



Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Hartford  
Office for Black Catholic Ministries



# GOOD NEWS

Volume 2 Issue 2

*MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

Fall-Winter 2005

## *Feast Days of Various Black Saints*

- Pope St. Miltiades  
December 10
- St. Josephine Bakita:  
February 8
- St. Victoria February 11
- Sts. Felicitas and Perpetua  
March 7
- St. Benedict The Moor  
April 4
- St. Bessarion June 17
- Learn more about these and other Black Saints in the "Dictionary of Saints"- Revised Edition by John J. Delaney, printed April 2005, available at the Catholic Bookstores.

## New Director Appointed to the Office for Black Catholic Ministries



Deacon Arthur L. Miller was appointed the new director of the Office for Black Catholic Ministries on September 6,

2005, by Archbishop Henry J. Mansell. Deacon Miller, serves the Northend Cluster Parishes of St. Justin, St. Michael and Sacred Heart. He replaced Myles N. Hubbard who retired on August 31, 2005, after heading the office for five and a half years.

use those connections to introduce the Office for Black Catholic Ministries and its programs, to a broad range of folks." Miller said, "I am very blessed to have inherited the wonderful assistant of the office, Mrs. Kay Taylor-Brooks who has been a great help with the transition of leadership. I refer to her as 'My Boss' because she knows all the intricacies of the office and keeps the ball rolling."

Deacon Miller was ordained a Permanent Deacon by Archbishop Henry J. Mansell in June 2004 at the Cathedral of St. Joseph. He resides in Windsor with his wife Sandy and is the proud father of 4 adult children and grandfather of 4. He is also the author of a new best selling book "The Journey to Chatham," in which Deacon Miller recounts his childhood in Chicago and his connection to Emmitt Till, an acquaintance of the family, who was brutally murdered in Mississippi in 1955. This atrocity was one of the incidents credited to have ignited the Civil Rights movement in America.

"I am very excited about my appointment to head the Office for Black Catholic Ministries," says Miller. "I have served as president of the Advisory Board for 5 years with Mr. Hubbard as Director and have seen the office grow into the important ministry it is today. I plan to continue the wonderful programs already in place as well as implement new programs so that we may serve the needs of all. My position as a Deacon takes me all around the Archdiocese and I plan to

## Inside this issue:

Director's Message	2
OBCM Plans Collaborative Youth Rally	2
OBCM Director Miller, Volunteers in Mississippi	2
Archdiocesan Gospel Choir Performs First Mass	2
Holy Mass to Celebrate Black History Month	3
Black History Month Program Co-Sponsored by OBCM	3
Meet the OBCM Advisory Board	3
Caribbean Catholic Apostolate	3
Ghanaian Catholic Ministry Visits Rome	3
Term Ends for Beloved Priest	3
Save These Dates	4
Did You Know...	4
Words of Wisdom	4

## A Fond Farewell to Myles N. Hubbard

Mr. Myles N. Hubbard, former director of the Office for Black Catholic Ministries, retired on August 31, 2005. Mr. Hubbard was appointed to the position five and a half years ago by Archbishop Daniel A. Cronin.

Under the leadership of Mr. Hubbard, the Office for Black Catholic Ministries has been instrumental in establishing a Ghanaian Apostolate and a Nigerian Apostolate to serve the growing communities in the area. He was able to acquire indigenous priests to serve those communities.

Among his many accomplishments as director, Mr. Hubbard fondly remembers the annual Black History Month Mass, the Pierre Toussaint Awards Banquet, his work helping immigrants obtain asylum and legalization, and most recently, initiating the new Archdiocesan Gospel Choir in partnership with the Cathedral of St. Joseph.

Mr. Hubbard now enjoys being home with his wife Sherry, gardening, traveling, and playing with his 4 grandkids.

