

in a

Word™

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“Saint Joseph stands out, therefore, as an exemplary figure for our time, in a world that “needs fathers,” and not “tyrants”; a society that “rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction.”

**-Pope Francis
from his letter Patris Corde**

OUR LADY OF AFRICA

A new parish in Archdiocese of Chicago

Six years ago the Archdiocese of Chicago began a program named RENEW MY CHURCH. The Archdiocese stated that “this multi-year process is aimed at converting parishes for mission. It is the intention that every parish join with some of its neighbors (groupings) to plan the future. Careful planning will create a menu of possibilities. We are identifying parishes to be reconfigured through pastoral coordination with neighboring parishes, divisions, unions, and other structural and governance changes.”

The result affected African American parishes. So on July 1, 2021 the following pastors were appointed.

Rev. Matthew O’Donnell was appointed pastor of St. Moses the Black Parish (formerly Sts. Dorothy, Columbanus and Clotilde churches), Chicago.

Rev. Robert Kelly, SVD, was appointed pastor of Our Lady of Africa Parish (formerly Corpus Christi, Holy Angels and Sts. Elizabeth, Ambrose and Anselm churches), Chicago.

Why these changes? In regards to the Our Lady of Africa Parish the Archdiocese noted the following:

“Following consultations last year with lay and clergy members of the parishes, including input from parishioners at large, a report was submitted to the Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission, a group of lay and clergy representatives from across the Archdiocese of Chicago. Recently, the Commission submitted its recommendations to the pastoral leadership of the archdiocese.”

“Due to the small geographical size of each of the parishes, fewer diocesan and religious priests to serve as pastors, recurring deficits in all five of the parishes, historical decline and the small numbers of those participating at Sunday Mass, declining parish incomes, aging populations, changes are in order. The area is unable to sustain more than one parish to serve the combined communities. For evangelization and mission to be the focus of future ministry, the Church in this area of the Archdiocese of Chicago, must consolidate resources under the leadership of a single pastoral team.”

“In Fiscal Year 2019 the average Sunday Mass attendance at Holy Angels Parish was 198. The same year the average Sunday attendance at St. Elizabeth Parish was 41, at St. Ambrose parish it was 137, at St. Anselm Parish it was 74, and at Corpus Christi Parish it was 152. The combined total

average Sunday attendance at the five parishes was 602 in Fiscal Year 2019, this is a total decline of 61% over 20 years for the five parishes combined (from 1542 to 602).

At Holy Angels Parish the decline over the same 20-year period was 71% (from 678 to 198). At St. Elizabeth Parish the decline was 87% (from 308 to 41), it was 32% at St. Ambrose Parish (from 202 to 137), 59% at St. Anselm Parish (from 180 to 74), and 13% at Corpus Christi Parish (from 174 to 152).”

“In Fiscal Year 2019, Holy Angels Parish had an operating deficit of \$125,866.00, capital needs of \$1,931,600.00, total church debt of \$815,331.00, and savings of \$496,627.00. In the same year St. Elizabeth Parish had an operating deficit of \$207,878.00, capital needs of \$1,875,000.00, church debt of \$1,677,403.00, and savings of \$3,772.00. For St. Ambrose Parish the Fiscal Year 2019 figures show an operating deficit of \$303,756.00, capital needs of \$1,152,650.00, a debt of \$1,924,529.00, and savings of \$8,626.00. For St. Anselm Parish the figures are an operating deficit of \$122,147.00, capital needs of \$1,033,100.00, church debt of \$71,649.00, and savings of \$92,373.00. For Corpus Christi Parish the figures indicate an operating deficit of \$282,073.00, capital needs of \$2,616,900.00, church debt of \$610,955.00, and savings of \$439,600.00.”

“During Fiscal Year 2019 liturgical life outside Sunday Mass at Holy Angels Parish included six funerals, one marriage, and one Baptism. In the same period there were 12 funerals, no marriages, and no Baptisms at St. Elizabeth Parish; one funeral, two marriages, and three baptism at St. Ambrose Parish; two funerals, no marriages, and no Baptisms at St. Anselm Parish; and 11 funerals, no marriages and no Baptisms at Corpus Christi Parish. The combined totals for the five parishes are 32 funerals, three marriages, and four Baptisms.”

