

SANKOFA, AGGIORNAMENTO AND JUBILEE: RECALLING YESTERDAY,
ENVISIONING TODAY AND IMAGINING TOMORROW: BLACK CATHOLIC
LAY WOMEN EVANGELIZING THE CHURCH

A professional project submitted to the Theological School of
Drew University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree,
Doctor of Ministry

Advisor: Dr. David Lawrence, D.Min.

Valerie Denise Lewis-Mosley

Drew University

Madison, New Jersey

March 2015

ABSTRACT

SANKOFA, AGGIORNAMENTO AND JUBILEE: RECALLING YESTERDAY, ENVISIONING TODAY, IMAGINING TOMORROW: BLACK CATHOLIC LAY WOMEN EVANGELIZING THE CHURCH

Valerie Denise Lewis-Mosley

Christ the King Catholic Church

Jersey City, New Jersey

The Church exists to evangelize. All are called to participate in this mission through the Sacrament of Baptism. The Black Catholic community has a historical precedent as builders of faith communities. Their evangelizing spirit is evidenced by the institutions formed by Black Catholic women. However, the Catholic Church is experiencing an exodus of Black Catholics from their faith of origin.

The Catholic Church has embarked on a ministry to address the New Evangelization, to refresh fallen away Catholics' desire and interest in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ through their Catholic witness. Yet the gifts that Black Catholic women have to offer to the Church's evangelization mission go unwrapped.

The exclusion and isolation that the Black Catholic community continues to experience within the Church is the source of the exodus. The glaring absence of Black Catholic laity in leadership and ministerial roles at the Archdiocesan level fuels the

momentum for the exodus. Although the spiritual gift of their ancestors' uncommon faithfulness have provided them with a rich legacy on how to overcome such obstacles to their faith witness, these memories are unknown to some and forgotten by others. A community with many talents and treasures to enhance the Church's evangelization mission continues to struggle with access to full and active participation in the broader Catholic Church.

My Doctor of Ministry project serves as a model for Black Catholic lay women to recover the narrative stories of their ancestors, by remembering our ancestors who built the first Black Catholic church in the Archdiocese of Newark. The recalling of this history of Christ the King, provides the Catholic community a mechanism to address the root of the isolation and exclusion and to fashion a course of action that empowers Black Catholic women to move forward with their gifts in a joyful and fruitful manner to change the dynamic from exclusion to one of embrace and provide an inculturated evangelization for the universal Church.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is lovingly dedicated to the memory of the ancestors of Christ the King Church.

Those great cloud of witnesses upon whose shoulders I stand. Carrie and Daniel Livingstone my great-grandparents whose holy boldness and fervent faith lives on in six generations of Black Catholic women.

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY		viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		ix
INTRODUCTION		1
CHAPTER		
ONE	HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT	6
TWO	INCULTURATED EVANGELIZATION	14
THREE	THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL WARRANT	25
FOUR	THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS	39
FIVE	METHODOLOGY AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	51
	Project Design and Technique	52
	Sankofa	52
	The Symbolism of the Roundtable as Circle	53
	Rituals of Renewal	55
	Aggiornamento	55
	Black Religious Expressions	56
	Jubilee	56
	Methodology Approach	57
	Selection and Training of the Lay Advisory Council	61
	Selection Process	61
	Training	63
	Sankofa Phase	65
	Environment Development for Roundtable Events	68
	Roundtable Events	69
	Roundtable Event One	69
	Roundtable Event Two	72
	Aggiornamento Phase	76
	March 5, 2014: Ash Wednesday: Reflection and Renewal	76
	Jubilee Action Plan	77
	Preparing for Jubilee	78
	March 30, 2014: Rejoice! It Is Jubilee Time	78
	The Jubilee Event	78
SIX	EVALUATION OF PROJECT	91
	Lay Advisory Team Response	91
	Participants' Feedback	96
	Pre-Assessment Questionnaire Summary	98
	Participants' Post Project Response	100
	Self-Evaluation	103
	Conclusion	106

SEVEN	CONCLUSION	109
APPENDIXES		
	A—Pre-Assessment Questionnaire	111
	B—Jubilee Program	115
	C—Observers' Letter	116
BIBLIOGRAPHY		118

GLOSSARY

Adrinka symbols. Visual symbols originally created by the Akan people of West Africa. They represent concepts or aphorisms.

Aggiornamento. Is the Italian word of Latin origin for updating and renewal. It is the act of bringing up to date to meet the current needs. It is a theme drawn from Vatican Council II and proclaimed by Pope John XXIII. It is not the breaking of tradition but the revitalization, a renewal of the vision.

Griot. West African historian, storyteller, praise singer, poet and or musician.

Inculturation. Reciprocal process between faith and culture. It is a way of looking at customs, rites, and rituals of people to discover in them the active and saving presence of God.

Jubilee. A celebration or anniversary of years. It marks a return or restoration of property and lands and property rights. In this context it is the celebration of coming of age and agency and the celebration of the voice, gifts and legacy of African American people in the Catholic Church community of Christ the King.

Sankofa. It is a word derived from the African spirituality of the Adinkra symbols from West African wisdom and proverbs. It denotes the looking back at ones' history to retrieve it so that one may move forward. It is also the importance of learning from the past. It is symbolized by the Sankofa bird with the head turned backward with an egg of the future in her beak, checking surroundings as she moves into the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my beloved husband Eugene Mosley. He has been an anchor of support and patience all of these years as I pursued various courses of study. All for the Glory of God to show myself approved and fully equipped to service as a co-worker in the vineyard of the Lord.

INTRODUCTION

When I consider what fostered my passion to make the investment of time, talent and treasure in my doctor of ministry project, my response is that it gives me the opportunity to be an agent of healing for the mind, body and spirit of myself and of my local faith community.

The first academic course of this journey, *Psychological and Biblical Metaphors and Personal and Congregational Growth*, generated my interest in the application of these foundational concepts that could facilitate our evangelization mission. This interest led to the development of my doctor of ministry project: *Sankofa, Aggiornamento and Jubilee: Recalling Yesterday, Envisioning Today, and Imagining Tomorrow: Black Catholic Lay Women Evangelizing the Church*.

A class assignment on a theological reflection on Hebrews 12, and the “great cloud of witnesses” made me think of my ancestors—familial, cultural and spiritual (Communion of Saints in the Catholic Tradition). Who were the great cloud of witnesses from my social location? How did they influence the formation of my personal psychological and biblical metaphor for ministry? What was their story? What were the impediments and the fruits of their faith journeyed?

A course on *Conflict, Anger and Forgiveness: Working through Loss and Difference*, ignited my interest in healing the pain in my faith community’s historical

experience of isolation and exclusion. The principle of living joyfully even in the midst of life's travails is a third concept that was instrumental in the development of this project.

This is the framework of my interest in developing a Doctor of Ministry project that facilitates the mission of the Church which is evangelization. When I use the word evangelization in this project, it incorporates the inculturated lived experience that emerges out of the depths of a people's isolation, while leading to forgiveness and joyful witness. It is my hope that I can facilitate this healing and growth in the members of my faith community as we journey toward kingdom building in the Church of the 21st Century.

Narrative of Concern

The number of African Americans in the United States Catholic Church has decreased over the past century.¹ African American Catholics were 20 percent of the Catholic population in the late eighteenth century. The percentages decreased in the nineteenth century with the increased European immigration. The estimates today are about 2.5 million African American Catholics which is 3 per cent of the Catholic population and 9 percent of the African American population.²—“The general consensus...is that young black (*sic*) Catholics...are leaving the Church in large numbers; and that the only issue over which they are leaving is that of race. They are confronting an identity crisis as

¹ Katrina M. Sanders, “Black Catholic Clergy and the Struggle for Civil Rights: Winds of Change,” in *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, ed. M. Shawn Copeland (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009), 82.

² Patrick W. Carey, “Preface”, in *Black and Catholic: The Challenge and Gifts of Black Folk*, ed. Jamie T. Phelps (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997), 7.

black (*sic*) Catholics, and they are coming out black (*sic*) rather than Catholic.”³ This phenomenon impacts the fulfillment of the evangelization mission of the Church to be truly catholic.

A perception of Catholic identity that, in its genuine element, mirrors the tenets of a faith that preaches Christ Jesus has in many instances been influenced in a disordered way. The concupiscence of sin⁴, according to the writings of Pope John Paul II, leads to a disordered look at the physical body of another. It is the stripping away of the dignity of another who is deserving of being seen and respected in the *Imago Dei*, image and likeness of God. Building on this theology of the body, I have reflected on it and connect the concupiscence of sin to include racism and sexism. I perceive racism and sexism to be an important part of the disordered look at another individual. It influences the disordered preconception of who is worthy to make up the body of Christ through the witness of the Catholic faith tradition. This disordered look hinders the evangelization mission of the Church.

Just as the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28) calls to mind the cultural limitations that hinder her from seeking healing for her child, I want to address the disordered look and to acknowledge the voice and the presence of Black Catholic lay women in the Church. They are asking, seeking and knocking at the door to be included in the evangelization mission of the Church. It is oral history and their joyful and even sorrow-filled experiences that we believe can and will enrich and enhance the evangelization

³ Sanders, 82.

⁴ John Paul II, *Man and Women He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2006), 235.

mission of the Church of the 21st Century. Their gift is a new evangelization that mirrors the kingdom of the eschatology, every nation, every tongue, culture, every man, every woman and every child. It is an evangelization that is inclusive and inculturated.

Purpose of the Project

The thesis I will test in this project, positively stated, is: When Black Catholic Laity (women) are invited to recover their history, renew their vision, sing their praises and celebrate their spirituality through their oral narrative, they will enhance the new evangelization mission and facilitate change for the Church of the 21st Century. The purpose of the project is to recover the history of the contributions and legacy of the Black Catholic ancestors who established the Church of Christ the King in Jersey City, New Jersey.

The recovery is to be shared for edification, empowerment and evangelization. It is to inform the imagination and vision of current generations. It is to build on the legacy and draw others to the possibility of faith witness through Catholicism. The purpose is to empower Black Catholic lay women to act with agency in the ministries of the Church at the parish and Archdiocesan level. Their faith stories of witness will allow for the joyful recovery and shared contributions of Black Catholic lay women. This will enrich the new vision and model evangelization in the Church of the 21st Century.

“Man (*sic*) listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers and if he (*sic*) does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.”⁵ It is this quote from *Evangelization in the Modern World* that provides the warrant for evangelization through the lens of oral

⁵ Pope Paul VI, On Evangelization in the Modern World, (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*) (EN, 24)

narrative of the women evangelizers who built a faith community. It is the exhortation of two Popes—“Bring your gifts of Blackness to the Church...for it enriches the Church”⁶ and “The Church needs you and you need the Church”⁷- that is the mandate for the purpose of this project.

The Scope of the Project

The scope of the project is the recovery (Sankofa) of the history and narrative stories of the parish and the Black Catholic lay women who built it as a safe haven for evangelization of the African American community of the 1930’s. It will allow the knowledge of the history and legacy of these women to inform the imagination and create a vision that leads to bringing up to date a new inculturated evangelization (Aggiornamento) within the Church of the 21st Century. This can address the issues and impediments of evangelization within the Church particularly that of the African American community, and effect second order change in the evangelization mission. It is this joyful witness (Jubilee) that corresponds with the Church’s golden jubilee celebration of the Vatican II documents that empowered the role of laity, women and culture in the mission of evangelization.

The Church of Christ the King in Jersey City, New Jersey, an urban African American parish, is the central location of the collecting and listening in on the oral history narratives of the Black Catholic lay women, the ancestors, elders and the current generations that have inherited the legacy of the parish.

⁶ Pope Paul VI, “To the Heart of Africa” (Address to Bishops of the African Continent at the Closing Session of a Symposium held in Kampala, Uganda). *The Pope Speaks*, vol. 14 (1969), p. 105.

⁷ Pope John Paul II, Address to African American Catholics (New Orleans, Louisiana) 1987 Libreria-Editrice Vatican.