## Director's Message

I was delighted when the Archbishop appointed me Director of the Office for Black Catholic Ministries. As a Deacon, when ordained I accepted the call to service. I believe that with this opportunity I will be able to address the needs of the black community and serve it on an Archdiocesan level. Today marks the third month since being named director. In that time, the OBCM has been involved in several areas of particular concern, not only to the black community, but to the entire Church. I have attended an interfaith conference which has been organized to more fully expose the tragedy of the genocide that is occurring in Darfur, Sudan. Our actions, buoyed by our hopes and prayers, are to bring about an end to this much ignored catastrophe. The Ecumenical committee's effort is to convince our government that this atrocity must end.

Recently I have been working with Rev. Cornell Lewis whose work in Hartford is well known. The OBCM is supporting his efforts and will walk the streets with the organization he has developed called *Men of Color*. These men walk to school with children in drug infested communities to assure their safety, we will walk with them...more importantly we will stand up with them.

These are but a few of the initiatives with which the OBCM is involved. I have found that the work is fulfilling and it is hard; but it is the hard part that makes it good works. God Bless.

## OBCM Plans Collaborative Youth Rally

A one-day Youth Rally is being planned for the young people of the Archdiocese of Hartford for Saturday, June 3, 2006 at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield. The rally is a collaborative effort of several Archdiocesan Agencies which includes the Office for Black Catholic Ministries, Vocations Office, Office of Religious Education, Office of Catholic Schools, Pastoral Hispana, Campus Ministry, and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

An important ingredient to evangelizing young people is to reach them where they are. That's why it was decided to contract Catholic entertainers, including Fr. Nor-

man Fisher, from the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY, also known as the "Rapping Priest;" and a Christian rock group, R.O.C.K. lead by Mike Loin. We feel that by providing messengers that are relevant to today's young people, we can attract their ears, their hearts, and their souls. Archbishop Henry J. Mansell plans to participate by celebrating Holy Mass at the end of the rally, following a candlelight procession.

For more information, or to register to attend, visit the Archdiocesan website at [www.archdioceseofhartford.org](http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org).

## OBCM Director Miller, Volunteers in Mississippi

There are not many instances in our lives that we can point to as being life changing or life altering events, particularly when one has seen as many years as I, but it happened. Like most of us I was deeply troubled by the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina on the people in the South. I was so moved I decided to volunteer with Catholic Charities and traveled there. What I experienced gave me a greater understanding of what little hardship I have faced and how faith can lead a people to become a community.

Bay St. Louis, MS, is a small rural town off the Gulf of Mexico that was nearly flattened by the late August hurricane called Katrina. Thousands suffered and many died in that little town. When I arrived in mid-October, some seven weeks after the hurricane, what I saw was a new people arisen in that tragedy. I met people with incredible

courage and faith, not in government, but in the resurrection of themselves as the people of God.

The devastation still remains, and there is much work and healing that needs to be done, but the people are strong in their faith, in their community and in our God. I am blessed because I saw it and in the very short time I spent there I came away realizing this: The hurricane may have washed away homes, possessions, jobs, and things that were worked for, but if you look hard enough and deep enough; if you look into the eyes of those that are rebuilding, you will see God's Holy presence.

I recorded my experience in a daily journal which was published in several newspapers around the country. If you would like a copy, please e-mail our office at [obcm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:obcm@sbcglobal.net) or call 860-243-0648.

## Archdiocesan Gospel Choir Performs First Mass

"Exhilarating!" "Wonderful!" "The best thing to happen in the Archdiocese for a long time!" These were some of the comments made by members of the new Archdiocesan Gospel Choir and those who attended their first performance at the Vigil Mass of Christ the King at the Cathedral of St. Joseph on November 19, 2005.

The choir was the brain child of the Office for Black Catholic Ministries and its former director, Myles Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard approached Ezequiel Menendez, Music Director at the Cathedral, who was instantly in agreement with the idea. From there, the phones rang constantly in response to the Parish ads seeking members for the choir. Over 105 men, women and children from across the Archdiocese, from Canton to Marlborough, Suffield to Madison, and places in-between, excitedly responded. The results were extraordinary! Under the leadership of Ezequiel Menendez and Donna Shears with the musical contributions of Bonnie Pepper and Ellsworth Grant, the choir is fast becoming a gem for the Archdiocese. Their repertoire include African-American Spirituals, Gospel music, and African chants complete with drums and tambourines.

