

in a
Word™

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**Church must listen
to young people**

-Archbishop Christoph Pierre,
Papal Nuncio to United States

Photo by Father James Pawlinski, SYD

LISTEN TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Remarks from Papal Nuncio to Catholic Bishops
November 14, 2016

Every year in November the Catholic Bishops of the United States meet. At the meeting many items are discussed. This year of interest to us here at IN A WORD are the remarks of the pope's ambassador the United States, Archbishop Christoph Pierre.

In a very long talk the Archbishop began by suggesting to the bishops that **“mercy is what this country needs to heal the wounds of division.” He said “May I add that throughout the Year of Mercy, following the very long process which has led to the recent national election, I honestly think that mercy is what this country needs to heal the wounds of division after a polarizing campaign.** Many Americans have personally reached out to me to voice their frustration with what has been happening. As Catholics and shepherds, we need to give witness to hope, to carry on through the coming days, so that we can truly be “one nation, under God.”

The Nuncio, however, focused most of his talk on young people. He looked to the future talking about the challenge Catholics face in keeping the church relevant to young people, a topic bishops from around the world will consider when they meet in Rome in 2018.

“The upcoming Synod and the preparation for it provide a window for us to learn from young people, to listen to them, to be with them, and to help them discover God's plan for them. Our presence will remind them that they matter; that they are part of the family; that they belong. Rejecting the throwaway culture, we will give them reason to hope by assuring them that we are on the journey with them.”

The Pope's ambassador then addressed the question why are young people not in the pews?

“We, the Church, have to seek them out to provide the occasion, the environment, and the moment that allows for this encounter with Jesus. Do young people have a sense of being sought out, welcomed and appreciated enough that they can have this encounter with Jesus Christ through the Church? We know that youth are critical to the life of the Church, and that it is becoming increasingly difficult to transmit the faith to young people in a changing environment and in a Church in which very often they do not have a profound sense of belonging, even if they have the desire to belong. **Our youth find themselves at the “peripheries” of both the Church and society. We must go out to them.**”

“A new language, new methods, and a new missionary ardor is necessary so that each young person may experience tangibly the mercy of God. Our methods of evangelization require a profound reconsideration to see whether they are effectively communicating the authentic Christian experience - with closeness, simplicity, warmth and transparency.”

Young people want to be heard and they desire community, he said, and the church must go to them and walk alongside them. Above all they need to be listened to.

“If we are to help young people discern God's plan for their lives, we might ask: what are they looking for? They are looking to be heard. Earlier I mentioned the idea of accompaniment, which implies going to them and being with them. To this, we add listening to them. Listening is an important element of discernment. Pope Francis said: ‘I think that in the pastoral ministry of the Church many beautiful things are being done, many beautiful things... But there is one thing that we must do more, even the priests, even the lay people, but above all the priests must do more: the apostolate of listening: to listen!’”

“That fact that we go to them to listen is an acknowledgment of their existence as true members of the Church. It is an important dimension of affirming their dignity. Young people have a strong need to be heard, to be recognized as persons, and to receive a personal response. In this dialogue, young people learn to journey in faith with others.”

“Young people seek bonds. They want to be part of a relevant group to overcome loneliness and isolation. In an individualistic society, the young have a desire for community. Some want to belong but ask, “Do I fit in here? What is my place or role in this Church?” That to which we belong defines our cultural expression. If we do not experience this sense of belonging to the Church, our cultural expression will be determined by something else.”

He concluded his remarks that the the whole Church and each of its members must “decide to go to and walk with our young people: to each and everyone, from an awareness of carrying out a prophetic task. The most important thing that a young person needs to feel saved by Christ is to experience His love and mercy directly. This is different from simply saying, “You are saved.”

It is worthwhile to read the entire text of the Nuncio's address. You can read it at uscgb.org

A SAINT AMONG US

New Orleans honors Bishop Dominic Carmon,

Bishop Dominic Carmon, SVD was honored at the Black Saints Celebration of the Archdiocese of New Orleans on November 5, 2016.

The event was held at Xavier University of Louisiana's Katharine Drexel chapel and was a joyous affair. The November celebration is held annually by the Archdiocese to remember the Black Saints and honor those who today contribute time and talent to their parishes.