CHAPTER ONE
HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory, the past President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the current Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Atlanta and a representative of the African American Catholic Episcopate states,

For history offers a mirror in which we may see our humanity. It tells us not only what we have done, but also provides a reflection of who we are and what we can do...examination of the past often reveals possibilities for the future. These turning points indicate that the future is in motion.¹

It is the spiritual gifts of wisdom and knowledge that directed the ancestors of my home parish, The Church of Christ the King in Jersey City, New Jersey within the Archdiocese of Newark. This great cloud of witnesses was the cornerstone that laid a foundation for the Black Catholic community to exist and thrive in the Northern areas of New Jersey beginning in the late 1920's. It is their historical background that provides the foundation for my own ministry as a Black Catholic lay woman and evangelist.

It is the combination of tradition and history that influences the Black Catholic experience. It is an experience that is informed by the legacy of the African Diaspora and their Catholic faith that influences the experiences of these ancestors. M. Shawn

¹ Wilton D. Gregory, "Uncommon Faithfulness: The Witness of African American Catholics," in *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, ed. M. Shawn Copeland (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009), 169.

Copeland, a systematic theologian who is also a Black Catholic lay woman, articulates very clearly that tradition and history are not the same.² In order to understand the active reception and transmission of the gifts of Black Catholics, the history must be uncovered. So it is with history that I begin.

Sankofa (“Go back to fetch”) is a term taken from the Adinkra spiritual and cultural symbols of the Asante people of Ghana, West Africa. It speaks to the spiritual reflection of looking backward to see from where one has come to discern where one is headed and to progress based on the experiences of the past. One reflects on the tradition, past experiences and culture so that one may forge ahead with wisdom to continue the mission of establishing the village, in this context kingdom building.³

The spirituality of the symbol is drawn from the African Proverb that states “It is not a taboo to go back and retrieve if you forget.”⁴ Jamie T. Phelps notes that these spiritual “...symbols suggests that the omnipotent creator God has given African American people the wisdom to go back and retrieve the truth of their human equality and dignity as recorded in the history, song, and proverbs of Africans and African Americans.”⁵

The ancestors and the elders of Christ the King built a faith community out of the depths of their deep abiding faith and their suffering. It is this history or, colloquially speaking, “her story” that directs the continuation of the mission. Dr. Diana L. Hayes

² M. Shawn Copeland, “Tradition and Traditions of African American Catholicism,” *Theological Studies*, vol. 61, no. 4 (December 2000): 632 (632-655).

³ Jamie T. Phelps, ed., *Black and Catholic-The Challenge and Gift of Black Folks* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997), 6.

⁴ Phelps, 6.

⁵ Phelps, 6.

notes, “They are our mothers, ‘our sheroes,’ women who somehow, despite all of the forces arrayed against them, were able not simply to preserve a culture but to pass it on to those coming after them.”⁶

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone (Matthew 21:42) is an appropriate introduction to tell the story of the ancestors of the Church of Christ the King. The church was incorporated in 1930, is the result of the mission and ministry of a group of Black women who stepped out in faith to build a house of worship where all would be welcomed at the banquet table of the Lord. Amongst the women who began this mission was my great grandmother Carrie McQueary Livingstone and her three sisters. The building of the church and establishment of the Apostolate for the Negro (*sic*), as it was called during the early days of the Twentieth century, began with Mary Queenan Ward. A lay Catholic woman, she took a census of the Black Catholics living in Jersey City, Bayonne and Hudson County in 1929 and discovered out of six parishes within Jersey City and surrounding areas, there were approximately three hundred Catholics who were African American. As a result of her census, she petitioned the Bishop of the then Diocese of Newark to establish a parish for Black Catholics. It was not uncommon during those days for the Church to establish ethnic parishes to serve the needs of immigrant Catholics. Black Catholics of Jersey City and Bayonne were faced with being rejected at the doors of many of the Catholic parishes because of their race.

She asked Bishop Walsh to address the pastoral and spiritual needs of the Black Catholics by allowing them to establish their own Church. Bishop Walsh performed his

⁶ Diana L. Hayes, “Faith of Our Mothers: Catholic Womanist God-Talk,” in *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, ed. M. Shawn Copeland (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009), 133.

own census of the population of African Americans in New Jersey. He took note of those who were Catholic and as well as to the numbers of those who were not. He granted permission for the community of believers in Jersey City, New Jersey to establish the Church of Christ the King. It was the seeing with new eyes that allowed the Bishop to grant permission for the community of believers in Jersey City, New Jersey to establish CTK. Mary Ward, a lay Black Catholic woman, was the vessel used to establish this faith community. It was her vision and the seeing with new eyes of the Bishop that allowed this community of believers to flourish.

When I reflect on this interaction between this lay woman and the Bishop, I think of the story of another Mary. The Gospel narrative of the Wedding at Cana gives the following account of Mother Mary speaking to Jesus. Mary tells him “they are out of wine.” Jesus responds, “You must not tell me what to do...” It is with her instruction to the wine stewards to “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2: 1-11) that the mission and miracles begin...a woman acting in faith. I cannot help but reflect: Was this the exchange between Mary Queenan Ward and Bishop Walsh? Was her faith producing the census and pointing out that “the Irish have their church, the Italians have their church, it is time for the colored Catholics to have a Church of their own...” that moved the Bishop to make this his concern as well? In 1929 the Bishop recognized that something must be done for the approximately 95,000 African Americans in the Diocese of Newark (later to become the Archdiocese of Newark).⁷

The initial community of about twelve that soon became twenty began with a Mass on June 30, 1930 in a small house that was the chapel for the priest appointed to serve the

⁷ Eugene J. Reilly, *The Apostolate to the Negro* (Kearney, N.J.: New Jersey's Boystown Press, 1962), 1.

Black Apostolate of the Diocese. This Black Apostolate would become Christ the King Church. On July 3, 1930, Bishop Walsh approved the letters of incorporation for the Church of Christ the King. Two days later a rally was held at Public School 11 to commemorate the new “Negro Roman Catholic Church of Christ the King.”⁸ The number of people in attendance at this gathering was described as massive, overflowing from the auditorium into the corridors of the school with standing room only. The owner of the funeral home for Black residents, John E. White, offered the use of the large chapel in his business for the first Mass celebrated as the newly incorporated Church of Christ the King.

Many of the Black people in New Jersey had arrived at the onset of the Great Migration from the South. They were accustomed to the segregated church environment of the south and did not expect to be turned away from Holy Communion at the churches in New Jersey. Yet this was their reality. Many Black Catholics turned to the Black Church experience of the Protestant tradition where they did not experience the indignity of the rejection. This was not an option for others. It was out of this rejection that a movement of evangelization among the lay Black women of New Jersey was ignited.

The groundbreaking for the newly incorporated faith community took place Sunday August 17, 1930 and the cornerstone was laid October 26, 1930. The newly built Church opened its doors on February 15, 1931. On March 1, 1931 fifteen children became the

⁸ Seton Hall University, Walsh Library Archdiocesan Archives (Christ the King, Jersey City folder), *Jersey Journal*, July, 5, 1930, Laying of the Cornerstone *Jersey Observer*, August, 18, 1930, October 27, 1930, February, 16 1931, Monday, March 2, 1931, December 22, 1930.

first Black class in the county to receive First Communion. The dedication of the parish took place December 20, 1931.⁹

The work of the lay women was the fundamental impetus to the establishment of this church community. Two months prior to the dedication of the new church, the Confraternity of the Rosary was organized, on October 4, 1931 one hundred and twenty five Black Catholic lay women were received into the Rosary Society by the Order of Preachers, the Dominican Friars from Sacred Heart Church of Jersey City.¹⁰

On June 22, 1932 Christ the King held a week long revival mission. Cited during the sermons in these missions was the service and missionary work of a Mrs. Jeanette (Nettie) Jackson, a convert of less than two years. A newspaper article stated “although her simple but firm faith is practically her only educational preparation she was successful in evangelizing and bringing three-hundred converts into the faith and into the Church of Christ the King.”¹¹ She was instrumental in the catechesis of the largest number of Black Catholics, two hundred-twenty three in number, to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in Hudson County to that time.

When the parish was first formed in 1930, Mrs. Jackson was one of the first adults baptized. The first adult baptism class was on November 27, 1930. The initial twelve grew to twenty and became a worshipping community of over one thousand. The

⁹ Seton Hall University, Walsh Library, in Archdiocesan Archives (Christ the King, Jersey City folder).

¹⁰ Seton Hall University Walsh Library, Archdiocesan Archives (Christ the King Church, Jersey City folder 1930's), *The Jersey Journal*, October 5, 1931.

¹¹ Seton Hall University Walsh Library, Archdiocesan Archives (Christ the King Church, Jersey City folder), *The Jersey Journal*, June 30, 1932, *Jersey Observer*, June 30, 1932.

magnitude of her evangelization mission was noted in a June 1931 newspaper article appearing in the *Afro-American of Baltimore, Maryland*.

...Mrs. Jackson having practically no education except the training in Christian doctrine she received from the Trinitarian Sisters of the Church of Christ the King and from the Mount Carmel Guild, enkindled in her soul a faith so strong, so zealous, that guided by the sisters, Mrs. Jackson succeeded in bringing in contact with the Church countless numbers among the forsaken Negroes (sic). As a result of her efforts alone more than three hundred received the gift of faith and entered into the Catholic Church.¹²

Also in the company of these women, the evangelizers who built a church, was Dr. Lena Edwards. One of the first baptisms in Christ the King was that of her infant daughter and the baptismal font was donated by Lena and is the baptismal font that is still in use in the church today. It is the font that I was baptized in as well as the six generations of my family. Dr. Lena Edwards was among the women who initiated this mission to establish a home church for the Black Catholics. Dr. Edwards relocated to New Jersey as a part of the Great Migration of the late 1920's. She was a parishioner of St. Augustine Church in Washington, D.C. St. Augustine's is the Mother-Church of Black Catholics.

These Black Catholic lay women of Christ the King laid the cornerstone; they were the kingdom builders, laying a foundation. The stone that the builders had rejected had become the corner stones in the building of a faith community. Although they had been rejected and turned away from the other Catholic churches in Jersey City, they did not lose faith. They did not grow weary; they soared up on eagles wings. They became the cornerstones that built a church, the Church of Christ the King. Theologian Hayes notes

¹² Seton Hall University Archives Walsh Library, Archdiocesan Archives (Christ the King Church, Jersey City folder), *Afro-American*, Baltimore, Maryland, June, 1931.

“Somehow our foremothers persisted in their faith. They did not suffer these indignities quietly.

They walked out and then raised money to build their own churches and schools.”¹³ From the depths of their travail and rejection, the Black Catholic lay women of Jersey City stepped out in faith and created the first Black Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Newark. It is the historical mother church of Black Catholics in New Jersey.

“Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God and like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house”

(1 Peter 2:4 NAB)¹⁴ The Lord called them and the women responded.

¹³ Diana L. Hayes, “The State of Black Women in the Catholic Faith,” *The National Catholic Reporter* (10 August 2001), 8.

¹⁴ New American Bible: Catholic Companion Edition (Wichita, Kansas: Fireside Bible Publishers, 1991).

CHAPTER TWO

INCULTURATED EVANGELIZATION¹

The work of evangelization is not confined to the clergy and the religious alone. It is also the responsibility of the laity... Within the tradition of the Black community, laypersons in the Black Church have always had important roles. Within the history of the Black Catholic community, at a time when the Black clergy were few, many laypersons provided leadership.²

One of the fundamental missions of the baptized Christian is to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is a mission that every man and woman (and yes even children old enough to understand) by right of baptism has a duty and responsibility to fulfill.

This mission of building the kingdom of God is not optional. The purpose of evangelization is to lead others to salvation in Christ Jesus. My role as a catechist, a teacher of the faith, is centered in the ministry of evangelization. Simply put, the goal of catechesis is to lead others through the Word of God “to radical acceptance..., belief...obedience of Christ and his way. In other words the goal of catechesis is

¹ This chapter represents a partial reworking of material presented previously, which has been revised to help explain the impetus for this project. The original paper was presented as Valerie D. Lewis-Mosley, *Kingdom Building in the Church of the 21st Century: Is There a Place for Black Catholic Lay Women in the Evangelization Mission of the Church?* (Master of Art Pastoral Ministry Thesis submitted to Seton Hall University: South Orange, New Jersey, 2011).