The next performance for the choir will be at the OBCM annual Mass celebrating Black History Month, to be held at the Cathedral of St. Joseph on Sunday, February 5, 2006, at 2:00 PM in the afternoon. Save the date! You won't want to miss it!

## Holy Mass to Celebrate Black History Month

Plan to attend the 3rd Annual Holy Mass in celebration of Black History Month and the National Day of Prayer for the African-American Family, sponsored by the Office for Black Catholic Ministries. The Mass will be held at the Cathedral of St. Joseph on Sunday, February 5, 2006, at 2:00 PM in the afternoon. Archbishop Henry J. Mansell will be the main celebrant with guest homilist Rev. James E. Goode, Director

of the National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life, in New York City. The exciting new Archdiocesan Gospel Choir, which consists of people of all nationalities, will perform, as well as the Ghanaian and Nigerian Choirs and Liturgical Dancers. Don't miss this most colorful and lively celebration of the Eucharist, guaranteed to lift your spirits long after you've returned home.

## Black History Month Program Co-Sponsored by OBCM

Celebrate Black History Month with Catholic Charities/Black Family Enrichment Program and the Office for Black Catholic Ministries on Thursday, February 23, 2006 at St. Thomas Seminary, in Bloomfield.

The program is an annual event which is filled with African music and folklore as well as speakers who address powerful and life-changing topics for the African-American family. Soul food will be served at the reception following the program.

## Meet the OBCM Advisory Board

**President**  
Robert Brown

**Vice President**  
Victoria Virgo-Christie

**Treasurer**  
Elizabeth Nkonoki-Ward

**Secretary**  
Donna Shears

Edward Adjei-Kensah  
Mae Clayton  
Verna Creary  
Gertrude Duarte  
Gena Evans  
Michael Greene  
Alex Mikulich  
Anthony Nwankwo  
Luther Plummer  
Claire Potier

We wish you Christ's Peace  
this Christmas and  
throughout the New Year!  
From the Office for  
Black Catholic Ministries  
and its  
Advisory Board

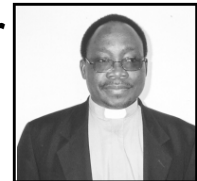
## Ghanaian Catholic Ministry Visits Rome

On November 6, 2005, over 25 people of the Ghanaian Catholic Ministry and friends, took off for Rome, Italy for a 9-day Spiritual Journey. They spent four days in Rome where they had an audience with Pope Benedict XVI and were the talk of St. Peter's Basilica because of their spectacular and colorful native dress. "Tourists stopped us on the streets to take our photos," said one pilgrim, "and we were given special seating for our Papal Audience, because of our colorful native garments."

Rev. Augustine Owusu-Sekyere, the Spiritual Leader on the journey, desired to share with his people the spiritual ambience and the historic antiquities of Rome to enhance their understanding of the Catholic faith. The pilgrims were in awe as they visited the Sistine Chapel and several Basilicas in Rome, including St. John Lateran, Cathedral of Rome, where they met with Bernard Cardinal Law, rector.

Other exciting points of interests included Basilicas and churches in Assisi, and Florence.

## Term Ends for Beloved Priest



Rev. Augustine Owusu-Sekyere, Parochial Vicar for the Ghanaian Catholic Mission at St. Mary Church in East Hartford, will return to the Catholic Diocese of Konongo-Mampong in Kumasi, Ghana, West Africa, after completing his 4-year term here in the Archdiocese of Hartford.

