



**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.

## St. Katharine Drexel Parish, Chester, PA

### A New Beginning

By Rev. Thomas Whittingham, Pastor



Having just been named pastor of St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Chester, PA I'm already impressed with the way that our various parish communities work together to worship and to perform works of mercy here in Chester. While the Spanish-speaking community is in the process of rebuilding their own community within the larger parish, there is wonderful integration among the black Catholic community and the other parishioners across our three Sunday Masses in English. It is truly wonderful to behold each Sunday.

The former parish school, now Drexel-Neumann Academy, continues to offer a phenomenal educational environment to the children of Chester who are admitted. We are particularly excited that the students will be joining our parishioners for Mass more frequently. Additionally, the first graduates of our school are now moving through college and graduating and we are very anxious to see how they will take the education they've received and begin to give back to the community of Chester.

There are many financial challenges in our parish and we have already begun new initiatives to begin to address those needs. Nevertheless - we all [parish staff, clergy, religious and lay members] are dedicated to continuing and expanding the works of mercy already undertaken to serve those in Chester, who require our assistance on a day to day basis. Moreover, we are laying the groundwork; prioritizing the work of evangelization. Making disciples out of our most committed members and then turning them around and sending them out with the tools, training, and spiritual support to help train others to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

We are hopeful that we can continue to participate in more events for the black Catholic community and even begin to host some of those events here in Chester.

*Reflection...* Attending the World Meeting of Families in September will be one of those experiences referred to for years as "important", "amazing", "inspirational". In the weeks to come much will be written to help the Church digest and absorb the fruit of this historic gathering. Additional programs and gatherings in the evenings complemented the four days of congress presentations so that one could literally spend all waking hours of that intense week giving God the glory. Starting Monday, the evening before the opening of the WMOF, the Office of Black Catholics organized a two-night Family Revival held in the historic Gesu Church. Desiring to never forget these precious hours of fellowship, I captured some observations from those two awe-inspiring nights so that, afterwards, our community could revisit this celebration of *our family*.

The anticipation is palpable as we wait for our bus in the church parking lot in the cool evening this first night. Weeks of preparation for this very moment: Praying, reading, small group discussions building an understanding that love is our mission. As we clamor onto the bus there's a youthful giddiness anticipating something special. How appropriate is it that we'll be traveling on a big, yellow school bus - for, *unless you turn and become as children...* As we climb off the bus and see the grand entrance of Gesu Church we are greeted by a beaming priest wearing kente cloth and shaking a tambourine. Entering the sanctuary, my breath is momentarily caught by the sheer enormity of the space: the patterned ceiling with arches that seem to endlessly stretch and point even higher than I can see, every wall richly clothed in paintings and gold detail that warmly invite you to come and see, statues that gaze down beckoning all who enter, "the Holy Family welcomes you".

Our speaker for both evenings is the talented Damon Owens. He reminds us that Christian eyes see things not in separation, but in communion. So our understanding of man and woman must take into account the complementarity that is the basis of the union within marriage.

We arrived as individuals and groups, some traveling alone and some on big, yellow school buses. We depart as family. Singing, joyfully singing, *my prayers shall rise like incense, like an evening oblation*.

Financial support for the Family Revival was generously provided by the Martin de Porres Foundation.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 – St. Katharine Drexel Parish, Chester, PA
- 1 – Reflection-2015 WMOF Revival
- 2 – "Et tu"...A Reflection...
- 2 – MARK YOUR CALENDAR
- 2 – SAVE THE DATE



Paula Manchester  
St. Raymond of  
Penafort Parish

## “Et tu”...A Reflection on the World Meeting of Families and the Papal visit

By Ann Menna, Deputy Secretary-Office for Catechetical Formation  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia



There seemed to be no shortage of accolades or the telling of favorite moments from folks from all walks of life when it came to the recent Papal visit. Bloggers, tweeters, and good old fashioned print and photo captured the tremendous events of those two short days with the Holy Father. How blessed we were and are from his presence in Philadelphia!

This visit, however, was more than pomp, circumstance and parades. The Holy Father seized opportunity after opportunity to remind us of our call to missionary discipleship and the spread of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Consider his homily on Saturday morning. Five times he spoke the words, “ET TU... What about you?” Within the walls of our Cathedral, Pope Francis challenged the priests, deacons, religious and lay faithful as the then Holy Father, Leo XIII, did to a young idealistic Katherine Drexel. As she begged him for missionary outreach to North America, he retorted to her request with those words. The rest, as they say, is history as this simple question moved her to devote her life and fortune in providing tirelessly for the spiritual and material needs of African Americans and Native Americans.

