

Preparing the Welcome Table – Joseph A. Brown, SJ, Ph.D.

Part 1: “How Can Black Catholic Liturgies Restore Healing to Our Culture?”

Part 2: “The Validity and Power of Black Catholic Liturgies: Defining the Terms by Which We Pray.” In these workshops, participants will reflect on how deeply-rooted our liturgies are, reflecting the richness of Black culture. There will also be reflections on how Black Catholics can feel confident and secure in developing worship opportunities that are inclusive and welcoming.

Celebrating A Year of Favor From Our God: Cycle C – 2025 – Rawn Harbor

During the Liturgical Year parishes gather around Word and Table and enter into the entire mystery of Christ. Seasons of the year are identified by a series of scriptures and rituals that impact music and, many times, define a church’s liturgical plan for this Year of Favor From Our Lord. What does “*Sing to the Lord*” tell us. Come and feast at the Table of the Word and Table of the Eucharist through the lens of effective liturgical planning.

Gifts of Conversation in the Spirit - Cynthia Bailey Manns, DMin

We come together with the commitment to individually and in community, listen to the Holy Spirit. Through prayer, respectful dialogue, deep listening, opening our hearts to one another, and discernment, we will share our concerns about and dreams for our Church. Within the sacred container of prayer and silence, we will create sacred space to listen to the protagonist, the Holy Spirit, and allow ourselves to move from “I” to “We.” In this space, we will continually encounter God.

Empowering Voices, Youth in Liturgy – Christian Bentley

This workshop (**Part 1**) will explore the rich history and significance of African American spirituality in the Catholic Church, showcasing the distinctive elements of worship, music, and prayer that characterize African American Catholic liturgy. We will discuss the role of young adults in various liturgical ministries, including lectors, choir members, ushers, and altar servers and share success stories and challenges faced by young adults in actively participating in liturgical ministries. We will highlight the impact of their involvement on the vibrancy and inclusivity of Catholic worship.

Harmony in Diversity: The Voices of Tomorrow – Christian Bentley

This workshop (**Part II**) will delve into the significance of music and worship in African American Catholicism showcasing youth choirs and musical performances that express the unique blend of spirituality and culture. We will highlight the transformative role of music in fostering a deeper connection with God and explore the ways in which young adults creatively express their faith within the liturgy, such as through poetry, art, and dance. We will share personal testimonies and performances that witness the beauty of diverse expressions of faith within the Catholic liturgy and discuss strategies for sustaining and expanding young adult involvement in Catholic liturgy.

The Gospel for Today: Ministry to Black Young Adults for a Church That Needs Them – Fr. Robert Boxie and Ali Mumbach

Young people desire the truth and seek justice. They want to belong and feel seen. Their experiences and contributions matter. This session will explore the needs of Black Catholic young adults and how the Church responds to them.

“I Shall Not Be Moved: Rhetorical Agency in the Black Prophetic Preaching Tradition” – Fr. Maurice Nutt

The Black prophetic tradition is best promulgated but not necessarily exclusive to the Black church. Black churches have long since been the locus of political meetings, organized rallies, protests, and boycotts, voter registration and census participation drives. These efforts are known as Black prophetic practices. The passionate prophetic sermons urge congregations to fearlessly march forward toward moral victories. This presentation will explore how the rhetorical agency of the Black prophetic tradition commonly embodied in preached sermons, homilies, pronouncements, and declarations (these prophetic practices and actions of Black people seeking justice) correspond with Catholic social teachings and why they have a necessary and appropriate place within Catholic homilies.

“Pray with Me; Don’t Play with Me!” Being CHURCH is Serious Business” – Fr. R. Tony Ricard

“When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites!” (Matthew 6) It’s hard to understand how some churches can appear to be hypocritical when we compare the mandates of Jesus to church operation. Often, our churches transform from houses of worship into places of business rather than places of prayer. Are we the Church that Jesus calls us to be? This workshop will explore our ministry to God’s Beloved while staying viable in the world. Today, Jesus is saying, “You can Pray with Me but Don’t Play with Me!”

Foundations of African American Preaching – Fr. Manuel Williams

This workshop will offer participants a chance to learn or develop a theology of preaching. We will survey the treasure trove of Black preaching and discuss some principles of homily/sermon preparation.

Preaching From the Pews: How Laity and Clergy Can Enable Better Preaching – Fr. Manuel Williams

Preaching can enrich or hinder the life of faith. In this workshop we will explore ways the congregation/hearers of the Word can prepare themselves for better reception of the preaching event and ways they can help the preacher to offer more impactful homilies/sermons.

Preaching Outside The Church Doors: How We Are Called to Tell the Story of God in Our Daily Lives – Kayla August

As the Sunday liturgy comes to a close, the priest invites the congregation into continued proclamation as he states, “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.” This workshop invites the participants into the everyday acts of preaching that the lay community is called to. It reminds us how the biblical text is in constant communication with our lives and that our goal is to be renewed by the Gospel proclaimed inside the church walls so that we can share it outside church walls. This workshop will address not only the church’s call to lay preaching but also engage practices of how and when to do so.

“Why Do We Do That in Mass?”: Revealing the Symbolism Behind Key Liturgical Moments – Kayla August

As we sit, stand, and kneel through the liturgy, we take part in the ancient traditions of the church with deep symbolism and meaning. Yet, the average Catholic is often unaware of these underlying realities. This workshop aims to teach the “why” behind key moments of that mass in order to invite us into deeper prayer through the liturgical act.