The Ghanaian Catholic Ministry was established in 2001 when the Office for Black Catholic Ministries petitioned Archbishop Daniel Cronin to secure an indigenous priest for the growing Ghanaian Catholic Community. "Father Augustine brought a light to the Ghanaian Ministry" said Ted Kensah, a parishioner and a founding member of the Ghanaian Community. "We started with 10 families and, through the guidance of Fr. Augustine, it has grown to at least 60 families."

"One of Rev. Father's goal was to take us to Rome so we can see where the Catholic Church started. He accomplished that goal in November of this year," said Kensah. "He is like a friend, not just to the Ghanaian community, but to everyone who knows him. He will be truly missed."

Father Augustine will be replaced by Rev. Savino Gyama of the same diocese in Ghana, who will be sworn-in at St. Mary Church in East Hartford at the end of January 2006.

## Caribbean Catholic Apostolate



Over 1100 Caribbean Catholics from across the country gathered in Arlington, VA this past August for the first-ever convention of the new Caribbean Catholics Apostolate. Those attending represented most of the English-speaking Caribbean islands. A delegation of 16 people from St. Justin Church in Hartford attended the historic event where the phrase "Unity Through Diversity" was adopted as their motto. For more information on the Caribbean Catholic Apostolate, or to join, please call the Office for Black Catholic Ministries at 860-243-0648.

**ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD  
OFFICE FOR BLACK CATHOLIC MINISTRIES**



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FM New Haven, every Saturday at  
3:45 PM for GOOD NEWS with  
Elizabeth Nkonoki-Ward  
Broadcast from St. Thomas Seminary*

**We're on the Web**  
**[www.archdioceseofhartford.org](http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org)**  
**Click on Ministries**

**SAVE these DATES**

**January 16, 2006:** Holy Mass in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Cathedral of St. Joseph, 9:00 AM. Deacon Arthur L. Miller, homilist.

**February 5, 2006:** Black History Month Mass, 2:00 PM, Cathedral of St. Joseph, Hartford. Features the new **Archdiocesan Gospel Choir**. Rev. James E. Goode, homilist.

**February 23, 2006:** Catholic Family Services/Black Family Enrichment Program Black History Celebration, St. Thomas Seminary

**March 6, 2006:** Holy Mass for the Healing of HIV/AIDS. St. Thomas Seminary, 12:10 PM.

**June 3, 2006:** Youth Rally, St. Thomas Seminary featuring Christian Rock and Christian Rap performers. Look for more details coming soon.

DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

*Please call the OBCM for details on any of these events. (860) 243-0648*

**Did You Know...**

That in 393 AD, a local African Church council, in union with and under the authority of the Bishop of Rome, approved a list of Old and New Testament scripture to be canonical (same list as later approved by the Council of Trent in 1545)?

That the first known Black person to arrive in the United States was Catholic? His name was Rafael and he came with the Spanish Conquistadors. He arrived in 1532, only 40 years after Christopher Columbus.

**It has been said that:**  
If a child lives with **criticism**, they learn to **condemn**.  
If they live with **hostility**, they learn to **fight**.  
If they live with **ridicule**, they learn to be **shy**.  
If they live with **shame** they learn to feel **guilty**.

**However:**  
If children live with **tolerance**, they learn to be **patient**.  
If they live with **encouragement**, they learn **confidence**.  
If they live with **fairness**, they learn **justice**.  
If they live with **approval**, they learn to **like themselves**.  
*Investing in children is determining our own destiny.*

**Words of Wisdom**

There is a wonderful mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life – happiness, freedom, and peace of mind – are always attained by giving them to someone else.  
*Peyton Conway March*

The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.  
*Joseph Campbell*

You haven't failed; you have gained experience. On you go!  
*St. Josemaría Escrivá*

The opportunity that God sends, does not wake up those who are asleep.  
*African Proverb*

Happy moments, praise God  
Difficult moments, seek God  
Quiet moments, worship God  
Painful moments, trust God  
Every moment, thank God.  
*Unknown*

Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.  
*Hamilton Wright Mabi*

If you want peace, work for justice.  
*Pope Paul VI*