² *‘What We Have Seen and Heard,’ A Pastoral Letter on Evangelization From the Black Bishops of the United States* (Cincinnati, Ohio: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984), 25.

conversion.”³ Salvation is the destination, evangelization is the transportation, and catechesis is the gasoline that fuels the process.

If one is to speak of catechesis, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* is foundational in that conversation. This document “calls for inculturation and refers to the various ways of expressing the Catholic faith among different cultures and peoples.”⁴

Just as the ministry of catechesis is called to be inculturated, the ministry of evangelization which is so closely linked to it, must also be inculturated.

Inculturation is an ongoing reciprocal process between faith and culture. It is a way of looking at the customs, rites, and rituals of people to discover in them the active and saving presence of God. Through inculturation the Church affirms what is good in a culture; purifies what is false and evil; strengthens what is weak; educates what is ignorant...Catechists must establish an environment favorable to the customs of the people and build a community based on mutual respect, trust, friendship, and love.⁵

On Evangelization in the Modern World, (Evangelii Nuntiandi) by Pope Paul VI, provides substantive insights on evangelization. It was created after a 1974 gathering (Synod) of three hundred Catholic bishops from around the world. The focus of their gathering was evangelization from the perspectives of their different continents.

For the Church, evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming from within and making it new...the purpose of evangelization is therefore precisely this interior change...the Church evangelizes when she seeks to convert, solely through the divine power of the message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieu which are theirs.⁶

³ Giles Conwill, “Black Catechesis” in *Taking Down Our Harps: Black Catholics in the United States*, ed. Diana L. Hayes and Cyprian Davis (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 206, 207.

⁴ *Principles for Inculturation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1994), 1.

⁵ *Principles for Inculturation*, 1, 2.

⁶ Pope Paul VI, *On Evangelization in the Modern World (Evangelii Nuntiandi)*, (EN) no. 18.

This document also says that “... the task of evangelizing all people that constitutes the essential mission of the Church”⁷—which motivates me as a teacher of the Church to investigate the question of evangelization as it relates to culture. As a Black Catholic lay woman involved in the ministry of evangelization through catechesis and spiritual direction, I ask if “all people” is inclusive of the African Americans in the Church of the 21st century. I raise this question because of my experiences. I know firsthand that many Black Catholics have left their faith of origin. I also marvel at the fact that still in the 21st century to be Black and Catholic is somewhat of an oddity to some, both in the broader Catholic community, and the African American community and even in other religious circles whether they be Christian, Jewish or Muslim. When one hears or speaks of the Black Church experience, Black Catholics are rarely included. There exists a presumption in the general Catholic community that to be Catholic is to be of European immigrant legacy or heritage. It is this misperception and errant assumption that hinders the “New Evangelization” mission in the broader Church and in the African American community.

The Vatican Council II document, The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, A Light to the Nation establishes the mission of evangelization. We are to carry the light of Christ into the life of others so that they are transformed interiorly. The ministry of evangelization is for witness to the universal people of God. I find the attitudes, actions and dispositions of those at the Archdiocesan level fall short of this witness in the pastoral care and ministry within the African American community.

⁷ Pope Paul VI, *On Evangelization*, 14.

Those who emerge from the African American community as laity “fully functioning”⁸ to teach, preach and evangelize, are not often invited or engaged to participate in the ministry programs or project development within the Archdiocese for the broader multitude of the Catholic community.

The mission of evangelization is a universal call. It ought to resemble the spirit of Pentecost that generates an inclusive multi-cultural dynamic. The Black Bishops of the United States acknowledge that the Catholic Church in its membership, the diversity of many people from various lands, is representative of the universality of the Church. Yet they caution, “The Church, however, must preserve its multi-cultural identity.”⁹ They make reference to a specific quote of Pope Paul VI:

Evangelization loses much of its force and effectiveness if it does not take into consideration the actual people to whom it is addressed, if it does not use their language, their signs and symbols, if it does not answer the questions they ask, and if it does not have an impact on their concrete life....¹⁰

The Catechism of the Catholic Church in its discussion on inculturation affirms that, “From the beginning, this one Church has been marked by a diversity which comes from both the variety of God’s gifts and the diversity of those who receive them. Within the unity of the People of God a multiplicity of peoples and cultures is gathered together.”¹¹

Some years ago I wrote a paper in whose title I asked: Is There a Place for Black Catholic Lay Women in the Evangelization Ministry of the Church? I continue to ask this

⁸ Sr. Thea Bowman, “To Be Black and Catholic,” *Origins*, July 6, 1989. Vol. 19: No. 8.

⁹ ‘*What We Have Seen and Heard*,’ 19.

¹⁰ Pope Paul VI, *On Evangelization in the Modern World*, no. 63.

¹¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church for the United States of America, no. 814.

question as a lay minister of the Church, because I find my own ministry and obligation sometimes impeded from full and active participation. It is my obligation to spread the Good News according to my calling, so I must address anything that is a stumbling block to the calling. This question is the motivation for my hypothesis: When Black Catholic Laity (women) are invited to recover their history, renew their vision, sing their praises, and they celebrate their spirituality through their oral narrative, they will enhance the new evangelization mission and facilitate change for the Church of the 21st century.

There are currently approximately 3 million African Americans who are Catholic. Historically Black Catholic lay women were at the center of the evangelizing mission of their brothers and sisters into the Catholic Church. Recognizing the role of these women in the past is advantageous in addressing the issue of evangelization in the Church of the 21st century. According to the African American Bishops,

Within the Black Catholic community today, Black women continue to witness in various non-ordained ministries both as religious and lay....Needless to say, this potential for service within our own community needs to be more fully recognized and utilized by the Catholic Church in the United States. Black women can and should be considered as collaborators in the work of evangelization....¹²

Who should evangelize? It is clearly noted that all are called into the ministry by right of baptism. If this is the mandate, why is there such a limited presence and visibility of Black Catholic Lay women in the broader aspects of the Church? Why are their presence and gifts only visible among their Black Catholic parishes or Offices of Black Catholic ministries? A look at programs from Archdiocesan days of renewal or ministry development rarely identify a Black Catholic lay women as catechist, liturgist, or speaker engaged in evangelizing and leading others to a full and mature witness of their Catholic

¹² *What We Have Seen and Heard*, ' 14.

identity and discipleship. The rare appearance of Black Catholic lay women is in a choir, or music ministry. Are we not called to preach, and teach and evangelize as well as sing the message?

This manifestation is consistent with the invisibility of Black Catholics as a whole in the mission and ministries of the Church beyond their local (Black Catholic) parishes. A special edition of *U. S. Catholic*, *Authentically Black Truly Catholic*, addresses some of these points of discussion. Systematic Theologian Sr. Jamie T. Phelps addressed the “historical and statistical invisibility, devaluation, and marginalization”¹³ of Black Catholics within the general U.S. Catholic population. Phelps made note of the fact that although their gifts of ministry were not utilized in the general arenas of the Church, that the Black Catholic community had been very productive in ministry.

Across a forty year span of time from the 1960’s into the new millennium, Black Catholics “organized several effective national associations to strengthen black (*sic*) Catholic ministry...caucuses, conferences, and organizations of black (*sic*) clergy, women religious, seminarians, administrators, theologians, and laity as well as the National Office of Black Catholics and the National Black Catholic Congress.”¹⁴ The formation of graduate and doctorate theological degree programs speaks to the gifts and investments to the development of ministers—ordained, religious and laity—to serve not only the Black Catholic community but the Catholic Church as whole.

I am supported in my perspective that the Black Catholic voice and agency to actualize their “task to evangelize all people” has been restricted to only being ministers

¹³ Jamie T. Phelps, “Not Just a Black or White Issue,” *U. S. Catholic*, August 2002, 50.

¹⁴ Phelps, “Not Just a Black or White Issue,” 50.

to themselves when Phelps adds that "...black (*sic*) initiative, creativity, and ministry within the Catholic Church has largely gone unnoticed, and black (*sic*) Catholics still struggle to make the Catholic Church a stable permanent home for mediating the black (*sic*) religious experience...."¹⁵

I see this issue in the following manner, first that the role of Church is limited in evangelizing "all people" when it does not make a deliberate effort to authentically evangelize in the African American community (leaving it as an issue and concern of only Black Catholics), and second, the "task to evangelize all people" is a restricted task when Black Catholic laity are not included in sharing their gifts of witness and discipleship with the entire Church. It is important that people and cultures have a degree of self-determination as ministers serving themselves and their communities through the inculturated lens of evangelization. It should be an inclusive witness. No individual person or cultural group should be left alone in actualizing this task. It is not a task to be performed in isolation, without the collaborative and communal action of the whole Church.

A community of believers must be able to act in its own agency as a competent body. They are called to echo their faith and actualize their baptismal vows; to lead others to a mature faith and witness of Jesus in their lived experience. It is necessary for this self-determination to be manifested apart from a "*paternalistic*" and "*patronizing*" missionary mindset. The African American bishops acknowledged in their document that "maturity brings with it the duty, the privilege and the joy to share with others the rich experience

¹⁵ Phelps, "Not Just a Black or White Issue," 50.

of the “Word of life...”¹⁶ and then adds “that the Black Catholic community in the American Church has now come of age”¹⁷ This does not remove the whole Church from the obligation to be their brothers and sisters keepers.

The mission of evangelization in the African American community has been the work of and by Black Catholics. Yet with the wonderful contributions and gifted witness in evangelizing themselves, as noted above, their gifts have been left unwrapped by the broader Church. Popes, Paul VI and John Paul II respectively implored the people of Africa and the Black Catholics of the United States to give their gifts of Blackness to the “whole Church”¹⁸ These gifts spoken of by Paul VI were later affirmed by John Paul II, “...your black (*sic*) cultural heritage *enriches the Church* and makes her witness of universality more complete. In a real way the Church needs you, *just as you need the Church...*”¹⁹

The Church of Africa has exploded with record numbers in growth, while the U. S. Church is experiencing an ongoing exodus of Black Catholics and limited success in recent years with new converts from the African American community. Even devout and committed Black Catholic faithful struggle with the continued isolation that they often experience at the local and national level around issues such as lack of leadership and

¹⁶ ‘*What We Have Seen and Heard*,’ 1.

¹⁷ ‘*What We Have Seen and Heard*,’ 2.

¹⁸ Pope Paul VI, “To the Heart of Africa” (Address to Bishops of the African Continent at the Closing Session of a Symposium held in Kampala, Uganda), *The Pope Speaks*, vol. 14 (1969), p. 105.

¹⁹ Pope John Paul II, Address to African American Catholics (New Orleans, Louisiana) 1987 Libreria-Editrice Vatican.

visibility or inclusiveness of their gifts in the broader evangelization mission of the Church.

The Church has made a great investment to promote the “New Evangelization” that was first spoken of by Pope Paul VI in the encyclical Evangelization in the Modern World and later promoted by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical Mission of the Redeemer, “...the moment has come to commit all of the Church’s energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples.”²⁰ It is important to understand that the message of evangelization is not new, just the proposed methodology of carrying that message of salvation in Jesus Christ to others. Yet from the lens of one who is Black and Catholic, even this supposed new methodology that is gaining fervor in the broader Church is not news to them. One only has to look at ‘*What We Have Seen and Heard*,’ the pastoral letter from the Black Bishops cited above. It offers an extraordinary instruction on evangelization, not just for the Black Catholic community but for the Church at large. Yet in all the recent publications emerging out of the Church by various clergy and laity on the “New Evangelization,” this pastoral that has celebrated its 30th Jubilee, is not cited, referenced or mentioned.

The New Evangelization witness is a task in need of a “wholistic and holistic” approach. Black Catholic Spirituality is holistic; there exists no compartmentalization of intellect, emotions, and mind, body and spirit. There exists no duality in the sacred and secular. This is what makes it holistic.²¹ Our religious experience and witness is

²⁰ John Paul II, Mission of the Redeemer (*Redemptoris Missio*, Encyclical Letter, 1990), n. 3.

incorporated in "...the whole human being-both the feelings and the intellect, the heart as well as the head....we find foreign any notion that the body is evil...."²² The gift that is present in the Black Catholic Spirituality is a gift that can impart healing of mind, body, spirit of those who engage life from a Western tradition of seeing duality and division; either-or as opposed to and-both.

