

Martin de Porres Foundation

The UPDATE

June 2015
Newsletter

Edition 2, Volume 1



The Mission of the Martin de Porres Foundation: The goal of the Martin de Porres Foundation is to develop lay leadership among African American/Black Catholics. This is achieved through undergraduate and graduate education as well as training in Ministry and Leadership skills. The Foundation supports these lay leaders in their efforts to advance Catholicism in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

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Jamey Moses, RCIA Team (St. Martin de Porres Parish)

On June 19-20, 2015, the annual National Catholic Bible Conference convened at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Doylestown, PA. The faithful from across the country and countries in the Caribbean to pray, study, share and celebrate the faith we share as women and men, youth and elders, clergy, religious and laity. Under the watchful gaze of The Icon of Our Lady, known as The Black Madonna,

who holds special affection by women and men of African descent around the world and was greatly Venerated and loved by His holiness, Saint John Paul II, a family gathered united on our common bond: our Catholic faith.

Sweet Hour of Prayer

The conference opened with mass in the Shrine church with a homily that reminded us as believers to embrace the gift of God to us in Jesus and through the scripture, come to know Him with a deeper understanding of the gospel message for our lives while learning to implement this message in our time; finding creative and innovative ways to share Him with others.

Blessed Assurance....Oh! What a foretaste of glory divine!

In a world that divides us by race, gender, language, class, political affiliation, age and a variety of trivial distinctions, how good and pleasant it is as we are told in Psalm 133, for brothers and sisters to dwell together in unity. Our church of Philadelphia is diverse in many ways, symbolic of our church universal. Too often these diversities separate us. The church in the city separated from the church in the county, mass in English differs from mass in Spanish, Polish flower crowns in contrast to Korean prayer lanterns are all unique ways we celebrate on earth and will jubilate in Heaven in the presence of our God. Through this conference we were afforded a glimpse of our church united.

(Reflection cont'd)

Great is thy faithfulness

Through our workshops from presenters well versed in scripture, tradition, Mary and church life, we encountered once more the God who is ever present to us and continues to call us to know love and serve him; the God who met us in the heights of Doylestown is the God who then assures us that He will be with us as we return to Saint Martin de Porres in the Kingdom of North Philadelphia, to Saint Cyprian in the Kingdom of Cobbs Creek, to Saint Raymond's in the Kingdom of Mt Airy, to Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Ignatius, and to every God's-Kingdom throughout all Christendom. Sweet hours of prayer brings us to The Blessed Assurance that reminds us the Great Faithfulness of our God.



World Meeting of Families (WMOF)

Friday, August 7, 2015

Prayer Walk for the 2015 World Meeting of Families and Papal Visit - A prayer walk around the sites of the *World Meeting of Families and Papal Events*. Meet outside the Convention Center (corner of Broad and Cherry Sts.) at 10am or join the group at the Cathedral at 11am for a walk to the Art Museum and back. More info: Please call Jillian Buhl, 215-287-7069 or jillian.buhl@walkingwithpurpose.com.

Source: New Evangelization
<http://www.phillyevang.org/wmof/>

THE VIGIL



Cynthia A. Brown-VP
Fundraising
Management
Ruffalo Noel Levitz
(Our Lady of Hope)

There was a beautiful service that I attended on the steps of St. Raymond of Penafort Church. About 50 people were there, each holding a candle taking part in a ceremony hosted by the Office for Black Catholics. It was in memory of the 9 people who were murdered on June 17th in the Emanuel AME Church located in Charleston, South Carolina.

We all came together to pray for the victims, families of the victims, families of the Emanuel AME Church and all of us.

The service began on Sunday evening, June 21st with Father Christopher M. Walsh, Pastor of St. Raymond, addressing the faithful. He knew that we all came with heavy hearts filled with every emotion that one could fathom. We were saddened by the senseless massacre of 9 beautiful, innocent fellow Christians. We were very angry. We could not believe that something of this nature could happen in 2015 in a civilized society. Lastly, we were pondering when would the evils of racial hatred end in this great country of ours.

The vigil did give us a great source of consolation. *First*, it reconfirmed that the Catholic Church does care. Father Joseph Okonski, Pastor of St. Athanasius Church, and Deacon William Bradley, Director of the Office for Black Catholics were present. *Second*, it addressed the fact that 9 Christian soldiers died. He took the time to individually say their names and just a few words to help us to recognize them as "Christian Heroes." I bowed my head and could only image the last thoughts of each of the victims...Daniel in the lion's den came to my mind. *Third*, it helped us to understand why we feel the way that we do. Father Chris told us that it was natural that we were angry. Old wounds were opened with this massacre.

Painful memories and stories from the "old" South were brought to life on June 17 in Charleston. *Fourth*, this memorial service gave us an opportunity to speak, to be heard, and to remind us just how far we have come as a people. Some spoke about our personal stories and our relatives...of what we went through and apparently how much farther we have to go. The words of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King were read aloud to continue to remind us that we have dreamt but still continue to have a dream of racial animosity in this country.

Lastly, the vigil helped us to come together as a group of people called the "human race." This society remembers the past; lives in the present; and hopes and strives for a better future. As a member of the Knights of Peter Claver and Ladies' Auxiliary, we embrace Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity. I can only hope that the rest of society catches up with us. Thank you, Father Chris Walsh and the Office of Black Catholics for allowing me to share my heart felt sentiments.

www.facebook.com/martindeporresfoundation
www.martindeporresfoundation.org

Tell us your parish story
janell.lavender@martindeporresfoundation.org

Calendar of Events

Catechist Training Nights

The Role of the Pastor & the Catechist
Tuesday, August 4th at 6:00 p.m.
Archdiocese Auditorium – 222 N. 17th Street

The Catechist – Spiritually Refreshed and Renewed
Tuesday, August 11th at 6:00 p.m. Archdiocese Auditorium – 222 N. 17th Street

Drama and Movement in your Lesson Plans
Tuesday August 18th at 6:00 p.m. – St. Malachy Church – 1429 N. 11th Street, Philadelphia

Resources for Effective Catechetical Programs
Tuesday, August 25th at 6:00 p.m. – St. Malachy Church- 1429 N. 11th Street, Philadelphia

To register contact Deacon Bill Bradley at wbradley@archphila.org or 215-587-3541.

SAVE THE DATE

September 21-22, 2015
Gesu Church, 17th & Girard Avenue
Philadelphia, PA

REVIVAL

Sponsored by the Office of Black Catholics to celebrate the World Meeting of Families (WMOF)

Further details will be available soon!

Reimbursements for the above fees will be funded by the Martin de Porres Foundation. Reimbursement forms must be submitted through the parish (Pastor/DRE).



From my point of view, God is the light that illuminates the darkness, even if it does not dissolve it, and a spark of divine light is within each of us. Pope Francis