At this celebration Rev. Daniel Green, a priest of the Archdiocese, gave an inspiring testimony to the saints who had gone before and live amongst us today. He remembered Augustus Tolton, Sister Thea Bowman, Holy Family Sister Eva Regina Martin, his own grandmother, and Bishop Carmon one the many living saints in our midst.

What makes a saint, Father Green said, is embodied in the life of Bishop Carmon. He recounted Bishop Carmon's accomplishments and said "He took on pastoral assignments to bring peace, to bring healing, to bring God's love" "This is what it means to be a saint. Bishop Carmon, I am sure, would tell us he's not been perfect, although from the outside looking in, it's hard to find a fault. "

Indeed as Bishop Carmon sat humbly while being honored as a saint among us his accomplishments and influence is without question. He has been priest for almost 57 years, having been ordained for the Society of the Divine Word in 1960. After ordination he was sent as a missionary to Papua, New Guinea (where he often remarks he thought he would retire). In 1968 he became pastor of St. Elizabeth's Church in Chicago, Illinois where he served for 15 years.

He then became pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Opelousas, Louisiana. He was named auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of New Orleans in 1992.

After the ceremony Bishop Carmon was surrounded by many well wishers including those from his own family. His two brothers Clifton and Aubrey Carmon were elated by the recognition given to their brother.



Bishop Carmon with his brothers Clifton and Aubrey Carmon



Archbishop Gregory Aymond summed up the spirit of the ceremony with his final blessing on Bishop Carmon when he said...

"But most of all Lord, we ask you to send your sweet, sweet spirit that led our ancestors in faith, to continue to bless the community of the Archdiocese of New Orleans that benefits from Bishop Carmon's constant presence. O, Lord God, in faithful appreciation for Bishop Carmon, we offer our love and support and prayers and God's people say, Amen!"

God bless you Bishop Carmon as you continue to bless us.



in a word or two

On November 14, 2016 Archbishop Wilton Gregory of Atlanta urged bishops gathered in Baltimore at the USCCB's fall general assembly to issue, sooner rather than later, a document on racism. "A statement from the full body of bishops on racism is increasingly important at this time," said Archbishop Gregory.



He urged that the Administrative Committee of the country's bishops, "in collaboration with relevant standing committees, do all it can to expedite the drafting and approval of the statement on racism currently contemplated in the 2017-2020 strategic plan, given the urgency of the present moment."

He also urged prayer, ecumenical and interfaith collaboration, dialogue, parish-based and diocesan conversations and training, as well as opportunities for encounter.

Archbishop Gregory told the American bishops that as a body they must move more quickly to address racism in the United States, "particularly in the context of post-election uncertainty and disaffection."

The archbishop, who chaired a special task force created to address an outburst of violence throughout the country, including various police shootings of unarmed black men as well as lethal attacks on police officers, said that a planned pastoral letter on racism should be "expedited" and that in the meantime, "a shorter term statement on these issues, particularly in the context of post-election uncertainty and disaffection," should be drafted.

He also said that the bishops' social justice charity, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, "should be tasked with identifying and funding new and innovative approaches that promote community development and peace."

"The church is uniquely situated to bring people together in honest dialogue to foster healing," Archbishop Gregory said. "As bishops we must recognize the significance of this moment and work with the faithful and affected communities for lasting peace."

Michael O'Loughlin author
Live-blogging the U.S. Bishops' Fall Meeting
americamagazine.org

A Halleluiah Song! Memoir of a Black Catholic Priest



A Halleluiah Song! is the memoir of Father William Norvel, S.S.J. a black Catholic priest from the Jim Crow south. It tells of his formation as a person and a Josephite priest; his pioneering efforts to include gospel music and black culture in the

Catholic liturgy; the trials and triumphs of his 50-year ministry to Black Catholics around the country; his courageous work to build a seminary in Nigeria to ensure the future of his religious community; and, his historic rise to the top leadership position of Superior General of the Josephites. It is the compelling story of a man grounded in faith and family whose life's journey has been filled with challenges and successes, purpose and passion.

Contact the [Josephite Pastoral Center](http://www.josephitepastoralcenter.com) to order this memoir of Father Norvel, SSJ



Divine Word Missionaries is an international missionary community of over 7,000 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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