Thea Bowman a Black Catholic religious, a Franciscan nun, who dared to preach, teach, evangelize and inculturate the bishops of the Catholic Church; planted in me this seed of believe in the healing possibility of Black Catholic Spirituality through the joyful witness of Black Catholics. "Thea Bowman believed that black (*sic*) spirituality had the power to heal the Catholic Church, that the gifts of blackness were treasures without limit for the people of God."²³

The New Evangelization, what Therese Wilson Favors describes as "carrying the message that help is on the way and that help is Jesus,"²⁴ is imparting the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ in a manner that speaks to the people of today. It is sharing that personal relationship with Christ, and the transforming power of that life in Christ. It is giving witness to that message of faith. It is about being open to the Holy Spirit moving in one's life. It is allowing that which is contemplative in the spirituality of the

²¹ *'What We Have Seen and Heard': A Pastoral Letter on Evangelization From the Black Bishops of the United States* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984), 8.

²² *'What We Have Seen and Heard,'* 9.

²³ Joseph A. Brown, "This Little Light of Mine: The Possibility of Prophecy in the Black Catholic Church" in *Thea Bowman Handing on Her Legacy*, ed. Christian Koontz (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1991), 90.

²⁴ Therese Wilson Favors, "Evangelization in the African American Community" (lecture, Evangelizers on Fire for Jesus Inter-Regional African American Catholic Evangelization Conference & Institute, Memphis, Tennessee, November 2, 2000).

relationship to be exported out of self as a joyful witness to others so that they too can be renewed. It is simply about; *Sankofa* looking back recovering the knowledge of the faith in Christ, *Aggiornamento* being renewed and empowered by the movement of the Holy Spirit and changed by that personal encounter with Jesus, and *Jubilee* sharing that message, that encounter and that change in a joyous invitation that invites others to that same experience. It is summed up in the wonderful pastorals and documents that the Black Catholic community have put forth for quite some time, yet as sadly noted our gifts are often not unwrapped.

CHAPTER THREE

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL WARRANT

Aggiornamento, updating the vision, is the component of the thesis that is the foundation for the theological reflection discussed in this chapter. The previous chapter discussions of the historical and social context and evangelization hint that there exists an impediment to the mission and ministry of evangelization. The recovered narratives of the ancestors and the current women of Christ the King Church reveal a need for an eye-opening discussion about the past and current experiences of exclusion and isolation of Black Catholics within the Church. This is also an issue within the general Black Church experience.

This reflection discusses the impediment to the evangelization mission through the lens of theology and Scripture. The writings of theologians Bernard Lonergan, Miroslav Volf, Edward K. Braxton and Bryan Massingale are the optics through which the issues are visualized through the lived experience of the Black Catholic community.

It is through these “*theological contacts*”, that this chapter addresses the healing that is needed. A healing to correct the disordered look that impedes evangelization. It is through the warrant and mandate of Scripture that the corrective lens are applied to heal the blurred vision and the outlook of some as to who should evangelize. Using the language of Beverly Carroll, Executive Director Emeritus-Secretariat for Black Catholics, it is my prayer that those in the Church who are committed to the New

Evangelization will "...become instruments in the healing process for the hurt so many of our African American sisters and brothers endure...."¹

On Evangelization in the Modern World echoes the mantra of the universality of the Catholic Church, saying it is "...without boundaries or frontiers alas, those of the heart and mind of sinful man (*sic*)."² What are the sins that perpetuate boundaries and frontiers in the heart, mind and spirit that inhibit the mission of evangelization by all and for all? What conversion is necessary for the true vision of the universal Church to be actualized so that the mission of leading all souls to Christ can be fulfilled? The gift of salvation is promised to all for God wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth (1 Tm. 2:4). How can the gift of these truths be shared with all, if evangelization is not set as a priority for those communities who have little knowledge, understanding or exposure to the Catholic faith?

Pope Paul VI in his encyclical points out that kingdom and salvation are the key words integral to this mission. They are the gifts of God's evangelization mission, and they are gifts to us through a process of interior renewal and conversion of the heart. Can it be that there has not been a large scale authentic evangelization within the African American community because there still needs to be conversion of hearts, minds and spirits of those who are called to evangelize? Does there need to be an authentic evangelization of those who have been baptized into the faith but not authentically catechized as to what it means to be truly Catholic, a truly universal Church? The "New Evangelization" that the

¹ Secretariat for Black Catholics National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Many Rains Ago: A Historical and Theological Reflection on the Role of the Episcopate in the Evangelization of African American Catholics* (United States Catholic Conference, Inc.: Washington, D.C., 2009), 1.

² *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, On Evangelization in the Modern World, (EN) no. 61.

Church has engaged upon speaks to this re- evangelizing, or in the language of this project, updating the vision of evangelization through the lens of a converted mind, body and spirit “Aggiornamento.” It is looking with a reconciled eye to lead others to Christ. It is a witness centered in passionate and joyful vibrant expression. It can be described as a zeal to proclaim Christ even in the midst of suffering and out of the depths of one’s own frailty. The descendants of the African Diaspora know something about being able to sing these songs of praise even on the shores of alienation. This spirituality and witness is an asset for the evangelizer. A true evangelizer embodies the Evening Prayer antiphon, “my own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every peoples.”³

What is the action of one who has embodied the spirit and truth of the primary mission of the Church? The evidence is that “a person who has been evangelized goes on to evangelize others.”⁴ This primacy of the mission finds its warrant not only in the encyclical but in Scripture, “...only the Kingdom therefore is absolute and it makes everything else relative.”⁵ Seek first the Kingdom of God and all else will follow (paraphrasing Mt 6:33.) The encyclical’s message on the kingdom and salvation builds on Scripture, that the gift of God’s mercy and grace is offered to all people and the message must be carried to all people.

³ The Divine Office, The Liturgy of the Hours, *Feast of the Presentation of the Lord*, Feb. 2 Evening Prayer II antiphon 3 (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Corp., 1975), Vol. III: 1359.

⁴ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, On Evangelization in the Modern World, (EN) no. 24.

⁵ EN, no. 8.

Theological reflection is founded on, tradition, culture and personal experience. It is through this lens that I engage this discussion. This chapter is my theological reflection on the impediments to evangelization. It is through this reflection that I look to the past to draw on the experiences of those who have gone before me. I hope to address how the Church can be more effective in its mission of evangelizing within the African American community and how the African American laity can best evangelize within the broader Church.

Scripture provides a social justice model, what so ever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters you do to me (paraphrasing Mt 25:40.) Black culture, women and laity have each been the focus of papal pastorals and episcopal addresses. The context of these addresses have been to give a correct or ordered view of how they are included in the mission of the Church. Each of these groups have suffered over the course of the Church's history with exclusion from or limited access to full and active participation. They have been treated as the least within the Body of Christ. They have not always felt empowered to participate in the mission of evangelization; they have felt excluded from the five ministries of the Church.

The Church living in various circumstances in the course of time, has used the discoveries of different cultures so that in her preaching she might spread and explain the message of Christ to all nations...the Church sent to all peoples of every time and place, is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation, any particular way of life or any customary way of life recent or ancient. Faithful to her own tradition and at the same time conscious of her universal mission, she can enter into communion with the various civilizations, to their enrichment and the enrichment of the Church herself.⁶

⁶ Second Vatican Council Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Guadium et Spes*), no. 58 1965 Austin Flannery O.P., Boston, St. Paul Editions, Daughter of St. Paul rev., 1988.

This is a teaching from the Church in the Modern World. It is in its 50th Jubilee yet the issues of culture and race are still boundaries that impede the authentic evangelization and the inclusion of Black Catholics.

What has been the obstacle to the evangelization within the culture of the people of the African Diaspora of the United States of America? Why does there exist this misconception and “false image” that the Catholic Church is “exclusive” to a particular culture, race, nation or ethnicity within the minds of many people of this country? The net that the disciples cast on the other side of the boat at the Lord’s instruction, (John 21:6) produced a large and diverse abundance.

Bishop Edward Braxton, a renowned theologian who is Black and Catholic, acknowledges that “The greatest obstacle to the evangelization of black (*sic*) Americans may be the fact that the cultural, educational, economic and political situations that define the relationship between the Catholic Church and most African Americans constitutes a radical cultural divide.”⁷

Imagine this scripture-like scenario. The Lord looks and sees His created image and likeness in Black at a standstill, in the evangelization mission of Mother-Church. The Lord asks ‘Why are you wasting the whole day here doing nothing?’, and the Lord hears their response ‘no one hired us’ (Matthew 20:1-7.) This is somewhat the experience of the Black Catholic community. They are interested in serving in ministry and they have responded to the call, yet they have been excluded and isolated.

⁷ Bishop Edward K. Braxton, “Evangelization: Crossing the Cultural Divide” *Origins*, vol. 27, no.16 (2 October 1997): 275 (272-279).

The experience of exclusion and isolation has been historical on many levels: local, diocesan and national. Both the secular and the sacred have been consistent in making a whole community and culture feel like the other. It is such references as—“the cultural divide” by Bishop Braxton, “other”—by Miroslav Volf and impediments of the spiritual eye, “scotomas” by Bernard Lonergan, that form the disordered look of racism. It is the impediment to the evangelization mission. Whether it be corporate or personal in action, it is an affront to the human dignity.

John Paul II referred to these boundaries and frontiers of exclusion as that of sinful man (*sic*).⁸ The Church has produced documents such as *Brothers and Sisters to Us*, which categorically asserts,

Racism is not merely one sin among many; it is a radical evil that divides the human family and denies the new creation of a redeemed world. To struggle against it demands an equally radical transformation, in our own minds and hearts as well as in the structure of our society.⁹

The Church also is called to address this transformation not only in the body of its members but in its corporate mindset. The ecclesial leadership, although having written wonderful documents on the above-noted matters, has not been as aggressively proactive on the frontlines, counteracting this very relevant pro-life issue of one’s right to exist with full active participation in life with dignity and in the life of the mission of the Church. The universal identity of being “catholic” has not been embraced in the mind and spirit of those individuals who have been baptized into the faith but not evangelized into what it means to be truly catholic.

⁸ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, On Evangelization in the Modern World (EN) no. 61.

⁹ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Brothers and Sisters To Us: U.S. Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Racism in Our Day* (United States Catholic Conference, Inc.: Washington, D.C., 1979), 10.

What is an authentic “Catholic identity” and why does it matter? It matters because on the surface the presumption that one “is not Catholic if Black”, indirectly excludes them from the active and full participation in the Church. The issue of culture and cultural exclusions are eluded to in the Gospel of Matthew 15: 22-28. A Canaanite woman was begging for Jesus’ mercy and help...and Jesus responds that what He has to offer is for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Yet the woman goes on to challenge his response and it is her faith and her persistence that allows her to receive help for her daughter. Her cultural identity was perceived to be other and different from the group who were the focus of Jesus’ ministry. Yet Jesus is addressing this attitude of otherness.

Black Catholic identity and the perception of being other in many instances is the influence of a disordered look. This disordered way can be described as a disordered look at a people and a culture.

Much has been written on the “Theology of the Body” by John Paul II. “Theology of the Body” discusses the role of concupiscence and its influence on the disordered view of the image and likeness of God in the disordered perception of another’s body. The subject of that particular theological work by John Paul II is primarily about the ordered respect of the human body and human sexuality and human dignity in conjugal sacramental love, “the procreative and unitive nature of the marital relationship.”¹⁰ It is my assertion, however, that the disordered look of another’s body can as well be extended to the negative attitude toward the physical and cultural body of a people. I have discovered that others are also reflecting on this concept of addressing racism

¹⁰ Pope John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: Theology of the Body* (Boston: Pauline Books, 2006).

through the tenets of “Theology of the Body.” This became apparent in a discussion with anthropologist and historian Giles Conwill, a Black Catholic priest, who uses the term “Theology of the Body Black.”¹¹ Although Father Conwill referenced the need to take a look at this affront that racism posed to God’s creation through the lens of a Theology of the Body, he did not present or have a formulated methodology to do so. He raised it as a future prospect for reflection.

