

Archdiocese of Louisville African American Catholic Five-Year Pastoral Plan of Action



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November 3, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

May God bless you!

This document details the Archdiocese of Louisville's African American Catholic Five-Year Pastoral Plan of Action. This plan was developed by the archdiocesan delegates who attended the XII National Black Catholic Congress and the Archdiocesan African American Catholic Advisory Council. It flows from the National African American Catholic Plan of Action as well as the Archdiocese of Louisville's strategic planning efforts.

This plan will provide direction for the next five years and will align archdiocesan initiatives with the national vision of responding to the needs of Catholics from the African Diaspora. The initiatives reflected in this plan also will be informed by the U.S. Bishops' letter on racism, which will be released later this year.

Let us pray together for a rich harvest in the priorities established in this plan: spirituality, leadership, vocations, social justice, outreach, youth ministry, and catechesis.

I am grateful to all who participated in this planning process. As we seek to act justly, love goodness, and walk humbly with our God, let us seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our efforts to serve well our African American brothers and sisters who have such a rich heritage of faith in our Archdiocese.

Sincerely yours in our Lord,

Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D.
Archbishop of Louisville

Historical Perspective

The first Catholics came into Kentucky among the earliest settlers. In 1785, larger groups, or “leagues,” of Catholic families arrived from Baltimore with their enslaved African Americans who practiced the Catholic faith. African American Catholics have always been a part of the Archdiocese of Louisville. Mr. Steve Crump states in his documentary presented in June 2018, “Facing an Uncomfortable Truth”, that African American Catholics helped build some of the oldest churches in the archdiocese with contributions made by Kentucky's early African American Catholics dating as far back as the 18th century. When we look at the early history of the Dioceses (arch) from 1700-1800, the largest presence of African American Catholics was located in Maryland, Louisiana and Kentucky.

In 1987, Black Catholics and those who minister in the Church, gathered in Washington, DC for the first Black Catholic Congress in many years, which was established in 1889 by Daniel Rudd, a native of Bardstown, KY. This gathering provided Black Catholics the opportunity to do what Fr. Cyprian Davis, OSB spoke of in his 1990 ground breaking book *The History of Black Catholics in the United States*, allowing Black Catholics to embrace their past to shape their future. Today, the National Black Catholic Congress XII's Pastoral Plan of Action continues to set an agenda for the Church, and our parishes, with a renewed and new understanding that “The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me: Act justly, love goodness, and walk humbly with your God”. *Luke 4:18; Micah 6:8*. It is with this call that we invite your commitment to the work of the Archdiocese of Louisville's African American Catholic Five-Year Pastoral Plan of Action.

Priority I: Spirituality & Saints

It is required and necessary that African American Catholics develop opportunities to remember African traditions that forged a Black spirituality that incorporates cultural symbols, language and experiences of the lives of Black Saints. This should be accomplished by initiating liturgies and Scripture studies from an Africentric perspective for all members of the worshipping community and by promoting the invitation for Black families, women, men and children to become engaged in all aspects of church ministry that will authentically celebrate and nurture the virtues and spirituality of those who lived lives that were hallmarks of social justice while being committed to their spiritual and faith journeys.

Objective 1.1 Develop and implement an ongoing process to enable African Americans to enhance their Africentric Spirituality.

Action Step: 1.1.1 Provide opportunities for African American parishes to foster Africentric spirituality.

Beginning: August 2018

Review: April 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Office of Faith Formation

Action Step: 1.1.2 Develop, promote and encourage regions and the local church to foster Africentric family spirituality.

Beginning: April 2018

Review: April 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Family Ministries Office

Action Step: 1.1.3 Identify and promote Congress materials and resources to enhance Africentric spirituality for parishes.

Beginning: May 2019

Review: May 2021

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Objective 1.2 Create opportunities to enhance an awareness of Black Saints in the life of the church.

Action Step: 1.2.1 Provide ongoing experiences to educate African American Catholics about Black Saints

Beginning: November 2019

Review: September 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Office of Faith Formation

Action Step: 1.2.2 Provide resources by African American Catholic Ministries to enhance the knowledge of catechists in Black Saints.

Beginning: May 2019

Review: May 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Action Step: 1.2.3 Collaborate with the National Black Catholic Congress office to establish an annual collection to support the canonization of Black Catholic women and men.

Beginning: September 2019

Review: September 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Priority II: Leadership

The future of the Catholic Church requires the development and nurturing of African Americans in positions of leadership that will enrich the Church in ministry that is inclusive, equitable and welcoming of the unique gifts of African American Catholics. Our history as a Church has excluded African American leadership. Nonetheless, over the 200+ years of United States history African American Catholic leadership emerged. Today the Church's future demands that the Church create opportunities to engage and rise up African American leaders for African American communities and for the larger Church.

