



# Reverence For Life

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**Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction,  
persevere in prayer.      *Romans 12:12***

## **N:**      **African American Families Celebrate**

*Were you among the participants who accepted the invitation to send a personal prayer for those you know who are suffering from HIV/AIDS?*

**See story on page 3.**

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February 6, 2005, marked the 16th year African American families celebrated the “National Day of Prayer for the African American Family.”

Observers noted a significant increase in the number of families who participated in family prayer in their parishes and homes.

The concept originates from Father James E. Goode who perceived this as a way of emphasizing the importance of the African American family bond. All were encouraged to dwell on the positive aspects of their familial experiences.

The purpose is to promote wholesome spiritual family

life, self sufficiency, human growth and family development..

Each year, several weeks prior to the day , an order form is published containing the instructions for ordering a small brochure which includes the official prayer and other timely meditative notations.

In most of the predominate Black parishes throughout the United States the prayer was read in unison at some point during the liturgy.

Other families visited relatives in hospitals and convalescent facilities and shared the prayer with them.

Family prayer is at least a beginning to strengthening Black family stability.

**First Sunday of Black History Month  
FEBRUARY 6, 2005**



**PRAYER**

God of Mercy and Love we place our African American Families before You today. May we be proud of our history and never forget those who paid a great price for our liberation. Bless us one by one and keep our hearts and minds fixed on higher ground. Help us to live for You and not for ourselves, and may we cherish and proclaim the gift of life. Bless our parents, guardians and grandparents, relatives and friends. Give us the amazing grace to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Help us, as Your children, to live in such a way that the beauty and greatness of authentic love is reflected in all that we say and do. Give a healing anointing to those less fortunate, especially the motherless, the fatherless, the broken, the sick and the lonely. Bless our departed family members and friends. May they be led into the light of your dwelling place where we will never grow old, where we will share the fullness of redemption and shout the victory for all eternity. This we ask in the Precious Name of Jesus, our Savior and Blessed Assurance. Amen. Holy Mary, Mother of Our Families, pray for us.

*Halleluiah!*

Prayer composed by FR. JIM GOODE, OFM, who in 1989 founded this National Day of Prayer for the African American Family

## **Black Catholic Rosary For Life**

Very quietly and somewhat inconspicuously Black Catholics pressed the beads as they prayed the rosary while commuting to work.

Others spent their lunchtime doing the same. In schools, and gathering places, time was spent on January 24, 2005, the day designated for every Afri-

can American Catholic to pray at least one decade of the rosary.

This occasion was planned in commemoration of the Roe V. Wade Decision of the Supreme Court. A prayer service was held at the Mother of Africa Chapel in Washington, D.C., prior to the Vigil Mass

for Life, held at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Several thousand “Marched For Life” the following day.

Supreme Lady Mary L. Briers, Deacon Jerry Lett, and Supreme Knight Arthur C. McFarland were the team leaders for this event.

## If Not Now When? *From The Desk of the President*

The National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life represents the major National Black Catholic organizations in the United States. Bishop J. Terry Steib, SVD, DD is our



Reverend  
James E.  
Goode, OFM,  
Ph.D

Episcopal Advisor. We believe that every human person is created in the image and likeness of God. Our mission as the National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life is to proudly follow the mandate of the Church, our Holy Father Pope John Paul II, the United States Bishops, and our Catholic Christian vocation and boldly defend the sacredness of life in all its stages and in every condition.

The evil of abortion is an act of violence for which neither political

loyalty nor religious doctrine provide a rational or justification. Since the legalization of abortion in 1973, over 14 million African American children have been aborted. A disproportionate number of the nation's abortion clinics are located in the Black Community. Abortion is destroying the very life and future of the African American family. We must choose hope and not despair. We must reclaim our community.

**IF NOT NOW WHEN?**

### THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

Following are excerpts from the statement issued by this delegation after meeting with a delegation of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel: "Human life is of unique and highest value in our world. Any attempt to destroy human life must be rejected, and every common effort should be made, in order to promote human beings, respect for freedom of conscience."

The delegation substantiated the statement by referring to Genesis 1:26, "the human being is created in the

image of the living God."

The statement denotes the responsibility of educators to implement programs that will emphasize the value of human life. Persons of all religious denomination should join in promoting the sanctity of human life.

Adults as well their off-spring are exposed to the negative influence of the electronic media such as pornography and violence. This poses a challenge to believers of religion.

The institution of the family is of vital concern. It stems from the will of the Almighty. Its values include the care of life, love, unselfishness and mutual responsibility. "Every believer should cooperate in protecting life.