The idea of “Theology of the Body Black” resonated with me and I began to formulate my own reflections and thoughts as to how the tenets of the “Theology of the Body” should be expanded to address the disordered nature of racism on the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional aspects of those created in the Image and Likeness of God in Black. Conwill’s passing comment, “there needs to be a development of a ‘Theology of the Body Black’ to deal with the sin of racism”¹² complemented my thoughts and reflections. This new way of thinking of “Theology of the Body” is instrumental in addressing racism as an impediment to evangelization. It is a theology that leads to an intellectual conversion and a reconciliation of one’s mind, body and spirit about their brothers and sisters in Black. Yes in a sense it is an “Aggiornamento” to be able to look with new eyes “de novo.”

¹¹ Giles Conwill. In a discussion at the Black Catholic Symposium at the SMA Tenafly, New Jersey Society of African Missions, Saturday, November 10, 2012, Father Conwill, discussed the need to speak about racism against Black People from a “Theology of the Body” Context as an affront to the created Image and Likeness of God in the Body Black.

¹² Giles Conwill, Black Catholic Symposium, November 10, 2012.

M. Shawn Copeland has also begun to engage this conversation. “The body provokes theology”¹³—is the opening comment in her chapter on Body, Race and Being and her discussion on Black Body Theology. Copeland takes up this newly developing conversation noting that “Theologians and ethicists of African descent have begun explicitly to address the position and condition of the black (*sic*) body in Christian theological anthropology.”¹⁴

The concupiscence of sin is the cause of isolation and exclusion and defining people and groups as other. It is particularly the sin of racism that contributes to this disordered preconception of who makes up the body of Christ through the witness of the Catholic faith tradition:

How great, therefore, is that sin of racism which weakens the Church’s witness as the universal sign of unity among all people! How great is the scandal given by racist Catholics who would make the Body of Christ, the Church, a sign of racial oppression! Yet all too often the Church in our country has been for many a “white Church,” a racist institution.¹⁵

These are the words of the Bishops of the Church as they confront this disordered look. This disordered look hinders evangelization for it is an affront to the human dignity. It scandalizes the imprimatur “*the sacred stamp*” imprinted on the souls of God’s own creation.

The Bishops of the Church affirmed that “...the Church must respect and foster the spiritual gifts of various races and peoples and encourage the incorporation of these

¹³ M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 7.

¹⁴ Copeland, *Enfleshing*, 22.

¹⁵ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Brothers and Sisters To Us,” 8.

gifts....”¹⁶ The shepherds of the Church call the individual and the corporate body of the Church to be transformational by updating their vision and progressing forward with a spirit of repentance, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation.¹⁷ The healing of minds, bodies and spirits is necessary for this movement toward forgiveness and reconciliation. Yes, the Church needs a revival that ignites a fervor and a spirit for authentic inculturated evangelization.

Black Catholic lay women are asking, seeking and knocking at the door to be included in the evangelization mission of the Church. Black Catholic women are seeking the opportunity to carry the message of evangelization without limitations. We reject the limitation to just minister to our own; we want this to be gift to the universal Church. Black Catholic women seek to be visible in the proclamation of the kingdom of Jesus Christ in the ministry of evangelization. We want to step out, not just in faith alone but with actions and service, as laity in the full authority that is ours to claim by the right given to us in baptism.

Father Massingale, a Black Catholic priest and moral theologian has profoundly articulated the following thought. It is through the baptismal Sacrament of Initiation, that the paradox of the behavior of those who are baptized in Christ seeking authentic inclusion and those baptized in Christ exercising exclusion of others, scandalizes what it means to be one body.

For when the community reverently washes the body, lathers it in oil, and lovingly swaddles it in new garments, it communicates a belief about the reverence of life *regardless of color*...Such baptismal practices and catechesis instill within the

¹⁶ “Brothers and Sisters to Us,” 12.

¹⁷ “Brothers and Sisters to Us,” 8.

preconsciousness of believers a new understanding of social identity that is at odds with and subversive to the dominant racial cultural narratives.¹⁸

It is here that the need is obvious for what Bernard Lonergan calls “a new field of vision”¹⁹ a conversion of one’s mind, body and their spiritual eye. It is here that the broader Church needs a conversion regarding the continued invisibility of Black Catholics, Massingale quotes Lonergan to underscore this point that “what hitherto was unnoticed becomes vivid and present...what had been of no concern becomes a matter of high import.”²⁰

What is impeding a new vision, so that as evangelizers of the Church of the 21st Century, we can have the needed religious conversion? This question is the impetus of my doctor of ministry project, in practicing the healing of mind, body and spirit of my Catholic faith community. I asked the question so that the sin of racism can be addressed, for it has been the “cultural divide” impeding evangelization

Massingale cites what Bernard Lonergan classifies as “the flight from understanding”—the refusal of unwanted insight when such insight would entail changes that are costly, painful, or demanding.”²¹

The insight that is needed is the scrutinizing look and attention to the practice of a disordered look at another and an understanding of why it generates an environment of exclusion. In perceiving someone as other there is no room made for them within the

¹⁸ Bryan N. Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2010), 123.

¹⁹ Massingale, 121.

²⁰ Massingale, 160.

²¹ Massingale, 76.

circle. The exclusion of others because of difference is an example of a group's involvement in the "geography of sin" and what Catholic Social Teaching refers to as structures of sin—"actions or patterns of behavior that harm human dignity and hold back integral human development."²² Based on this definition racism could be classified as structures of sin and resonates with the language of "geography of sin." Miroslav Volf develops the concept of the geography of sin as "the field' outside of the public sphere, where no help can be procured, no witnesses are available, and no communal judgment can be passed...The preferred geography of sin is 'the outside,' where the wrongdoing can happen unnoticed and unhindered."²³ This is the concupiscence that needs to be brought into the light and challenged.

Pope John Paul II deals with the role of concupiscence as the disordered look, thought or action that causes humanity to function outside the boundaries set by God for His creation. John Paul II suggests the foundational theological writings of Thomas Aquinas were used to support the discussion of concupiscence as the disintegration of personhood, all the result of a movement away from God. It is this nature of "man (*sic*) of concupiscence" that is the force at work with the soul, body, mind, intellect and will at war with each other. It is man (*sic*) not ordered to God or others.²⁴ Miroslav Volf also notes the theology of Aquinas²⁵ that is foundational in this understanding of

²² John Paul II, "The Social Concerns of the Church" *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, (1988), paragraph 36, in *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret, Centenary Edition*, ed. Peter J. Henriot, Edward P. DeBerri, and Michael J. Schultheis (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994), 86.

²³ Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 96, 97.

²⁴ Pope John Paul II, *Man*, 171.

²⁵ Volf, 254.

concupiscence. Concupiscence allows for “The act of exclusion...by a perverted self in order to maintain its own false identity.”²⁶

It is this taking on an entirely “*new field of vision*” and “*attentiveness*” as to the need to be inclusive and embrace each other in the work of evangelization that is placed at the center of this “Aggiornamento” updating of the vision so that there can be metanoia, change and conversion that leads to forgiveness and reconciliation. It is an intellectual conversion that the “Aggiornamento” seeks in the minds of all. Lonergan refers to this as “a radical clarification and, consequently, the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity, and human knowledge. The myth is that knowing is like looking, that objectivity is seeing what is there to be seen and not seeing what is not there...”²⁷

The looking back and recalling “Sankofa” is as well an examination of our collective conscience around this issue of exclusion, isolation and alienation within Mother-Church. It is an opportunity to address the inattentiveness that has led to a feeling and paradox of being “un-son”²⁸ and un-daughter, like orphaned and motherless children. It is during this “Aggiornamento” updating the vision that the community embraces the opportunity to begin anew, to heal the relationship, and forgive the hurt and the exclusion. It is best described in the works of Volf, “Guided by the indestructible love which makes space in the self for others in their alterity, which invites the others who have transgressed to return, which creates hospitable conditions for their confession, and rejoices over their

²⁶ Volf, 95, 96.

²⁷ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), 238.

²⁸ Volf, 158.

presence....”²⁹ It is a “...receiving back the one who has broken the rules.”³⁰ Love is the ultimate measure in the mission of evangelization, love of God, self and others. It is the words of Cardinal George of Chicago that are key. “We will never evangelize what we do not love.”³¹

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” is an admonition of Proverbs 29: 18 (KJV). It is with prayerful meditation that the “Aggiornamento” is the updated vision that will beckon “Talitha koum”³² Black Catholic lay women rise up be healed, and renewed and reconciled to sing truth in the spirit of Jubilee.

²⁹ Volf, 166.

³⁰ Volf, 164.

³¹ Sherry A. Weddell, *Forming Intentional Disciples* (Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.: Huntington, Indiana, 2012), 135.

³² Mark 5:41 (Good News: The African American Bible Jubilee Edition), “Talitha koum” translated means, “Little girl, I say to you get up!” It is the summons of Jesus to a little girl as he restores her to life. It is taken from the Aramaic language.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

We come to our church “fully functioning”, knowing “who we are and whose we are”. This is a mantra of Black Catholic lay women. It is an evocative statement that speaks to our agency and our ability as evangelizers in the Catholic Church. The beckon and call was that of the Holy Spirit in the name of our Savior Jesus. It may have been a soft whisper or a silent signal generated by the Creator when God crafted and knitted us together with a divine finger. It is to this sacred summons that we move with haste and all deliberate speed. We are entirely subservient and responsive to this invitation to serve at the Creator’s pleasure. It is God’s imaginative hand that crafted us authentically Black in the image and likeness of God, truly Catholic, speaking a universal truth, as women of soul inspired by “*Sophia Wisdom*” in faith and praxis.

“What does it mean to be ‘truly black (*sic*) and authentically Catholic’? It means that we, as a people—as an African and American and Catholic people—have come of age and are beginning to act in accordance with our adulthood...”¹

Identity, ownership, empowerment and leadership are some of the struggles faced by Black Catholic women and laity in the Catholic Church.² These are the very reasons that I am on this journey. These are not new situations and circumstances. Yet I and all within

¹ Diana L. Hayes, “Strangers and Sojourners No More,” *Origins*, January 3, 1991 Vol. 20 no. 30, 477.

² Diana L. Hayes, “Strangers and Sojourners No More,” 477.

the mission of the Church are called to address the healing of mind, body and spirit so that we may all be one.

As a Black Catholic lay woman, I and others are reaching out to embrace our history, legacy, traditions and culture. Our faith and spirituality inform this quantum leap across the false cultural divide, a divide initiated by scarred vision and scared eyes. We are reaching out with opened hands and opened hearts, reconciled spirits and a mindfulness of being attentive to the sacramental commissioning to “Go and Make Disciples.”

It is in the telling of “the old story” the anamnesis, the remembrance, the calling to mind and recollection of the life, death and resurrection of the Savior, that we are led into the mystical healing and mending of our spiritual brokenness and blindness. Yet it is always through the mindfulness of the remembrance that we are renewed in the remembrance of God’s saving deeds.

My project retrieved the history and the traditions of the ancestors that built the parish of Christ the King. It is the narrative stories of the ancestors and the elders. It is the evolving narrative of the women who are walking in the footsteps of those who cleared the path for them. These narratives were revealing in that they provided insight to the life and experiences of the mothers of the Church of Christ the King, women who would not be turned away or turned around from the mission to which they were beckoned and called. Their evangelizing spirit gave birth to a newly formed faith community of Black Catholics. Their imagination and their faithfulness lives on in their narratives.

This chapter shares the theoretical foundation and insight that informs and validates all that was done from a tradition, cultural, spiritual, and faith inspired perspective. It

even gives an insight of the spiritual and psychic need to heal the fracture and division that left a community feeling like motherless children.