St. Elizabeth Church is becoming the Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton Heritage Center. It will be the outreach center of the new Parish.

First Mass of Our Lady of Africa will be July 4, 2021 at 10:30am.



Josephite Order Elated by Year Dedicated to St. Joseph Proclaimed by Pope

By George P. Matysek Jr. Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- For the 50-plus years Father Donald Fest has been a Josephite, he has watched his Baltimore-based religious community unsuccessfully petition the Vatican to declare a universal Year of St. Joseph.



After decades of disappointment, Father Fest and his brother Josephites were elated when Pope Francis surprised the world in December by finally announcing a long-sought year that

celebrates the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus.

"We've been waiting for this for a long time," said Father Fest, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Alexandria, Virginia. "St. Joseph is finally getting his due."

The pope announced the Year of St. Joseph Dec. 8, 2020, the 150th anniversary of Pope Pius IX naming St. Joseph as the patron of the universal church. The church observes March 19 as the solemnity of St. Joseph.

The Josephites have a special connection to the declaration through Cardinal Herbert Vaughan, the English founder of the Mill Hill Josephite missionaries sent by Pope Pius IX to Baltimore after the Civil War to minister to freed slaves.

The Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart, the American-based Josephites, split from the Mill Hill missionaries in the early 1890s to form an independent religious society that continues ministry to African Americans today in the Baltimore-Washington area, New Orleans, the Gulf Coast, parts of the American South and as far west as Los Angeles. The community sponsors several schools that serve the African American community, including the nationally recognized St. Augustine High School in New Orleans.

Cardinal Vaughan had led a campaign in the 19th century that amassed 150,000 petitions he sent to Pope Pius IX to entrust the universal church to St. Joseph.

"Cardinal Vaughan's mother (Elizabeth Louisa Rolls Vaughan) is the one who inspired in him devotion to St. Joseph that would guide him throughout his whole life and even in founding this religious community of men," Father Fest told the Catholic Review, the news outlet of the archdiocese.

"His idea was that as Joseph was the one that took Jesus to a foreign land -- during the flight into Egypt -- that Vaughan wanted to bring his men to foreign lands that did not know Christ," the priest said. "And so he called Joseph the first missionary."

It is said that Cardinal Vaughan's mother prayed every day in front of the Blessed Sacrament, asking that her children would answer the call to religious life. She was the mother of 13, one of whom died soon after childbirth. Her five daughters became nuns and six of her eight sons became priests -- three of them bishops, including Cardinal Vaughan. She died at age 42.

Throughout his ministry, Cardinal Vaughan promoted St. Joseph. He compiled a book of prayers and devotions to the saint and named both his missionary seminary in London and his religious community after St. Joseph.

The American Josephites continued that tradition after they split from the Mill Hill missionaries. The Josephites' seminary, the first integrated Catholic seminary in the U.S., is named in honor of St. Joseph. It was founded in Baltimore and now is located in Washington.

Today the Josephites are known for promoting the 30 Days Prayer to St. Joseph, a meditation on the joys and sorrows of the saint. Each day of the prayer represents one year of the earthly life of St. Joseph with the Holy Family.

Father Fest said St. Joseph is regarded as a powerful intercessor because he is a protector. The saint protected Mary's life and reputation when she was pregnant with Jesus and when they were searching for lodging in Bethlehem at the time of Christ's birth. He also protected the Holy Family during the flight into Egypt and as Christ grew up.

"The whole thing he does is protect, protect, protect," Father Fest said. "I think people see that and they want a protector, they want someone strong, they want someone who knows what it's like to be without, someone who is a home-life man, a pillar of families."

Bishop John J. Ricard, superior general of the Josephites, welcomed the Year of St. Joseph as a "special gift" from Pope Francis. His religious community has set up a page on its website with resources for the special year including video reflections from Josephite Father Joseph Doyle. "In Scripture, Joseph is a man of few words," said Bishop Ricard, "but his example and his actions call out to us now and through the ages."

The Year of St. Joseph runs through Dec. 8.