Objective 2.1 Identify, call forth, affirm, and celebrate lay leadership as essential in fostering full stewardship.

Action Step: 2.1.1 Continue providing leadership development days by African American Catholic Ministries to foster ongoing enrichment.

Beginning: June 2018

Review: April 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Parish Leadership Development

Action Step: 2.1.2 Continue identifying leaders in African American parishes to respond to the future needs of a vibrant parish.

Beginning: June 2018

Review: April 2021

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Parishes with an African American population

Action Step: 2.1.3 Collaborate with other archdiocesan agencies to provide leadership training on a local and regional level for those responsible for implementing the National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan.

Beginning: September 2019

Review: April 2021

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Parish Leadership Development;
Office of Faith Formation;
Office of Youth & Young Adults

Action Step: 2.1.4 Develop an Africentric mentoring component in every aspect of parish life.

Beginning: April 2019

Review: April 2020

Completion: April 2021

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Office of Faith Formation

Action Step: 2.1.5 Continue calling forth, acknowledging and celebrating African American leaders on an annual basis within parishes and the archdiocese.

Beginning: March 2019

Review: April 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Communications Office

Objective 2.2 Create opportunities to develop current leaders and invite new persons to leadership positions in lay ecclesial ministry.

Action Step: 2.2.1 Enhance ministry leadership skill talent of African American Catholics in order for them to be gainfully employed on the diocesan level.

Beginning: September 2019

Review: April 2021

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Parish Leadership Development

Priority III: Vocations

Today's call to get in the game is tougher to answer than in years gone by. The call to vocations in the Black community must be a time of deep prayer, listening to God and reflecting on personal blessings and on how God carried us through the rough times of our lives only to bring us to moments of sheer joy and accomplishments. The fears, anguish and disappointments within the Church today invites each Catholic to place his or her faith in the power of God and to be open unconditionally to how to answer God's call to be of service and ministry in the Church.

Objective 3.1 Promote and support African American Vocations.

Action Step: 3.1.1 Develop a comprehensive African American vocation plan in collaboration with the Vocation Office to increase the presence of African American clergy serving African American parishes.

Beginning: March 2019

Review: April 2020

Completion: June 2021

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Vocation Office

Action Step: 3.1.2 Continue supporting the National Black Catholic Congress office in collaboration with the Joint Conference/Clergy Caucus to establish a national date to promote Black vocations.

Beginning: May 2018

Review: May 2019

Completion: May 2020

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Action Step: 3.1.3 Collaborate with the Vocation Office to provide vocational materials that reflect African American priests, deacons, and religious engaged in parish activities displayed throughout the community and in the schools.

Beginning: February 2018

Review: April 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Vocation Office

Action Step: 3.1.4 Expand the use of social media to promote God's call to ministry on parish and diocesan levels from a multicultural perspective.

Beginning: April 2019

Review: April 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Communications Office

Objective 3.2 African American Catholic Ministries, in collaboration with the Priest Personnel Office, need to develop a program for white clergy and foreign-born clergy assigned to serve in the African American community.

Action Step: 3.2.1 Collaborate with Priest Personnel Office to promote, offer, and support opportunities for seminarians, white clergy, and foreign-born clergy to enhance their understanding of ministering in the African American community.

Beginning: April 2019

Review: April 2020

Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Office of Priest Personnel

Priority IV: Racism/ Social Justice

This year, 2018, we celebrate many of the anniversaries of the Civil Rights Movement and the gains made over the past 50 years. To most adults and to many youths, it seems as if we have taken giant steps back in time with the call for *Black Lives Matter* and the blatant hatred that we witness daily in our nation for Blacks, Latinos, Muslims and immigrants. Our rallying cry must be, “I don’t believe He brought me this far to leave me”. The sin of racism is pervasive in our nation and in our Churches. As Black Catholics, we must speak our truth and believe that our Baptism gives us a prophetic voice that must continue to loudly proclaim, as Black Catholics, we are singular in our purpose to expose the sin of racism in all aspects of the life of the Catholic Church. Infused with the Holy Spirit, we will take our place in the Church and continue to demand that the Church never stop working to be what Christ has called it to be, *One Vine and Many Branches*.

Objective 4.1 Form a local committee to address racism in the church and the larger community

Action Step: 4.1.1 Work with parishes and other archdiocesan agencies to address the sin of racism in all forms.