The Catholic Church is referred to as Holy Mother Church. Yet over the course of time the “boundaries of sinful man” has caused alienation, inattentiveness and exclusion. This has fostered an environment where Black Catholics do not feel emotionally or spiritually safe. Mother Church has not been “a good enough mother” in the language of Donald Winnicott. According to Winnicott’s “good enough mother theory”³ the good enough mother is attuned and attentive to the needs of her children. The good enough mother allows them to grow and develop and foster independence. She nurtures her children and is responsive to their need. The good enough mother empowers them to be fully equipped and fully functioning to participate in the kinship and building of family life. The good enough mother allows for the true self to be enhanced. She protects and provides for a safe environment. She provides security and offers both physical and emotional (and yes even spiritual) care. The good enough mother establishes a “holding environment,”⁴ a sanctuary where her children are protected; they feel safe and grow into their true self. The “True Self”⁵ is one of being alive and real in one’s mind, body and spirit, having feelings that are spontaneous and unforced.

It is because of the sense of isolation and being made to feel like motherless children that the Black Catholic community established their own safe havens, their holding

³ Mary Barrett, “Donald Winnicott’s - Good Enough Mother Theory and the Holding Environment” (course lecture Conflict, Anger and Forgiveness: Working Through Loss and Difference, Drew Theological School, April 17, 2013).

⁴ Mary Barrett, “Donald Winnicott’s - Good Enough Mother Theory and the Holding Environment.”

⁵ Mary Barrett, “Donald Winnicott’s - Good Enough Mother Theory and the Holding Environment.”

environments. It is our ancestors, our mothers and grandmothers whose stories I recover in the narrative collection so that the history and legacy is retrieved. It is the experiences and the hurts that we bear witness to so that we can make visible that which needs to be brought into the light. It is the gifts of our forgiving and reconciled spirit and joyful “*uncommon faithfulness*”⁶ and resilience that we offer to the Church. They are our gifts of frankincense, gold and myrrh that we bring to the Church to enrich and update her ability to be authentically evangelized and truly catholic. It is the challenge of mindful conversion after the conflict, anger, loss and differences are illuminated so that the divide can be forgiven and healed.

The ministry project provides an opportunity for Black Catholics to reflect and dialogue on our identity. It is an opportunity to voice our vision and reality in the Church,

...further and fuller discussion, dialogue and development on the part of us all—from infant to elder—is necessary for the fullness of our self-understanding to be born...this dialogue must be shared with the church at large, for it is as a part of the Roman Catholic Church—the church universal—that we are most fully defined. Yet that definition must, at the same time, encompass our understanding of being African Americans as well.⁷

The ministry project looks to history and the past to inform the vision and update the imagination of what the future can best reflect for the evangelization mission of the Church.

“Ours is a memory of survival against all odds. It is the memory of a people born in a strange and often hostile land celebrating joyously each victory despite the burdens,

⁶ M. Shawn Copeland, ed. *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009), 1.

⁷ Hayes, “Strangers and Sojourners No More,” 477, 479.

despite the pain of living as sojourners in an alien land. Today we are stating we are no longer sojourners...we are here to stay.”⁸ These words are excerpts from the lineamenta, preparation for the National Black Catholic Congress of 1992. It formatted a plan for consciousness raising. It was to address the “*needed attentiveness*” of Mother Church to assess the pulse—the vital signs of the Black Catholic community and the urgent need for “indigenous leadership.”⁹

The Sankofa...project is about that Kujichagulia moment, the self-determining and self-defining action of Black Catholic women of the laity affirming and speaking their truth. We have been told that “your black (*sic*) cultural heritage enriches the Church and makes her witness of universality more complete...you are a part of the Church, and the Church is part of you...”¹⁰ We stand in full witness, confirmed in our belief of this truth. Our Black Catholic voice of women free and unbridled is a liberating and healing word that is of service.

Diana L. Hayes and M. Shawn Copeland are the two theoreticians whose writings and theology have informed the what, how and why of this ministry project. They have written extensively on the role of culture, tradition, and race, history, faith and the role of women through the lens of their social location of being Black Catholic lay women.

The role of history and memories are the wisdom seeds that nourish their philosophical and theological insights and discernment. They “stand in their mothers’ shoes”¹¹ (the sheroes and women ancestors of the bloodline and church mothers.) Those

⁸ Hayes, “Strangers and Sojourners No More,” 481.

⁹ Hayes, *Ibid.*, 477.

¹⁰ John Paul II, “Address to the African American Catholics,” New Orleans, Louisiana, September, 1987.

¹¹ Diana L. Hayes, *Standing in the Shoes My Mother Made* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

women who have been “*forged in the fiery furnace*”¹² of experience and suffering. They emerge “*enfleshing freedom*”¹³ through their recovered narratives of this great cloud of witnesses.

These theologians walk the mission of kin (g) dom¹⁴ building by allowing their insights to be a call for conversion and renewal and the updating of disordered ways of being that hinder the authenticity of what it truly means to be Catholic. It is through the selected publications of Diana L. Hayes and M. Shawn Copeland that this chapter highlights and substantiates the various aspects of my project. The project finds its validity and support in the words, metaphors, and symbols, theological thought, and methodology and praxis that mirror the works of these theologians, whose shoulders I stand on. They are my mentors and my elders in this mission of evangelization.

Sankofa, the recovery of the history, is informed by these words of Copeland, “...In order to understand the active reception and transmission of this gift by Black Catholics, the history of that reception must be uncovered...”¹⁵ Copeland provides the understanding that a correct narrative of the history of Black Catholics can only be achieved by the retrieval of those retentions and memories that evolve from the African Cultural context that continues to inform the ways of knowing even in the unknowing of the people of the African Diaspora. In essence this provides a healing of the distorted history and ideas about the reality of the experiences of a peoples’ truth. Tradition

¹² Diana L. Hayes, *Forged in the Fiery Furnace* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2012).

¹³ M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race and Being* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010).

¹⁴ Diana L. Hayes, “Standing in My Mother’s Shoes: My Call to Ministry” (paper and lecture at Academy of Homiletics Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia: November 11, 2010), 4.

¹⁵ M. Shawn Copeland, “Tradition and Traditions of African American Catholicism,” *Theological Studies*, vol. 61, no. 4 (December 2000), 632 (632-655).

provides an insight into the mechanism of the uncommon faithfulness and fidelity to the Gospel and how the ancestors “not only received and appropriated the faith, but preserved and handed on that faith to successive generations.¹⁶ It is this very same action that was taken in my crafting of the Roundtable Narrative Events with the genogram activity of the multi-generation experience at Christ the King. This agency provides the retrieval of the history of the women of Christ the King and how they were able to build a Church for themselves and their families. It is a church that now still lives forming the faith of the sixth generation of descendants who have received the faith, history and traditions. Speaking of the ancestors, Copeland says, “these men and women not only contributed to Tradition, but created the condition by which their descendants in the faith could enter into the process of traditioning, that is, of discovering, testing, and nurturing their own authentic ways of doing expressing matters related to faith- of being Black Catholic.”¹⁷

“Tradition” provides not only the relevance of the retrieval of the history but the methods and manner in which it is relived and accentuated through the cultural practices and spirituality that enliven the memories in our everyday living and witness. Copeland provides the contemporary Black Catholic retrieval of African Cultural retention interpreted through the lens of popular religion.¹⁸ She delineates the use of ancestor veneration, libation, and the role of African spirituality of the Bakonga people and their symbolism of the cosmogram and the Kalunga line. Copeland also discusses the

¹⁶ Copeland, “Tradition,” 635.

¹⁷ Copeland, “Tradition,” 636.

¹⁸ Copeland, “Tradition,” 632.

significance of using the circle motif to validate the generational connections “the circle of life.” She gives extensive detail of the correlation of these practices and symbols with the dual influences from both African and Catholic tradition. She provides the context for the authority and legitimacy of the role of the ancestors from both the African and Catholic perspective, “...they are not mental concepts but historical people...”¹⁹ It sets a firm awareness that there exists no duality in being authentically Black and truly Catholic.

Copeland provides in “Tradition” a description and a visualization of a commemoration, “... that is informed by the historic struggle of peoples of African descent for spiritual, cultural and social freedom and informs that struggle in the present. This popular religious ritual of the commemoration brings together BaKongo and Roman Catholic regard for the dead...”²⁰ Copeland incorporates the language and rhythm of the drum, song, dance, and ritual walk and the recitation of the narrative story by the Griot.

The methodology of the Sankofa and the Roundtable Events as well as the Jubilee Event are validated and represented in this discussion by Copeland in “Tradition.” It provides the substantive documentation that the use of ancestor veneration, retrieval of cultural history and retentions and narrative stories across the generations are healing and empowering to the spiritual and religious ministry of pastors and congregations. Copeland also provides the acknowledgment that retrieving examples of how the ancestors and elders lived and witnessed to the faith even during very disturbing circumstances, is the influence that shapes the lives and ministries of Black Catholic

¹⁹ Copeland, “Tradition,” 650.

²⁰ Copeland, “Tradition,” 648.

thought and praxis. It is important for it to be seen by the community. She places this public presentation as a witness to further strengthen the minister and the community “to live a life worthy of their calling.”²¹ The purpose of the Jubilee Event in my research was to do just this, provide the recovered history and legacy updated with a renewed spirit so that the women could joyfully share their evangelizing spirit with the entire Church.

Diana L. Hayes provides the authority and the foundation for women called into service for such a sacred task. I use the social location of women because it is my experience. It is how I enter into the salvation history and ministry of fulfilling the beckon and call of my Savior. I am a Black Catholic woman and laity. Yet these very aspects of who I am are the very pieces that have been the source of much pain and suffering to fulfill this witness that I have been called to reflect. This identity, the restriction and attempts to bridle these parts, have been the very factors that at one time led me away from the beckon and call. In a world that sees my Blackness as sin (curse), My Catholic “faith tradition” as superstition, my “womanist” gender as scandalous and my call to ministry as sacrilegious, it is a wonder that I do not run and hide under a rock. Yet as revealed in the language and theology of Diana L. Hayes, we need not hide under the rock but stand in the shoes our mothers made for us. They as women, Black Catholic women—Black Christian women of faith—forged a legacy for us to know that we do not stand alone. We stand on the shoulders and in the shoes of a mighty cloud of witnesses.

In *Faith of Our Mothers: Catholic Womanist God-Talk*, Hayes provides the guidance for us as Black Women to recover our story and tell our truth in a way that can only be told by Black women. She validates our right to speak our truth through our popular

²¹ Copeland, “Tradition,” 650.

language, “nommo” creative style of signifying, or sister talk with our colorful nuances and unspoken words, and as well with our academic and professional voice and myriad of ways of self-expression. This affirmation is the creative fire for the Jubilee Event, Black Religious Expressions in the vernacular of the women across genres. She reminds us that women as the community’s “...bearers of culture...have historically forged new ways of being and speaking in the world.”²² In, “Here I Am, Send Me,” Hayes provides a model for the faithful prophet of today adhering to the beckon and call. She brings attention to the necessity of our “attentiveness” to the fact that we are called into the ministry of evangelization. It is through the lens of the Vatican II Church Council that Hayes presents the mission and updated vision of the Council ancestor, “...earnestly and fearlessly to dedicate ourselves to the work needed to be done in this modern age of ours...”²³ These words of Pope John XXIII set the tone for Hayes’ discussion, to look with new eyes at the role that women are called to fulfill in the work of the Church. She places a magnifying glass on the intent of the council, which at the time of this project was celebrating its 50th Jubilee. Hayes presents the background behind the Council, a recalling of “...the sacred heritage of Christian truth with greater efficacy while at the same time safeguarding it in its integrity...to transmit it in all its purity, undiluted, undistorted.”²⁴ She quotes the language of the Council father particularly when she comments that John XXIII’s call for Aggiornamento was to update the doctrine. It was

²² Diana L. Hayes, “Faith of Our Mothers: Catholic Womanist God-Talk” *Uncommon Faithfulness*, ed. M. Shawn Copeland (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009), 144.

²³ Diana L. Hayes, “Here I Am Send Me: Called to be Faithful Prophets” (lecture and paper presented at Call to Action Annual Meeting: Milwaukee: November 2010.), 1.

