



National Black Sisters' Conference 1968 - 2017

SIGNS OF SOUL

Summer 2017

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.

Acts 2:1-5

Where is the Spirit Leading NBSC?

- To explore ways to vision our future
- To provide more opportunities to net-work
- To focus on welcoming new members & implementing new ideas
- To fan into flames the action of the Holy Spirit
- To voice concerns & desires



Message from the President

July 2017



Dear Sisters and Associates,

We have just celebrated the feast of Pentecost. Pentecost is a time that offers us an opportunity to reflect on the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit – Wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord.

May God's Spirit of compassion and healing be poured out on the people of Paris, London, Chicago, Baltimore, Charleston, Orlando, Texas, Ferguson and Seattle... May our suffering sisters and brothers experience a joy that the world cannot give. God bless them with peace, love, courage hope in restoring their family life and rebuilding their communities.

May God's Spirit of long-suffering break forth in the cries for an end to racial divide in the United States, Africa, the Middle East and unnamed nations.

May God's Spirit of wisdom continue to enlighten people everywhere and bring joy and peace.

Today, we have a compelling need for God's Spirit of love and mercy. May God's Spirit enrich us to be ministers of the Word. May the Spirit of God enrich us with new life.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sister Callista Robinson, OSF

NBSC President



GOOD NEWS!

NBSC Welcomes New Members

Sister Melinda Adrienne Pellerin, SSJ

Sister Cherotich Chuma, CSJP

Spirit - Filled

We as Black Women Religious, continue to stand at the forefront in the struggle for justice, giving witness to the saving truth of the gospel and the mission of Christ's Church on earth.

The National Black Sisters' Conference was founded in 1968 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania under the inspiration and direction of then Sister Martin de Porres Grey, RSM (now Patricia Grey, Ph.D.) and with the generous support and hospitality of the Most Reverend John J. Wright, Bishop of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Sisters of Mercy.

Sister Martin de Porres was the only woman religious to attend the first national Black Catholic Clergy Caucus (NBCCC) held in Detroit in April, 1968. Inspired and encouraged by the vision of African American Catholic Priests, she left the Caucus with a heightened awareness of the pressing demand for black religious to address themselves to the urgent need for the Catholic Church in America to develop greater relevancy for black folk, or to risk losing its credibility as a manifestation of Christian unity.

The Holy Spirit moved Sr. Martin de Porres to call all black religious women to share in a task, which would be done only by Black religious women acting together, fully free, and joyously for the coming of the kingdom.

At that first, now historic, meeting in the summer of 1968 over 150 Black Catholic women religious from 79 different national and international congregations, gathered on the grounds of Carlow College. Sister Martin de Pores was elected to serve as president. A board of directors was elected and plans for legal incorporation of the National Black Sisters' Conference were made.

Today, NBSC is a national organization of more than 150 Black Catholic women religious and associates in the United States striving to promote a positive self-image among ourselves and our people. Together, we form a strong and cohesive voice in support of the dignity and rights of women of color, in creating mentoring and support systems for Black women in religious formation, in educating the African American family, and in confronting the sin of racism, which continues to permeate our society and Church as we work tirelessly for the liberation of African people.



NBSC 20/20 Vision Update

We are still on the move with creative juices flowing. During Joint Conferences 2014, 2015, 2016, we have focused on Black Vocations, Back Family Life and Women. At Joint Conference 2017, we will focus on Black Life Matters.

A full report will be given at the General Assembly Meeting July, 2017, Orlando, FL. Future planning will center on our 50th Anniversary.

As we look back over the Women's Gatherings we have presented, ponder these questions.

Were your expectations met?

- I was inspired by good, rich discussion from Black Women at the Conference
- Better understanding of what my role as a Black Catholic woman and what I can do to make a difference.
- You could feel the Spirit in the room
- I received more than I thought God wanted me to have
- I was awakened to need to be informed within my family

What insights and revelations did you experience during these gatherings?

- We still have work to do
- Wake up, look up and get up.
- Problems are the same all over the country
- As a young adult I realized the active women in the Church are older and after them there are no others.
-

What topics would you like covered in the future?

- The future of our youth
- How changes from Vatican II affect Black people
- How do we incorporate a young woman's (18-25) place in the Gathering
- Setting a national agenda for Black Catholics
- Mental Health issues affecting Black women

NBSC Members Ministries

Education

Religious Education

Health Care/Justice and Peace

Prison Ministry

Counseling/Music Ministry

Outreach to the Poor/Mission

Pastoral Ministry

Women/Youth

Finance/Development

Congregational Services

Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America

Organized by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Women and Spirit Catholic Sisters in America is a traveling Museum Exhibit. The exhibit displays a wealth of photographs and rare artifacts. First hand narratives tell the stories of American and African American women religious who helped shaped the nation's social, cultural, educational and healthcare systems. They provided services that have served millions. The NBSC Board visited the Exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum when it first opened.



Sisters Donna Banfield, Pat Lucas and Dorothy Hall stand admiring the LCWR Religious Women's Exhibit on Liberty Island, NJ

The National Black Catholic Congress XII

More than 1,500 Black Catholics will gather in Orlando, FL for Congress XII. The theme is "The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me: Act Justly, Love Goodness and Walk Humbly with your God." Among the highlights for the Congress will be Cardinal Turkson, Fr. Emewl, Dr. Tricia Bent-Goodley, Fr. Donald Sterling, and Bishop Perry, Bishop Braxton. There will be workshops for adults and the youth. The Pastoral Plan Of Action for NBCC XII will be developed by the delegates from the proceedings of the Congress attendees.

African Americans Being Considered for Sainthood

Fr. Augustus Tolton
Henriette Delille
Pierre Touissant
Mother Mary Lange

Education Within in the African American Community

Quiet Revolution: New research spotlights role of Black Catholic Nuns in desegregation

Shannen Williams, is a doctoral candidate at Rutgers University and a graduate of Craigmont High School in Memphis, TN. In the article Quiet Revolution, she highlights the significant impact African American Women Religious have made through education in the African American community. To read the detailed article click on the link below.
<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2011/may/22/quiet-revolution/>



Our school communities have become empowered to create a school culture conducive to transforming students' learning and lives.

"Catholic Schools in the African American communities to valuable to self."

Stay at Home NBSC Pledge Fundraiser

NBSC is inviting all members, associates and friends to support our stay at home pledge. Thanks to all who have sent in your pledge. It's not too late! Your generous donations will be greatly appreciated.

We would like to thank all of NBSC's friends and members who have offered prayers, spiritual guidance and financial support throughout NBSC's journey.



STAY CONNECTED

National Black Sisters' Conference www.nbsc68.com

National Black Catholic Congress www.nbccongress.org

The National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life www.blackcatholicsforlife.org

National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus www.nbccc.us

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops www.usccb.org

***Save the Date: Joint Conference 2018
50th Anniversary-NBSC/NBCC
July 22-26, 2018 New Orleans, LA***

*Make your plans to be there in July 2018 and encourage those who
have "been away" to come and celebrate our **50th!***