In the same sense, Pope Francis called us to “dwell on two aspects of the joy of the Gospel” in regards to this question. First, do we recognize in our young people the same “high ideals, generosity of spirit and love for Christ” as Katharine had? “Do we find space for them”, encourage them to share their high spirit and enthusiasm “in serving the Lord?” Secondly, can we build upon the “great foundations” which historically undergird the US Catholic Church, namely, “catechesis and education”, in “the midst of a rapidly changing society?” Will all of the baptized, particularly the laity, “become engaged as missionary disciples” in these works?



For those of us in ministry, these are tall orders, or perhaps not. Taking cues from the Pope himself, the joy of the Gospel is about pastoral tone on being a “field hospital” as a Church, smelling like sheep as workers of the Lord and promoting family as a “factory of hope”, even if “plates fly!” Perhaps, the examination of conscience for us then is how we become renewed “in the joy of that first encounter with Jesus and to draw from that joy renewed fidelity and strength?”

So let’s just imagine. If in a year or two, Pope Francis just happened to “drop by” Philly again, what might his question be to us? My sense tells me that “What are you doing?” would be past tense. Rather, he most likely would want to know, *what have you been doing?* “for the growth of the Church in America in prophetic witness to the power of the Cross (of Christ) to bring joy, hope and strength into our world”

Let’s pray for each other as we rise to the Holy Father’s challenge!

*Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.-from [Now What?](#)*

[www.facebook.com/martindeporresfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/martindeporresfoundation)

[www.martindeporresfoundation.org](http://www.martindeporresfoundation.org)

Tell us your parish story or give reflections on program(s) you attended.

[janell.lavender@martindeporresfoundation.org](mailto:janell.lavender@martindeporresfoundation.org)

Or call 267-398-2314/267-408-5923

## MARK Your Calendar

**Bernadette Brooks Presents MEN In Gospel 2 – Gifted Voices Gospel Concert**  
Hosted by: J.C. Caldwell

Date: Saturday, October 17, 2015

Location: St. Thomas Aquinas Hall  
1700 Morris Street, Phila., Pa.

Concert 3:30 pm/Lunch 2-3pm

Tickets: \$20/ \$25 at door

For further information call 215-820-1762

**Msgr. John T. Mitchell Memorial Scholarship Banquet**

Date: Friday, October 30, 2015

Location: The View @ 7:00 pm

800 N. Broad Street, Phila., Pa.

Donation: \$50

For Information contact: Office for Black Catholics  
215-587-3541 or [wbradley@archphila.org](mailto:wbradley@archphila.org)

**Our Lady of Hope – Annual October Fun Fest-Monte Carlo Night**

Date: Saturday, October 31, 2015

Location: OLOH @ 6:00 – 10:30 pm

5200 N. Broad Street, Phila., Pa.

Donation: \$25 (\$5 voucher toward games)

DJ, Dancing, Prizes, Money Wheel & More!

All you can eat and drink (Homestyle Dinner)

For Information contact: OLOH 215-329-8100,  
Bernice Oakman 215-868-7228, or Eloisa Gonzalez 215-208-0648.

**The Saint Athanasius Knights & Ladies of Peter Claver Council & Court 342 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

Principle Honoree: His Excellency Herbert A. Bevard, Bishop of the US Virgin Islands.

Date: Sunday, November 8 2015 -3:00pm-7:00pm.

Location: Williamson

Easton Rd. (Rt. 611 & Blair Mill Road)

Horsham, Pa. 19044

Cost: \$75

For tickets contact:

Alonzo & Pauline Baker 215-681-4050

Michael Good 215-924-5648

**2015 PASTORING IN BLACK PARISHES**

A Series of Development and Enrichment Conferences for priests, deacons, seminarians, religious brothers and sisters and administrative laity who serve in leadership roles in the Catholic Church.

Date: November 9-12, 2015

Location: Hilton Crystal City Hotel

2399 Jefferson Davis Hwy

Arlington, VA 22202

Contact your Pastor/DRE about Martin de Porres Foundation funding.

## Save the Date

53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Celebration of the Canonization of  
Saint Martin de Porres

Prayer & Praise Service

Sunday, November 1, 2015 – 3:00 pm

St. Raymond of Penafort Catholic Church

1350 Vernon Road, Philadelphia, PA 19150