²⁴ Hayes, “Here I Am Send Me,” 1.

not to change the truth of the Gospel message and tradition of the Church upon which its doctrine is based. The intent was to refresh the doctrine and allow it to speak to the people and the “signs of the times...to fully understand and implement those teachings and apply them to their own times...”²⁵

It is with the warrant and mandate of the Council documents that Hayes builds a case for updating the vision “Aggiornamento” to be inclusive of diverse cultures, women, and laity. She notes the ground breaking event of the Council being “truly ecumenical” with the presence of our sister churches in Christ, and representatives of non-Christian religions along with the laity as observers and even women. Although the laity and women were silent with no voice (*Guests in Their Own House*, is a foundational read about this experience of the Catholic women of Vatican II and how they were seated at the back of the room. Clergy of the other faiths with their wives were seated in more prominent locales than the women of Mother Church who were consistently seated at the back.)²⁶ Hayes presents John XXIII’s desire to address the need of the present time for a Church that acts with “...a new enthusiasm, a new joy and serenity of mind...”²⁷

Hayes addresses the need for metanoia. She points out our need to let go of the fear. She addresses the fact that we are afraid to risk meeting God who presents as the other, in the lived experience of those unknown or different from ourselves. These Vatican II ideals and theology are employed in the Aggiornamento Event of the project. It is in the

²⁵ Hayes, “Here I Am Send Me,” 2.

²⁶ Carmel McEnroy, *Guests in Their Own House: The Women of Vatican II* (New York: Crossroads, 1996) 3, 5.

²⁷ Hayes, “Here I Am Send Me,” 4.

use of prayer, meditation and reflection that we seek to look inwardly, turn toward God that we might be able to turn to the other and embrace and be renewed.

It is the works of the ancestors, the mothers of the Church that are visionary and prophetic. It was as well the gift that was needed to move the faithful forward from fear and exclusion to a joyful awareness of our communal and spectacular vision, a church of transfiguration, the church on the hill.

Chapter Two asked the question, Kingdom Building in the Church of the 21st Century: Is There A Place for Black Catholic Lay Women in the Evangelization Mission of the Church? Hayes puts forth that in the Kin (g) dom of Jesus Christ yes there is a place.

CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGY AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The title of the Doctor of Ministry Project is *Sankofa, Aggiornamento and Jubilee: Recalling Yesterday, Envisioning Today, Imagining Tomorrow: Black Catholic Lay Women Evangelizing the Church*. It is a look at the history, tradition and culture of a faith community and its impact on the evangelization mission.

The scope of the project is the recovery (Sankofa) of the history and narrative stories of the parish and the Black Catholic lay women who built the parish as a safe haven for the evangelization of the African Americans of the 1930's. It allows the knowledge of the history and legacy of these women to inform the imagination and create a vision. This leads to (Aggiornamento) bringing up to date a new inculturated evangelization within the 21st Century. This can address the issues that impede evangelization within the Church, particularly as it relates to the African American community. The inculturated evangelization provides for the (Jubilee) as the Church celebrates the 50th anniversary of Vatican Council II and the documents that empowered the role of laity, women and culture in the mission of evangelization.

Tradition in the life of the Catholic experience and the African Diaspora motivated the incorporation of Sankofa, Aggiornamento into the project methodology. Joy is a fundamental characteristic of Black Catholic Spirituality. The Jubilee event conveyed the Sankofa and Aggiornamento and the liberating change that is evoked through authentic

joyful witness. The words of Jurgen Moltmann crystallizes the intent: "...Even when we may happen to be mourning . . . , we can accept the past without loss of identity since we can be another person and have moved beyond our selves."¹

The overall approach was methodological triangulation as classified by Denizen. It involves the use of more than one method to gather data², e.g. the parish sacramental records, Archdiocesan archival documents and newspaper reports, previously established body of knowledge and interviews, narrative oral collections, questionnaires and observations. The three areas of triangulation are: 1) Sankofa—archival retrieval and historical data and oral narrative collection and research review of literature 2) Aggiornamento- spiritual renewal and prayer 3) Jubilee Event- Black Religious Expression. It was an opportunity to check information from different sources for consistency and or validity. The information from the archives and church records, the oral narrative collections and the telling of the narrative stories in the Jubilee were consistent in that they confirm and tell the story of the foundation of CTK.

Project Design and Technique

Sankofa

The power of the spoken word, in the culture of the African Diaspora and in the proclamation of the Word within the Christian community, is the basis for the use of narrative stories in the retrieval of the history. The power of a joyful spirit to affirm and build up and renew and facilitate change is the premise for the theory of Appreciative

¹ Jurgen Moltmann, *Theology of Joy* (London: SCM Press, 1973), 63.

² Norman K. Denizen, *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods A Sourcebook*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), 291.

Inquiry. “Appreciative Inquiry provides an organizational-wide mode for initiating and discerning narratives and practices that are generative (creative and life giving). Then Appreciative Inquiry guides and nourishes (“reconstructs”) the organization along the line of its best stories.”³

The Symbolism of the Roundtable as Circle

A roundtable event around a meal was designed to facilitate an environment of hospitality and unity. This particular methodology of using food and hospitality as an effective tool is noted in *Know Your Story and Lead with It: The Power of Narrative in Clergy Leadership*.⁴ The use of an actual roundtable was symbolic of a circle. A circle symbolizes an unbroken line and this represents unity. The circle was used to represent the cosmogram symbolism of the ancient spirituality of the people of the African Diaspora. “The philosophic and visual tradition of the cosmogram has had a decisive and perduring influence on blacks [sic] enslaved in the Americas.”⁵ The circle is representative of the life cycle linking those who have gone on with those who live and those who are to come (pre-natal, birth, life, death, eternity). I used the roundtables as visual context of the multigenerational voices of the ancestors and the descendants.

Our stories emerge out of the stories of the ancestors. The individual number of five roundtables was representative of the five generations that evolved out of the community

³ Mark Lau Branson, *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield 2004), 19.

⁴ Richard L. Hester & Kelli Walker-Jones, *Know Your Story and Lead with It: The Power of Narrative in Clergy Leadership* (Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2009), 23.

⁵ M. Shawn Copeland, “Foundations for Catholic Theology in an African American Context,” Jamie T. Phelps, ed., *Black and Catholic: The Challenge and Gift of Black Folk* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee University Press, 1998), 118.

known as Christ the King. The embedded meaning of the circle represented by the roundtables was to deliberately symbolize what Diana Butler Bass calls the “circle of generativity.”⁶ This was to connect the integrality of tradition, narratives and practices: “...Tradition is embodied in practices and practices convey meaning through narrative.”⁷

Creating the story, proclaiming the story and empowering the story were the concepts operating in the methodology. The methodology is rooted in creating a voice, agency and action. Brigid M. Sackey refers to it as a method that incorporates “...narrative, reflexive approach...threefold method in one-namely it allows women to speak for themselves, it allows them to hear themselves speak, and it enables women to be heard by others...”⁸

The roundtable dinner setting provided the sense of hospitality and nurture. It set the tone of being at a family dinner, reminiscent of past times where stories were shared and wisdom from the ancestors were passed on to all. “Before people can speak or listen openly, they must be cherished and welcomed. That welcome must come from a deep well of acceptance and grace. We care about you, and want to make you feel at home. Come, join us at the table.”⁹

Deliberate attention was paid to creating a space that was inviting, secure and welcoming for the participants to feel safe in sharing their memories and their stories.

⁶ Larry A. Golemon, Editor, *Teaching Our Story: Narrative Leadership and Pastoral Formation* (Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2010), 7.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Brigid M. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 78.

⁹ Richard L. Hester & Kelli Walker-Jones, 24.

This aspect of hospitality of providing not just nourishment but a safe space is a biblical example of hospitality according to Hester and Walker-Jones.¹⁰

I created a holding environment for the women to develop their narrative. Their historical and social context of being abused, disenfranchised and having their voices bridled, made it a priority for them to feel safe. It was important that their stories be protected and embraced. This is this reason that the integrity officer from the Lay Advisory Council was present to symbolize that all due diligence and attention was being paid to securing the area known as the “hush harbor.”¹¹ Brown discusses the spiritual and religious practices of the enslaved ancestors and how they share their testimonies or personal narratives about conversion. They took particular precautions to gather in secret to ensure their safety, “...a private place...the prayin’ ground, and the ‘hush harbor.’”¹²

Rituals of Renewal

Aggiornamento

Aggiornamento is the updating of the vision and renewal. Rituals of traditional Catholic spirituality and practices were used to facilitate the metanoia, the change and updated vision that was central to the project. The use of the rituals and spiritual practices were centered in the belief that rituals serve a great role in helping people to reflect on their past and move forward with a sense of renewal. Anthropologist Victor Turner notes this in his definition of ritual, “Ritual serves the purpose of changing

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Joseph A. Brown, *To Stand on the Rock: Meditations on Black Catholic Identity* (New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 118.

¹² Ibid.

society. Ritual is an activity in which people move from their ordinary daily life across a threshold In that state, normal social activities and ways of relating are suspended, and people lay aside roles and statuses that ordinarily separate them from each other. . . .”¹³

According to Turner, ritual has the capacity to move the group into an interior aspect of themselves as one in an inclusive activity of discernment “open to different ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. They often leave this space having been changed. And that personal change may lead to social change.”¹⁴ I used the language of Turner to paraphrase the contemplative mood of Aggiornamento as the subjunctive mood where the question is asked “What if God is calling us to this task?”¹⁵

Black Religious Expressions

Jubilee

I merged the faith stories of Sankofa with the spiritual works of Aggiornamento to create the Jubilee event. The result was the joyful Black Religious Expression of praise by the participants after experiencing the history and lament of the ancestors and elders. The Jubilee Event is the joy that comes after weeping (Ps 30:5). The genealogies that were developed from the research, and the roundtable events contributed to the communal artistic genogram story portrayed in the Jubilee. It allowed for the linking of the stories to the generational connections and for an opportunity to share those qualities and characteristics that were integral to the history of the church and the families of the

¹³ Richard L. Hester & Kelli Walker-Jones, p. 23

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

participants. The therapeutic use of genograms for the recovery of memories and in sharing one's narrative was an effective method of connecting the individual family narratives to the overall narrative history of the Church.

Methodology Approach

The methodology approach was qualitative and included both ethnographic and proactive research techniques. It was ethnographic for two reasons: first it was an attempt to “understand the culture of faith community”¹⁶ that contributed to the development of CTK and secondly I did engage in the activities of a participant observer, “locating and engaging with...key informants, and found documents...examination of artifacts, symbols, rituals...verbatim accounts of relationship encounters....”¹⁷

The proactive research method was also employed, as described in *Narrative Research in Ministry*.

Here the researcher makes no pretense at objectivity, though every attempt is made to be open to the unfolding story of the research culture, and to avoid imposing an unfit or objectionable agenda upon it...with the proactive methods the leader/researcher joins the culture proactively, with the intention of deliberately working toward an identified, agreed-upon agenda for change. The goal of proactive research is not only understanding but transformation.¹⁸

I was invested in the emerging narrative and recovery as it was the story of my ancestors and informed my own narrative and role in ministry as a part of the legacy of CTK.

The liturgical season of Lent sets the theme of “metanoia” change and conversion and spiritual healing to begin anew. This is the foundation upon which the spiritual practices

¹⁶ Carl Savage and William Presnell, *Narrative Research in Ministry* (Louisville, Kentucky: Wayne E. Oates Institute, 2008), 108.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 109.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

and traditions of Catholic ritual are used as to manifest “updating the vision” Aggiornamento. I engaged the spiritual practices of prayer, fasting and the season of Lent to create an environment of spiritual movement toward a desire for change. It is the phase of updating the vision of a parish from one that exists in isolation to one that is willing to engage in ministry within the broader aspects of Mother Church at the Archdiocesan level. ‘Open wide the doors of Christ’ was the mantra echoed by the Catholic Church at the start of the 21st millennium. That mandate for action and invitation is embedded in the Aggiornamento phase as well as throughout the project.

It is the movement toward the mission of the new evangelization using the oral narratives of the women. Aggiornamento is about the spiritual healing and resolution of an age old conflict and wound suffered by those who are Black and Catholic in the Church of Newark. During Aggiornamento, through “Ritual of the Scrutinies,” the parish journeyed toward letting go of past hurts, anger and hostilities and opened themselves to healing the wounds with forgiveness and renewal.