**DELEGATION OF  
THE HOLY SEE'S  
COMMISSION  
FOR RELIGIOUS  
RELATIONS  
VATICAN CITY  
MARCH 3, 2003**

### NBCAL Beginnings

The National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life was inaugurated in the fall of 1997, with the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus and the Franciscan Solid Ground Ministry as sponsors and with the support of John Cardinal O'Conner, Archbishop of New York and the Archdiocese's Office of Black Ministry.

NBCAL is a ministry committed to

witness the gift of life in the Black Community. The "Soul" of this Apostolate lies in the words of Jesus Christ in John's gospel: "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

This ministry is committed unconditionally to defending human life from the moment of conception to natural death.

Representatives from the major National Black Catholic organizations, forms the NBCAL Board of Consultants. Their collective commitment to "Life" makes NBCAL a viable mission. Inquiries pertaining to this article can be made at: [tnbcalf@com](mailto:tnbcalf@com)

Feel free to visit our website at:  
[www.blackcatholicsforlife.org](http://www.blackcatholicsforlife.org)

## National African American Catholic HIV-AIDS Task Force

A nearly four year time-span evolved in the formation of this organization. Eight entities within the Black Catholic community constitute the membership.

It's purpose was determined after a few individuals raised a concern about the steadily increasing numbers of African Americans diagnosed with HIV.

With the single focus of reducing these high numbers of African American HIV cases, they approach the victims with a message

of hope explaining that those afflicted with this illness are as much loved by Christ as anyone else, and the need to celebrate God's glory by expressing wonder and gratitude for the gift of life.

Since prevention is an intrinsic part of combating any disease, the task force implements educational programs which are candid and informative. Emphasis are placed on early testing and treatment.

The task force's policy entails a series of activities such as (1) net-

working with other agencies with the same interest, (2) involvement in local and national action within the Black Catholic community. They can be contacted at:

[www.usccb.org/saac/index.html](http://www.usccb.org/saac/index.html)



Ms. Beverly Carroll, Executive Director Secretariat for African American Catholics

## The Year of the Eucharist

There are many aspects of the Eucharistic mystery and it's significance in the lives of the faithful. It is by far the most precious possession of the church.

The teachings of the church defines this inward union with Christ the faithful experience through communion.

*Transubstantiation* is the consecration of the bread and wine to the body and blood of Christ our Lord. It is beyond one's understanding

and can only be received in faith. John 6:53-55 reminds us: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life within you. My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

The late Pope John Paul II declared a special *Year of the Eucharist* which began during the World Eucharistic Congress October 17, 2004, and will end during the next

Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in the Vatican October 2-29-05.

The theme will be "Eucharist: Sources and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church."

"THE EUCHARIST IS TOO GREAT A GIFT TO TOLERATE AMBIGUITY AND DEPRECIATION."

POPE JOHN PAUL II

## Lenten Services for the Healing of HIV/AIDS



Holy Mother of God Chapel, Shrine of St. Josephine-Bakhita

On March 1, 2005, correspondence was E-mailed to the NBCAL Board of Consultants and

to the affiliates, inviting their prayers for the healing of HIV/AIDS. Each person was asked to share the prayer with at least seven people. By clicking on the picture the reader was provided a space in which they could write their prayer and the names of those for whom they were praying. After clicking on a button their prayer was sent to the NBCAL Website.

Father Goode (exclusively) removed the requests from the site and placed them on the altar of Holy Mother of God Chapel where they remained through Lent.

This procedure was devised to extend an opportunity for prayer for this cause, from wherever you may be. There were many responses.

*We are grateful for your interest!*

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**No Matter What...No Matter  
When...Black Catholics  
Respect Life**

[WWW.BLACKCATHOLICSFORLIFE.ORG](http://WWW.BLACKCATHOLICSFORLIFE.ORG)

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## TALKING POINTS ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN MINOR ABORTION

There are numerous reasons to support the passage of Parental Involvement laws. Parental consent and/or notification are presently on the books in various states. Since parental consent is



**In need of Divine  
Guidance.**

is required for minor medical procedures such as ear piercing, the dispersing of aspirin during school hours, and

written consent for field trips, it seems logical that it would be required for an abortion; furthermore, parents would be financially responsible for any post medical care.

The risk of medical complications decreases because the parents may be able to provide important medical information and history that the daughter may not know or provide.

Laws that exclude parental involvement in cases of incest or rape, place the teenager at a greater risk for repeated abuse. Since the abortion is secret, the teenager may potentially return to an abusive social or home environment.

Other reasons include the fact that few teenage girls are prepared for the physical, emotional and psychological aftermath of abortion. The wisdom, security, care and counsel of parents are essential.

It is this ministry's hope and prayer that all parents will be successful in discouraging their daughter from such a decision. **The *National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life* strongly opposes abortion.** We are aware that some states permit non-parental involvement in teenage abortion. It is for this reason and for cases of this nature, that this article was written.