Beginning: December 2018

Review: December 2020

Completion: December 2022

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Catholic Charities of Louisville;
Family Ministries Office (Pro-Life)

Action Step: 4.1.2 Implement all national efforts developed by the African American Catholic Bishops and USCCB addressing the sin of racism.

Beginning: January 2019

Review: January 2021

Completion: January 2023

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Family Ministries Office (Pro-Life)

Objective 4.2 Consciousness Raising and Outreach

Action Step: 4.2.1 Work with parishes with non-African American Leadership and Archdiocesan personnel to participate in workshops and programs designed to foster knowledge, appreciation and culturally relevant practices and ministries for African Americans.

Beginning: February 2019

Review: May 2020

Completion: May 2022

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Personnel Office; Diaconate Office;
Office of Faith Formation;
Parish Leadership Development

Action Step: 4.2.2 Encourage and support efforts of diocesan structures to assess opportunities for African Americans to serve as employees in leadership positions.

Beginning: January 2019

Review: January 2020

Completion: January 2022

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Personnel Office

Priority V: Youth Ministry

Today, youth across the country are showing us in countless ways that they can and are making a difference. They are answering the call to be of service to their churches, schools and civic communities in ways that are innovative and focused on change. The actions, voices and engagement of youth are necessary to the future of the Catholic Church and in particular to the future of Black Catholics throughout the country. The youth in our parishes desire to become involved in ministries and social justice, and they have answers that are authentic. The Church needs the openness and thoughtful ways of youth to speak their truths and relationships with Christ.

Objective 5.1 Parishes and dioceses address the urgency of disengaged African American youth in their faith.

Action Step: 5.1.1 Strengthen or establish youth ministries that are Africentric and reality based.

Beginning: April 2019

Review: April 2021

Completion: April 2022

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Office of Youth & Young Adults

Action Step: 5.1.2 Expand the use of social media to promote and invite youth to programs that affirm who they are and whose they are.

Beginning: January 2019

Review: April 2020

Completion: May 2021

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Office of Youth & Young Adults;
Communications Office

Action Step: 5.1.3 Utilize existing cultural/leadership programs and experiences as a means of developing our youth (such as Kujenga Viongozi Leadership Process, Viongozi Leadership Program, and Thea Bowman).

Beginning: July 2018
Review: April 2021
Completion: Ongoing

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries
Consultation: Office of Faith Formation;
Office of Youth & Young Adults

Action Step: 5.1.4 Continue providing local and regional Africentric opportunities to develop African American Youth.

Beginning: August 2018
Review: April 2021
Completion: April 2022

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Action Step: 5.1.5 Collaborate with the National Black Catholic Congress Office, National African American Catholic Youth Ministry Network and National Association Black Catholic Administrators and consult with the Office of Youth and Young Adults to convene an African American Youth Congress every three years.

Beginning: June 2019
Review: April 2021
Completion: April 2023

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries
Consultation: Office of Youth & Young Adults

Priority VI: Catechesis

The Church must gather those who are hungry for spiritual grounding in a time when everywhere we turn there is little hope. We must tell the stories of how the Church in Black parishes throughout the nation has been steeped in serving Black communities with teachings and celebrations that provided hope and education to African Americans, many of whom today carry and pass on the rich legacies of Black religious and lay who were committed to a deep and abiding faith and spirituality. We must reach back and become centered in African traditions that will link our past with today's new modes of learning to become engaged in our faith.

Objective 6.1 Develop and promote a comprehensive Africentric Lifelong Formation and Education Program.

Action Step: 6.1.1 Collaborate with the Institute for Black Catholic Studies (IBCS) at Xavier University in New Orleans, LA to develop formation resources to be used in our parishes.

Beginning: February 2019

Review: April 2021

Completion: April 2022

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Office of Youth & Young Adults;
Office of Faith Formation

Action Step: 6.1.2 Identify models of effective digital learning consistent with requirements of IBCS.

Beginning: March 2019

Review: April 2021

Completion: April 2022

Responsible: African American Catholic Ministries

Consultation: Office of Youth & Young Adults

Objective 6.2 Integrate and apply Catholic Social Teachings in Africentric Catechesis.

Action Step: 6.2.1 Provide ongoing opportunities to infuse life and human dignity perspective in the overall program.

Beginning: March 2019

Review: May 2021

Completion: April 2023

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Catholic Charities of Louisville

Action Step: 6.2.2 Design and promote cultural experiential activities to infuse Catholic social teachings in sacramental preparation.

Beginning: October 2018

Review: October 2021

Completion: June 2023

Responsible: Office of Multicultural Ministry

Consultation: Catholic Charities of Louisville;
Office of Faith Formation

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**This is an implementation of the 2017 National Black Catholic Congress XII
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