in 1855. (Baltimore: Lucas Brothers, 1855), 63.

See Gary Mills, *The Forgotten People: Cane River's Creoles of Color*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 153.

John P. Muffler, "This Far by Faith: A History of St. Augustine's, the Mother Church for Black Catholics in the Nation's Capital" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1989), 21-24.

Minutes of the Extraordinary Session, 39A-D5 in the Archdiocese of Baltimore Archives.

Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis II, in *Ecclesia Metropolitana Baltimorensis... Acta et Decreta*. "Titulus X. De Salute Animarum efficacius Promovenda. Caput IV, De Nigrorum Salute Procranda." Sections 483491. (Baltimore: John Murphy Publishers, 1868), 243-247.

Not to be overlooked are the religious communities that contributed to the ministry of Blacks. Chief among these were the Mill Hill Fathers from Great Britain in 1871, who separated from the parent body in 1893 and became known as the Josephites. The Holy Ghost Fathers or Spiritans arrived in the United States in 1872. Although not exclusively for ministry to Blacks, this ministry was one of its main apostolates. The Society of African Missions came to this country in 1905 to take over the African-American missions in the diocese of Savannah. The Society of the Divine Word arrived in the United States in 1897 and began work among Blacks in Mississippi in 1905. None of these congregations began work in urban areas with the exception of the Josephites who took over St. Francis Xavier Church in Baltimore shortly after arrival in 1871.

Acta et Decreta Concilii Plenarii Baltimorensis Tertii. A.D. MDCCCLXXIV. "Titulus III. De Zelo Animarum. Caput II. De Cura Pastoralis pro Hominibus Nigris et Indis" Sections 237-240. (Baltimore: John Murphy and Co., 1886), 133-135.

The text reads:

Allis autem in locis volumus ut non solum opportunus et idoneus locus in ecclesia communi provideatur, ac petentibus illis, nullo habito discrimine, sacramenta alacriter ministrentur ...

We read this to mean that Blacks would be provided a segregated place in a parish church (in ecclesia communi) but in no way is partiality to be shown in distributing the sacraments.

In fact, it was a little more complicated than that. The collection was to be divided between the Society of the Propagation of the Faith and Indians and Blacks. This arrangement did not last. See Section 243 of Chapter 11, Title VIII of the Decrees of the Third Plenary Council, pp. 135-36.

Three Catholic Afro-American Congresses. (Cincinnati: The American Catholic Tribune, 1893 reprinted New York: Arno Press, 1978), 146-48. Easton was from Galveston where he was a protegee of Norris Wright Cuney, a Black Republican political boss. Easton was a convert and a parishioner of Holy Rosary Church, a Black parish, begun by Bishop Nicholas Gallagher in 1886. Gallagher took a lively interest in the Black community.

Black sisters played a leading role in the area of African-American education. Even before the Civil War, two religious communities of Black women, the Oblate Sisters of Providence, founded in Baltimore in 1829, and the Sisters of the Holy Family, founded in New Orleans in 1842, began teaching Black youth and in some instances Black adults. The third congregation of Black religious, the Franciscan Handmaids of Mary, was founded in 1916 in Savannah, Georgia, and later moved to Harlem in New York City. They too taught in the schools and provided day care for pre-school children.

James A. Spencer, "Catholic Colored Churches," *St. Joseph's Advocate*, 12 (1894): 630- 634. Quotation taken from page 633.

Ibid. 634.

See Cyprian Davis, *The History of Black Catholics in the United States* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 190-91. A copy of this questionnaire is found in the Vatican Archives in a letter of Robert N. Wood, a member of the Black Catholic Congresses to Archbishop, Satolli, the first Apostolic Delegate to the United States, see *Del. Ap. U.S.A., XIII (Societ6) no. 8, Congresso dei Cattolici di Colore* (1893-94).

Augustus Tolton to Katherine Drexel, May 12, 1891. Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Archives, Bensalem, Pennsylvania. Blessed Katherine Drexel (1858-1955) founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People in 1891. Katherine Drexel used her inheritance to fund many missions and projects in the African-American community both in cities and rural areas.

See Cardinal Gotti to Archbishop Diomedo Falconio, January 18, 1904. *Del. ap. U.S.A., 11, no. 60b, Condizione dei negri, 1904* in the Vatican Archives. See Davis, *History*, 195.

See Dolores Egger Labbe, *Jim Crow Comes to Church* (New York: Arno Press, 1978).

Ibid. 18, 40.

Ibid. 49-50.

Markoe was pastor of St. Elizabeth's Church in St. Louis from 1927-1941. Olda was pastor of St. Augustine's Church in Washington, D. C. from 1919 to 1957. LeBeau was the first Josephite to establish a mission in Louisiana. He arrived in Petite Prairie in 1897 and worked there until he went to New Orleans to the newly established St. Dominic's Church, where he died in 1916.

It might be noted that the Knights of Peter Claver were not established at St. Cyprian's. Founded in 1909 in Mobile, Alabama by several Josephite priests, the Knights of Peter Claver were to be a Black counterpart of the Knights of Columbus, and they were to provide Black men with fraternal support and insurance benefits. A ladies auxiliary was established in 1922.

History of St. Cyprian's parish and sketch of the patron saint, BCIM, Series, 7/9, Box 1, folder 1. J. R. Matthews to Father Stickney, chancellor, September 20, 1915, BCIM, Series 7/9, Box 1, Folder 1. Marquette University Archives, Bureau of Negro and Indian Missions.

The New York Times. September 14, 1991, editorial page.