

# WORKSHOPS

## **“FROM BONDAGE TO BOUNDLESS: WHAT WE LEARN FROM THE SLAVE PREACHER!”**

**Kayla August**

In the woods, swamps, slave cabins, and thickets, the Black enslaved community of the United States gathered for an unforgettable Word of liberation and hope from the slave preacher. This unordained preacher was a community-appointed religious leader who used the biblical word as a guide on the Supreme God’s work in an unjust world. For them, the Black Church, at the time hidden from view, was both solace and sanctuary, education and spiritual emancipation for the enslaved. Through proclamation, the lay slave preacher, unable to be ordained, taught unforgettable narrative lessons that ignited the spirit, renewed the body, and courageously countered the lessons told to them by society. The enslaved knew that the liberative preaching needed to happen outside traditional spaces if the true message of the gospels was to continue. The session shows that both lay and ordained can learn from the lessons of past enslaved proclaimers to preach in ways that overflow church spaces today.



## **“HOPE TO AND FROM THE NEXT GENERATION OF BLACK CATHOLIC MINISTRY LEADERS”**

**Dr. Ansel Augustine**

The USCCB's new Mission Directive looks at reengaging the unaffiliated and disaffiliated from the Church with a special focus on youth and young adults. In this workshop we will look at results from regional Black Catholic Young Adult Listening Sessions that have taken place around the country and how these impact empowering, and connecting with, the next generation of ministry leaders.



# PASTORING IN BLACK PARISHES: A THREE-PART FORMATION SERIES

Christian Bentley (Facilitator)

*Presented by the Josephite Pastoral Center & The  
National Black Catholic Congress*



## Overview

**This three-part workshop** explores the unique pastoral, theological, and evangelizing demands of ministering in Black Catholic parishes today. Rooted in the lived experience of the Black Catholic community and grounded firmly in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Scripture, the Church Fathers, and the wisdom of Black Catholic theologians, this series equips participants to shepherd with cultural competence, spiritual depth, and a renewed commitment to justice. Considering the global Church's call through the Synod on Synodality, this workshop invites clergy, lay leaders, religious, and pastoral ministers to walk together, listen deeply, and discern how the Holy Spirit is shaping the future of Black Catholic pastoral life.

## Part I: Listening to the Spirit – Black Catholic Identity & the Synodal Moment

This session situates Black Catholic parish life within the broader context of the Synod on Synodality. Participants will reflect on the historic and contemporary needs of Black Catholic communities, including formation, evangelization, racial justice, and healing. Drawing on Scripture, the writings of St. Augustine and St. Cyprian, and voices such as Fr. Joseph A. Brown, SJ, and Sr. Thea Bowman, this module lifts up the rich spirituality that has sustained Black Catholics through centuries of struggle and hope. Attendees will explore practical ways parishes can foster authentic dialogue, listening, and shared leadership—core synodal practices essential for vibrant Black Catholic communities.

## Part II: Preaching, Worship, and Sacred Aesthetics in Black Parishes

Rooted in the Church's liturgical tradition and informed by Black Catholic liturgical pioneers such as Fr. Clarence Rivers, this session delves into the spiritual and cultural expressions that animate Black parish life. Participants will examine how the beauty of Black sacred music, preaching styles, storytelling, and communal prayer all serve the Church's universal call to full, conscious, and active participation. Drawing from the Catechism's teachings on liturgy and the sacraments, participants will explore how to celebrate worship that is both authentically Catholic and fully reflective of the Black experience. Practical tools will be offered for strengthening Sunday worship, sacramental preparation, and parish formation rooted in the joyful, contemplative, and communal spirituality of the Black Church.

## Part III: Mission, Justice, and Pastoral Action – The Black Church as a Prophetic Witness

This final session highlights the Black Catholic parish as a spiritual and social anchor for its neighborhood—continuing the legacy of the Black Church as a voice for justice, dignity, and the defense of human life. Inspired by the prophetic witness of Daniel Rudd, \*\*\*, and countless Black Catholic leaders, participants will reflect on the Church's social teaching and its implications for contemporary pastoral practice. Topics include confronting racism, building peace, accompanying families, advocating for economic and educational justice, and forming parishioners as missionary disciples. Grounded in the Catechism, papal teaching, and the wisdom of Black Catholic theology, the session equips ministers to lead parishes that serve as schools of holiness, centers of justice, and hubs of synodal missionary outreach.



## **ENJOY MUSIC THEORY** **Dr. Patrick Bradley**

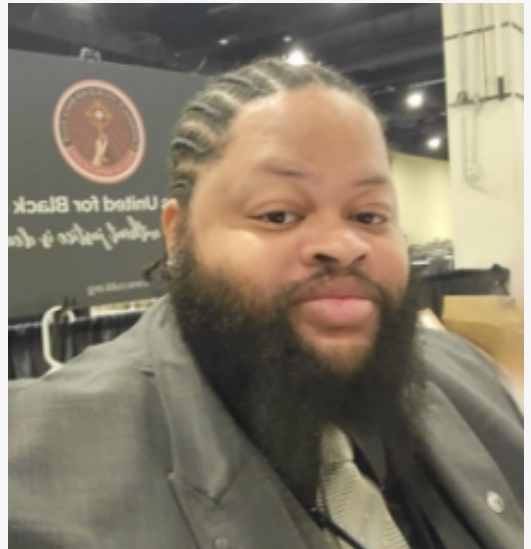
Dr. Patrick Bradley presents fun techniques and approaches of learning how to read music. Focus is upon basic knowledge and theory in music fundamentals.

