

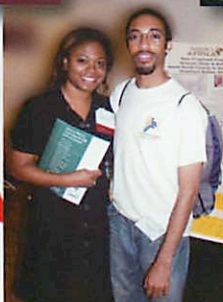
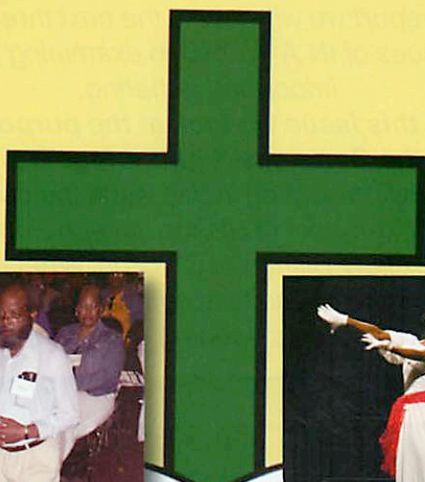
in a

Word™

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Tenth National Black Catholic Congress



July 12-15, 2007 in Buffalo, NY

The National Black Catholic Congress X

What was the purpose?



The National Black Catholic Congress held in Buffalo New York from July 12 - 15, 2007 had many interesting components. In order to bring a balanced report we will devote the next three issues of IN A WORD to examining this important gathering.

In this issue we look at the purpose of the Congress X gathering. This we do by presenting in this issue the opening remarks of Bishop Joseph Perry, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago. What this meeting hoped to accomplish is found in his words opening Congress X.



Good afternoon, brothers and sisters in Christ, with your bishops, their excellencies who are with us, your parish priests and deacons, men and women of consecrated life and fellow Catholics from around the country and beyond who are with us these days. I am Bishop Joseph Perry, auxiliary Bishop of Chicago and chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for African American Catholics.

It is my privilege to officially call to order *Black Catholic Congress number 10!*

If only Daniel Rudd and Father Augustus Tolton could see us now! We share the mission of those first Congress planners –



their vision for the life and vitality of the church in the African American community, from the very first Congress of 1889 unto this year 2007 Congresses have become the primordial assembly of our commu-

nity by the grace and mercy of God!

Congress IX gave us eight principles to explore and implement for life in our parishes and communities in order to nurture all things black and Catholic.

We have, for the last five years, been pondering, researching and implementing these for the good of the whole Church, matters connected with: *Spirituality, Parish Life, Youth and Young Adults, Racism, Catholic Education, Africa,*

HIV/AIDS, and Social Justice.

Congress X wishes to report on these eight principles through the prism of the 7 sacraments which distinguish us as Catholic Christians. The principles, therefore, are not simply a charter of social and political survival. The principles arise out of our baptism and anointing – our birthright in the Roman Catholic Church. These principles must improve us essentially as Catholic Christians.

Whereas Scripture gives us the words of Jesus recalled by his closest disciples for our hearing and adoption. The Sacraments are the gestures and the touch of Jesus on our bodies in his healing, consoling and enlivening and commissioning of us anointed in friendship with him through baptism. **The Sacraments give empowerment to our 8 principles of implementation for truly Catholic evangelization. These 7 sacred signs are benchmarks of our pride as African American Catholics; the articulation of our uniqueness as Christians and instruments of our holiness.**

Sacraments are not mere pageants or performances or concerts. Sacraments insure our graced encounter with Jesus

Christ each in their own way. Something takes place in each Sacrament that only God can do resulting in our sharing life with God and friendship with the redeemer Jesus Christ while we receive strength for the journey. We trust that renewed excitement in each of us can be engendered by the presentations of these days. Both Scripture and Sacrament in the Catholic imagination, from the very beginning of Christianity, give us experience of the whole Christ until He comes back to take us with him.

In other words, ours is an altar and a pulpit!

We have something special, holy and authentic. This means we are responsible for handling it with faith, care and the authenticity of our lives. We are required to teach others and bring them to the faith of Christ's Church.



in a word or two

Fr. Clarence Williams is taking a position in the Washington, D.C. area with Catholic Charities USA. Fr. Williams served in the Archdiocese of Detroit for 30 years and assumed the position for Director for Racial Equality and Diversity Initiatives in September. For the last 12 years, Fr. Williams served the Detroit Archdiocese in the area of Black Catholic Ministries. Previously, he served as pastor of St. Anthony Parish on Detroit's eastside and was a celebrant for the TV *Mass for Shut-Ins* for 25 years. As the Director of Racial Equity and Diversity Initiatives, Fr. Williams will share his *Racial Sobriety* approach with more than 150 diocese and archdioceses which are members of the Catholic Charities network. Catholic Charities USA has adopted his *Racial Sobriety* approach as its official tool for race relations in their 1400 agencies. This approach was developed while working for the Archdiocese and promoted by the Department of Parish Life and Services throughout Southeastern Michigan.



Father Williams (far right) is pictured with Xaverian Father Rocco Puopolo, executive director of the Africa Faith and Justice Network, and Sister Jamie Phelps, O.P., Ph.D. Director of Institute for Black Catholic Studies

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) will be held November 8-11, 2007 in Columbus, Ohio. This is an excellent opportunity to gather and celebrate with over 20,000 Catholic teens from across the country.

For more information contact:

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Brother Pat Hogan, SVD is leading a tour to China May 26-June 7, 2008. Brother Pat spent 30 years teaching Chinese at Fu Jen University in Taiwan. He is well versed in the Chinese language, history and culture. One could not ask for a better guide! The tour will be conducted when China will be hosting the 2008 Olympic games. For more information email Ms. Carmi Linden at DWM6099@aol.com

The Very Reverend Joseph Donald Simon, S.V.D., Provincial Superior of the Southern Province (U.S.A.) of the Society of the Divine Word passed away on July 18, 2007 as a result of complications arising from cancer. He was 75 years of age.



He was ordained a priest on May 4, 1961. Following ordination he studied church history at the Gregorian University in Rome and earned his Licentiate there in 1963. Returning to Bay St. Louis he taught Church History and Homiletics at St. Augustine's until he was assigned to the newly opened Divine Word College in Epworth, Iowa in 1966. He was President of the College from 1987-93. Father returned to Bay St. Louis to serve as Director of Development for the Southern Province from 1993-96. He then served as pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Maurice, Louisiana from 1996-2002. In 2002, Father Simon was elected Provincial Superior of the Southern Province which includes parishes in Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas.

Malonna Michelle Baudy and Dr. Eric Anthony Peters were married in April at St. Joseph Catholic Church in New Orleans. The bride's uncle Father Fernand Cheri III, OFM officiated at the ceremony. Malonna graduated from St. Mary's Academy and Louisiana State University. She is a Real Estate Consultant.



Photo by: gkphotography.com

Dr. Peters graduated from Xavier University where he received a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. Both bride and groom are active Catholics and full of life! The lively couple reside in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Divine Word Missionaries is an international missionary community of over 6,000 brothers and priests. In 1905 the SVDs began working among African Americans in the Southern United States. Today, Divine Word Missionaries work in over 35 parishes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and Arkansas.

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Web page can be found at <http://www.inaword.com>