Matysek is digital editor for the Archdiocese of Baltimore and the Catholic Review, the news outlet of the Archdiocese of Baltimore

in a word or two

The Daniel Rudd Fund Grant Cycle is Now Open.

Cycle closes on Wednesday, Sept. 1, 2021 at 5:00 PM EDT

Founded 2013 The Daniel Rudd Fund (DRF) for Black Catholic Activities was established by the National Black Catholic Congress (NBCC) Board of Trustees on November 8, 2013 in Baltimore, Maryland. It is a result of donations to the Congress to promote the ministry of African American Catholics. The Fund financially supports organizations who promote the NBCC Pastoral Plan. Applicants must be rooted in ministry with African American Catholics and familiar with the history and mission of the National Black Catholic Congress and the Pastoral Plan. All programs must develop one of the ten priorities of the NBCC Pastoral Plan.

In its initial year, 2014, the Fund granted \$95,000 to 12 organizations; the following year (2015) resulted in 27 awarded grants equaling \$95,000. During the 2016 Grant Cycle, 40 grants were awarded equaling \$62,500.

The grant process is conducted entirely on-line. You must be able to provide information about your organization: founding date, the committee chairs or officers; history; mission; and information about the program for which you are applying for funding, such as scope and budget. Only applications submitted through the online grant system prior to this date and time will be considered for funding.

A new Pastoral Plan of Action was created during Congress 12. One of the criteria we base our decisions on is how well your program fits the Pastoral Plan, so applying organizations should verify that their program aligns with the Pastoral Plan.

What DRF Grants can be used for:

- Materials and equipment that are specifically for the program.
- Rentals related to the program and venue.
- Postage and marketing for the event.

What DRF Grants cannot be used for:

- Office supplies and materials that are necessary for the organization to do business.
- Salaries for individuals that work directly for the organization applying for the grant.
- Basically, any expenses related to the day to day operation of the organization are not covered. Any expenses, other than stipends, that are specific to the program can use DRF monies.

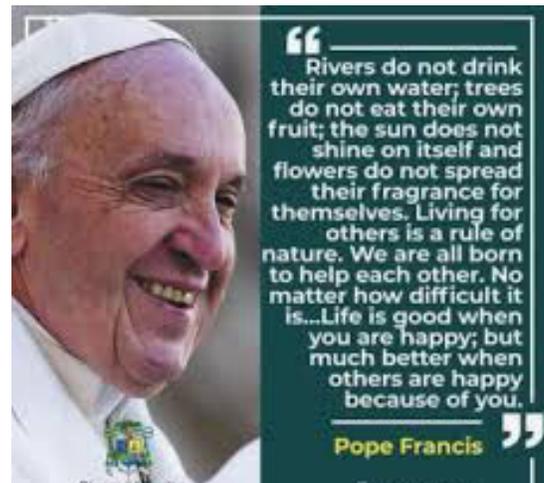
For more information go to the Congress website at:

<https://www.nbccongress.org/daniel-rudd-fund.html>

Front cover photo is of Ezekiel Esejobor (left) and Dominic Tochi Njoku (right). Both these young men are novices for the Josephites.

A PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH FROM POPE FRANCIS

HAIL, GUARDIAN OF THE
REDEEMER,
SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN
MARY.
TO YOU GOD ENTRUSTED HIS ONLY
SON;
IN YOU MARY PLACED HER TRUST;
WITH YOU CHRIST BECAME MAN.
BLESSED JOSEPH, TO US TOO,
SHOW YOURSELF A FATHER
AND GUIDE US IN THE PATH OF LIFE.
OBTAIN FOR US GRACE, MERCY,
AND COURAGE,
AND DEFEND US FROM EVERY EVIL.
AMEN.



IN A WORD is not published during July and August. Our next issue will be in September 2021.

Have a blessed and safe summer.

Divine Word Missionaries is an international missionary community of over 7,000 brothers and priests. In 1905 the SVDs began working among African Americans in the Southern United States. Today, Divine Word Missionaries work in over 35 parishes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Florida and Arkansas.

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Web page can be found at <http://www.inaword.com>