## **"(SUB) TOTAL PRAISE"** **James Conway**

Exploring the necessity of full cultural inclusion and expression vs fanatic progress in our Catholic spaces. This session focuses in on affirming and reaffirming the need to use your cultural and spiritual gifts in Catholic spaces while also debunking the myth of progress for progress's sake to save a "dying" church.

## **"BLACKSTABBING"** **James Conway**

Addressing the true challenges in the Black Catholic Church. This panel discussion is used to delve into identifying and addressing the spoken and unspoken issues that Black Catholics face, so that we can use the solutions to better equip ourselves to thrive in Catholic spaces



## **"HOW DO WE FOSTER A CHURCH OF HOPE?"** **Veronique Dorsey**

While the world seems to be in disarray, it's our job as church to be a beacon of hope. But how do we foster such a hope? Join as we study the early church and dialogue about how we can return to those communal roots to foster a hopeful church that can sustain through these turbulent times.

# **“SPIRITUAL PREPARATION FOR LITURGY”**

**Fr. Maurice J. Nutt, C.Ss.R., D.Min.**

This workshop on spiritual preparation for Catholic Mass in the African American religious tradition focuses on deepening one's connection with God and enhancing the experience of the Eucharist. Key components include prayerful reflection, examination of conscience, and understanding the liturgical readings. Participants are encouraged to set aside time for silent prayer before Mass, allowing them to center their hearts and minds on God's presence. The workshop also explores the significance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a way to approach the Mass with a purified heart. Spiritual direction is another vital aspect, offering personalized guidance to discern God's will and grow in faith. Through one-on-one mentoring with a spiritual director, individuals can address specific challenges in their spiritual journey and develop habits of prayer and virtue. The benefits of spiritual direction include greater self-awareness, clarity in decision-making, and a deeper relationship with God. By fostering these practices from an African American perspective, the workshop aims to enrich participants' vibrant participation in Mass, making it a transformative encounter with Christ.



# **“HOSPITALITY AS THE FIRST HOMILY: LITURGICAL WELCOME THAT RESTORES THE WEARY”**

**Fr. Jeffrey Ott, OP**



Hospitality is often the first proclamation of the Gospel, a parishioner or visitor encounters. Long before the liturgy begins, the tone of the community is established at the door – and for many who walk into the church, carrying stress, grief, or other burden, that welcome becomes a crucial moment of hope. This workshop will examine hospitality, not merely as good manners, but as a liturgical act, rooted in scripture, tradition, and the Eucharistic vision of the church. (If possible, include the following as a final sentence: Participants will explore how worshiping communities can become places where the tired feel held, the anxious feel safe, and all feel invited to encounter God's rest.)

# “WHEN WE BREATHE TOGETHER: WORSHIP THAT HEALS THE SOUL”

Dr. Alice Prince

In a time of anxiety and division, worship can still be the place where the breath of God restores us. This session blends Scripture, reflection, and storytelling to explore how liturgy, music, and communal prayer can become spaces of healing and renewal. Participants will experience how shared worship helps us breathe again, together, as the Body of Christ.

**Takeaway:** Techniques to craft prayer and worship experiences that restore spiritual well-being and communal hope



# “STILL, I RISE: THE UNBREAKABLE SPIRIT OF BLACK CATHOLIC FAITH”

Dr. Alice Prince

From the hush harbors to the pews of today, the story of Black Catholic faith has always been one of resurrection. This workshop is both testimony and teaching, a celebration of how our praise, our preaching, and our perseverance continue to rise above despair. Dr. Prince will guide participants through a scriptural reflection on resurrection hope and the enduring fire of the Holy Spirit in the Black Church. **Takeaway:** Renewed conviction that our collective story, marked by struggle and grace, is a living Gospel of hope.



# “LORD, HELP MY UNBELIEF!”: HELPING THE FAITHFUL FIND HOPE!

Fr. R. Tony Ricard

What happens to God’s Mercy when True Believers feel lost or afraid? Where is Hope when everything seems to be going wrong? Hope-filled Faith comes when we look past our doubts and anticipate our incoming blessings! Like the Father who asked Jesus to heal his epileptic son, sometimes we can only pray, “Lord, I do believe, help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24). As we look at the state of our nation, we are called to rely on the Goodness God and the Prayers of our Ancestors. We have endured tougher times and are confident that we shall make it through these troubling waters. This joy-filled workshop will help us renew our Hope for our Church, our Families and the World. It will help us find Hope in these modern times.

# “THE POWER AND PURPOSE OF LITURGICAL DANCE”

Yvette Tunley

Sacred dance is a powerful and transformative expression of worship. Join us on a captivating journey of movement and spirituality as we immerse ourselves in the grace and beauty of liturgical dance. Together, we will explore sacred expression through movement, discovering the joy and power that come from blending faith and dance. Whether you are a seasoned dancer or new to the art, this inspiring experience invites everyone to participate. Dance is not solely for young people. Dance is all-inclusive and universal. Be an active part of the Archbishop Lyke Conference in an exciting, prayerful, and beautiful way through the gift of liturgical dance.

**Workshop attendees should be prepared to move and to participate in the designated liturgies held throughout the conference. Please come prepared with appropriate dance attire, including white and/or black dance tops; white and/or black loose-fitting bottoms (such as palazzo pants or skirts); and African-print tops, if available, or suitable alternatives.**



# “EULOGY OR PASCHAL MYSTERY: A FALSE DICHOTOMY”

Fr. Manuel Williams, CR

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) advises that the funeral homily at Mass focus exclusively on the Paschal Mystery: eulogies are to be avoided. This workshop asserts that both can be accomplished with integrity in the same homily. We will examine techniques and homilies which celebrate the homegoing and life of the deceased within the context of Christ's life, death and resurrection.

