

in a
WordTM

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**Bishop Dominic Carmon, SVD
Missionary, Servant, Shepherd
to be honored November 5, 2016
-see page 4**

IS YOUR FAMILY FRONT AND CENTER IN YOUR LIFE?

by

Father Jerome LeDoux, SVD

Labor Day witnessed 13 people shot to death and 65 wounded in Chicago as thugs continued to make a mockery of peace and security. Stop the world; I want to get off! Despite futile, pitiful attempts at denial by most, and in spite of superficial, hollow stabs at shadowy solutions by some, our sick culture of violence continues its ugly, pathological sacrifice of teenage lives on the altar of gang-cartel-controlled drugs and ruthless racketeering with gambling, skimming and prostitution.

It is extremely creepy to reflect that at certain given times in some of our big cities, our life and limb are in greater peril than those of folks in Iraq, Syria and other theaters of violence around this troubled world. Add to this baked-in layer of native thuggery – domestic urban terrorism – the relatively new layer of imported terrorism, and we find the seeds of fear sown around the security and safety of public venues and transportation. There seems to be no hiding place anywhere.

As if this conversation were not difficult enough already, discordant voices are complicating matters with their progressive social agenda and family tinkering. There are people like Anne-Marie Slaughter who refer to the traditional nuclear family unit as a version of the family we have “outgrown.” She says summarily, “We’re finally talking about stressed, toxic work worlds, but in a way that benefits wealthy, traditional families.” I seriously doubt that Ms. Slaughter would write these same words if she were black instead of white. Our only wealth is our family values.

“One of the few areas of agreement among American researchers and policymakers across the political spectrum has been the belief that married, two-parent households are the best for raising children and preventing poverty. Bipartisan groups have urged liberals to get behind a marriage opportunity agenda focused on ‘removing the barriers to marriage’ for families.”

Slaughter says defiantly that more marriages is not the answer. Of course not. But more God-fearing marriages is the answer! The alternative is the moral morass in which we find ourselves where unwed birthing and parenting are acceptable as a way of life at all levels of society, as an alternative to God’s mandate in Genesis 2:24.

With babies having babies, dysfunctional families continue to spawn younger and younger generations of children who, by and large, are a wipeout in the moral

vacuum called home, in undisciplined schools where they are disconnects and often dropouts, in the social world where they are fearful, uncomfortable misfits, and, finally, in the competitive world of business and work where they are unemployed.

Slaughter calls the paradigm of mom at home caring for the kids while pop works “a broken system,” because nuclear families are more esteemed than single-parent families. “There has been an explosion in the diversity of family structures in the U.S. over the last several decades, much of it the result of delayed and declining marriage rates and higher nonmarital birthrates... Family diversity is the new normal. But despite these trends, the nuclear family is still favored with the most esteemed cultural visibility, still seen as ‘normal,’ ‘good’ and ‘ideal’.

But that is the way God arranged it in Genesis 2:24, though we respect single parents. Like it or not, the integral family must be front and center in everything. While the “new normal” is a reality, it is unacceptable and must be improved by community, family and individual religious and social education and awareness.

Even in the best of times and under optimal circumstances, the rearing of any child – black or otherwise – is stressful, nonstop, sometimes dicey, and dependent in great part on the village in every phase of life. Yes, mama and papa need a hand.

Granted, economic issues at times dictate that both mama and papa have to earn some of the income. Still, that does not negate the established truth that a child does best in school and avoids gangs, drugs and crime best when mama and papa are there for her/him in the earliest, most crucial years and circumstances of life. All school, gang, social and crime statistics bear this out in stark detail. Still, we must affirm and support the single parents who rear their children with love and care.

You may be annoyed that I keep returning to this subject, but so incredibly critical has this discussion become that our nation cannot afford to digress from it even momentarily, for it is part of the core of all the knotty problems that bedevil us at every turn. More than an ideal, the return to nuclear families is a necessity and linchpin that can inevitably vaporize most social, life-threatening problems.

HEALING AND HOPE FOR BATON ROUGE

This past summer the people of Baton Rouge, Louisiana were at the center of senseless murders that led to protests and sometimes violence. Then to make matters worse they endured catastrophic flooding. Through it all the people of St. Paul the Apostle Church kept the faith and are striving to build bridges not walls between people as seen from the following article.

In July over 200 members of St. Paul the Apostle celebrated a prayer service for healing and for hope for the entire Eden Park Community, for Baton Rouge and for our nation.

St. Paul was directly effected by the recent violence and deaths that have happened in in Baton Rouge. Mr. Alton Sterling, shot by police was a man in our neighborhood; Officer Montrell Jackson, one of three police officers who were killed was the nephew of one of our parishioners.

Violence that causes the death of anyone tears at the very fabric of our lives and our community. With so many deaths and so much violence around us, we feel the pain, the fear, frustration and the justifiable anger deeply but we also feel a deep need to respond it way that begins to bring healing and justice so that we will be able to live in peace with one another.

As a people of faith, our response must never be one of hate or retaliation, but rather actively working to overcome the hate, the violence, the racism and injustice with the power of love that Jesus calls us to: "Love one another as I have loved you." The recent history of our nation's struggle for justice and civil rights has proven that real love does, in fact, have transformative and lasting possibilities. Nearly two generations ago, Dr. Martin Luther King said: *"returning hate for hate only multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate ... only love can do that!"*

It is imperative that we, along with all citizens of Baton Rouge must vow to live that power of love that both Jesus and Martin calls us to and trust that His love is alive and working in us and in all people of faith and through the power of that transformative love. It is only when we honestly begin to work together, talk with one another and begin to understand one another that we will overcome the racist, hateful behavior, and make our community better than it has ever been. But we must be clear; this is not a "sit on the side-line" kind of love but rather, a "tough love" that is active, demanding, critical, redemptive and transformative a love that is described in 1 John 3:18 which tells us, "let us not love with word or speech, but in deeds and truth." We must step up, move out and be on our feet!




At the end of the prayer service over 200 balloons were released. Circling the prayer garden parishioners in the center of the circle held 5 red balloons symbolizing the blood of Alton Sterling, the 3 police officers and the countless, unnamed victims of murder and injustice. They were released first. Followed by 100 blue balloons symbolizing the hope that we are making a change for the better in our community, striving and working for healing and restoration in our pursuit for real justice throughout our City and around Louisiana; 100 green balloons were next, speaking of new life that rises even out of death, just as Jesus brought new life in his resurrection.

Finally, a single white balloon, reminding us that in the midst of the pain, the blood, the anger, the frustration, the injustices inflicted on and by so many, Jesus remains with us ... who truly liberates, frees and redeems us all by his blood ... Jesus strengthens us to work in peaceful ways to overcome the ills and evils around us. It is Jesus who walks with us, heals, restores, empowers us to not just bend our knee or bow our heads to pray or pause for a moment of silence but who wakes us up to the realities we face.


As the service came to a close, Fr. Andrus reminded us that Jesus calls us to get up, show up, speak up and keep up, challenging the injustices deeply rooted in a corrupt judicial system and embedded in institutional racism which continues to oppress us all. We have to work together peacefully and press on until we overcome hatred with love, conflict with peace and injustice with justice for all. Tough but not impossible times are ahead. Regardless, we are determined most importantly to build bridges and not walls between people, unifying, not dividing, striving for understanding through real human relationships to end racism and every form of injustice ... The work has begun!

*St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church is located at: 3912 Gus Young Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70802
Rev. Richard Andrus Jr., SVD, is Pastor.*


in a word or two






Black Saints Celebration 2016
Saturday, November 5



*Celebrating the Ministry
of Bishop Carmon:
Missionary, Servant, Shepherd*




*Preacher for the Day
Father Daniel Green*




Join Archbishop Aymond, Archbishop Emeritus Hughes and Bishop Cheri in honoring Bishop Carmon. The celebration will begin with a parade starting at Conrad Park and concludes with a prayer service and reception at Xavier University of Louisiana's St. Katharine Drexel Chapel

8:30am Gather at Conrad Park (3400 Hamilton St. New Orleans, LA 70118)
9:30am Parade Begins
11:00am Prayer Service at Xavier University of Louisiana, St. Katharine Drexel Chapel



ARCHDIOCESE OF
NEW ORLEANS
Office of Black Catholic Ministries



For more information, call 504-861-6207 or email bcatholics@arch-no.org

**CONGRATULATIONS
BISHOP CARMON!**

*Thank you for all you have given and are
still giving to the people of God.*

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 and Arkansas.

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