I scheduled Invitatory and Morning Prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours on Saturday mornings to pray for the Aggiornamento updating of the vision of the parish. It was an opportunity for the stories presented by the women to be lifted up and offered for transformation and renewal of the mind, spirit and body and the vision of the community.

Because the issues of racism, isolation and exclusion were so central to the core development and life experience of this faith community, Aggiornamento was structured as an opportunity for liberation and transformation.

Jubilee was a public recitation of the history communicated to the current parishioners and the broader community associated with Christ the King. It is through the use of the

narrative, coupled with the artful expression of the stories and shared gifts that the history and witness of the ancestors and elders was used to enhance the vision of the CTK of today and its new evangelizing mission.

The power of this type of methodology, connecting the creative power of narrative work in hopes of updating and renewing the vision of the faith community, is supported by the work of Diana Butler Bass in her study of congregational practices and their ability to engage. She encourages "... well-placed and well-crafted narratives to link congregational practices to both religious tradition and local context."¹⁹ The value of this methodology is captured in the following assessment: "The congregations in Bass's research love to tell stories: of individual faith journeys, of their church's past, of their surrounding communities, of their own tradition. However, they do so not to just reclaim the past but primarily to help discern the present and imagine a new future."²⁰ The Jubilee design was based in the metaphor of a communal recovery, renewal and celebration. The methodology was based in the praxis suggested by Ron Heifetz and Sharon Parks as adaptive leadership and organizational storytelling, storytelling in a manner that "...helps the organization close the gap between long-held values and changing realities...reshape it in line with a new, adaptive vision."²¹

Jubilee allowed for the expression of Aggiornamento as the updated vision through the shared oral stories presented by the participants. It is the updated vision of the

¹⁹ Larry A. Goleman, Editor, *Finding Our Story Narrative Leadership and Congregational Change* (The Alban Institute 2010), 7-8.

²⁰ Golemon, *Finding*, 9.

²¹ Goleman, *Finding*, 12-13.

metaphor of the good enough mother or mother-church as the safe haven. The work of Jubilee emerged out of “turning the work over to the group,” as a collaborative action.”²²

The genre of expression for the Jubilee was intentional. Black Religious Expression is the embodiment of the spirituality of the descendants of the African Diaspora. The manner of exhortation, the intonation of expressions, the body language and signifying and even the silence all enhance and empower what is being shared and expressed. It is the soul of the people. It communicates beyond the words.

Black Religious Expression of the oral narrative is communicated in the dance and movement of the body. It is also in the clapping of the hands, the tapping of the foot, the nodding of the head and the moaning, deep moaning of the spirit.

...Meaning had to be uttered rather than spoken through something more primal than the particularity of language-the moan. The moan became the first vocalization of a new spirituality vocabulary-terrible and wonderful, it was a cry, a critique, a prayer, a hymn, a sermon, all at once. The moan facilitated and expressed the captive’s vague intuition of what latter would be identified with the Exodus God who hears the groans of the oppressed and intervenes on behalf for liberation. Although the captives could not name this God, the Divine was invoked and acknowledged in the moan.²³

The art, the music, the lyrics, and the tempo of the pulse of the participants are all crafted to convey the full narrative of the people of Christ the King, Black and Catholic and Joyfully So. This principle of the methodology of the role of genre in telling one’s story symbolized the value of the Jubilee speaking in the vernacular of the people the Black Religious Expression.²⁴

²² Ibid., 15.

²³ James A. Noel, *Black Religion and the Imagination of Matter in the Atlantic World*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 152.

²⁴ Golemon, *Teaching*, 18.

Selection and Training of the Lay Advisory Council

Selection Process

The council consisted of nine lay women of Christ the King. They are a cross section of the women of the parish. Additionally, I added a lay theologian on Black Catholic Laity and Womanist Theology. Her expertise is in the areas of liberation theology, and Black Catholic Spirituality, history and culture and its influences on the mission of Black Catholic women.

Rosemary, the chairperson, was the liturgy coordinator. She has experience in academic thesis and project development and grant writing. She served as a facilitator for the narrative collections and assisted with the development of the pre-test questionnaire.

Anne, the parish administrative assistant and accountant, helped provide oversight for the budget and reimbursements for the fiscal costs of the project. She assisted with the spirituality component for the Lay Advisory Council review workshops on the Church of Today Vatican II documents on Aggiornamento and Evangelization. She was a scribe at the roundtable event and facilitated the libation and candle lighting ceremony for the Jubilee Event.

Alma is a member of the parish finance committee and the women's spirituality Bible study. She assisted with the proofreading of draft copies of the development of the Prospectus and distributed public relations information on the project to parishioners who have moved away. She also served as a scribe for the collection of the narrative stories at the roundtable event.

Lydia, a graduate of the Performing School of Arts, and her two daughters Nicole and Megann, assisted me with the direction and coordination of the Jubilee Event. They also assisted with the facilitation and implementation of the project design that I created for the Black Religious Expression of the Jubilee and Lydia served as a facilitator at the roundtable collection.

Iris, educator and liturgical lector, facilitated at the roundtable dinner events. She also assisted with the integrity of the Appreciative Inquiry process among the Lay Advisory Council and through the oral narrative collections.

Diana is member of the hospitality committee. She facilitated the recruitment project for participants in the oral narrative collection and assisted in the distribution of all flyers and bulletins and notices throughout the parish. She assisted with contacting each of the parish ministries with updates on the parish ministry project and was the hospitality minister on the day of Jubilee segment, welcoming guests for the event and coordinating the refreshments. She was a facilitator at the roundtable events.

Patrice is a member of the pastoral council leadership and also a liaison for the developing young adult ministry. She assisted me with the recruitment of young adult women and elder women participants in the project. She was a scribe at the roundtable events.

Margaret is chairperson of the parish hospitality ministry and the parish public relations graphic program designer. She assisted with the implementation of my creative ideas for the programs, flyers, bulletin announcements and invitations. She created the advertisements, publicized the calendar of events and generated bulletin updates as to the progress of the project and all miscellaneous communication and public relations data.

Chyme served as the integrity officer for securing all recording devices and scribe pads from the roundtable events. She was the gatekeeper of the roundtable oral narrative and safeguarded the environment. She monitored the integrity of the collection process of the consents and the pre-test questionnaire. She served as a scribe at the roundtable events.

Training

The Lay Advisory Council agreed to meet each Sunday at 12:15 pm. The team gathered in the church hall in the same location designated for the Roundtable Event oral narrative collection. December 7, 2014 was the first of several sessions. The training sessions were designed to inform the team on how to effectively collect the narratives. The sessions were set up as workshops and included the Didache on the understanding and background of the language of Sankofa, Aggiornamento and Jubilee and what it entailed for the purpose of the project. The Prospectus was reviewed in detail. The team affirmed their commitment to follow the integrity of the Prospectus.

The training sessions included discussions on the theory of Appreciative Inquiry and how to put it into practice, a review of the Documents of Vatican II and the value of Aggiornamento, the power of narrative stories to facilitate change, and the relevance of the symbols and imagery, e.g. circles to reinforce the value of connectedness.

The sessions were formatted as workshops so that the team could role play and practice the technique of their function as facilitators and scribes. Technical practice on the use of the voice recorders and microphones was incorporated into the workshops. The scribes were given an example of how to make the written notations of the oral narratives. They were reminded that grammar and spelling were not as important as

capturing the narrative in its full context. It was also stressed not to ask questions or interrupt during the narrative recitation.

The background on the purpose of Appreciative Inquiry and its value to the project was highlighted. It was explained that “by discovering the best and most valuable narratives and qualities of an organization, participants can construct a new way that has the most important links to the past and the most hopeful images of the future.”²⁵ It was important that the team felt comfortable with this process as it would influence the participants’ sense of security and feeling safe to tell their story. Branson observes that “People have more confidence in the journey to the future when they carry forward parts of the past.”²⁶ The Appreciative Inquiry theory was integral to the Sankofa, Aggiornamento and Jubilee movement toward change. There were some role playing opportunities included. To speak in the affirmative to a circumstance as opposed to addressing the problem of or a situation was a shift for most of the group. Speaking from an attitude of hope was communicated in the training, since this can promote a sense of positive thinking.²⁷ An outline of various factors that influence or impede change in organizations was discussed

Research on the power of genealogy and knowing ones’ roots was shared with the group. The recent research showed that youth who knew the generational story of their families had greater self-esteem and a sense of self-worth. This research reinforced the understanding that collecting the narrative stories could facilitate change.

²⁵ Branson, 23.

²⁶ Ibid., 25.

²⁷ Ibid., 50.

I finally, incorporated into the workshops some of the practical points on negotiation and how to get the yes we needed to enhance the recruitment process, participation and cooperation of the parishioners in the doctor of ministry project. The use of the techniques of negotiation might perhaps facilitate a buy-in to the parish project.

The training sessions included development of the litany of the ancestors, libation and candle lighting ceremony for the Watch night service, Roundtable Events and the Jubilee Event.

Sankofa Phase

The Sankofa component consisted of three parts: 1) the blessing, commissioning and inauguration of the parish ministry project, 2) the research and retrieval of the historical and archived records and 3) the collection of the oral narratives at the roundtable meal event. December 31, 2013 was the inauguration of the research component. This occurred at the annual Watch-Night service of New Year's Eve. The dates designated for each aspect of the project were historically, culturally, spiritually and traditionally symbolic. New Year's Eve is a historical night of recalling the liberation for the African American and the enactment of the Proclamation of Emancipation on January 1, 1863. The community gathers to bring in the New Year recalling the past and reflecting on their legacy with thanks and praise.

Each Sunday of February (Black History Month) I presented a meditative reflection on the history and legacy that was retrieved from the archival research about the Black Catholic women who built the parish. This recitation was done in the style and tradition of the community Griot. It was the passing on the history for the edification and empowerment of the community. The parish bulletin also highlighted the key

components of the archival history. The public relations flyers and parish notice board also displayed the information.

Sankofa, looking back to retrieve the history, recall the past so that one can move forward can be viewed through the lens of a similar methodology that is formulated in Scripture. Based on the command from Deuteronomy; “Hear,” “Take care,” “Don’t forget,” and “Remember,”²⁸ Judy Fentress-Williams discussed the relevance this played in protecting the narrative identity of a people and the role of history and narrative identity. She highlighted the relationship between remembering and forgetting.

“Forgetfulness is a part of the human condition. Although we sometimes unintentionally forget, sometimes we choose to forget because we do not want to remember. We intentionally leave out aspects of the story because they are too painful to recall.”²⁹

Fentress-Williams used the text taken out of Deuteronomy 4:9— to point out that “The command to remember is in tension with the human tendency to forget.”³⁰ The value of this lesson of a people remembering its history is best summed up by “Remember,’ because memory is key to identity.”³¹ I formulated the methodology based on hearing the stories and the history, taking care to retrieve and carry back the history to the community, not forgetting the lessons of the past and remembering that the memory of the ancestors was the source of our identity. It is at the meditative segments that my

²⁸ Golemon, *Teaching*, 30.

²⁹ Golemon, 30.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

³¹ *Ibid.*

reflections given to the community was a “Hear Oh Israel” moment directed to our faith community of Christ the King—“Hear oh Christ the King” the history of your identity.

The project’s relevance and the recovered Christ the King history and its particular evangelizing potential was shared each Sunday in meditation reflections on the research. This recalling and re-membering helped to lessen some of the anxiety as people began to know the history and how it benefitted the community in the past and hopefully could be a vision of renewal in coming days. I remained mindful of the insight that I gained from the following quote, “Anxiety surfaces when people doubt their capacity to cope with an impending threat.”³² I used the benefit of the Sankofa moment, to paint the picture of past successes and strengths to stir the imagination that if the ancestors and the elders were able to find a way out of no way, then we too could.

February 3 is the feast day of St. Blaze the Patron Saint of healing for the throat and voice. The blessing of the throats of the women participants by the Pastor and Deacon was incorporated into the blessing for the oral narrative collections and the roundtable meal events. I gave an inspired exhortation calling the women to allow their accents to be a blessing to others. The women were encouraged to share their truth so that others could know the gift of Black Catholic Spirituality as an evangelizing spirit.

Throughout Black History month, parishioners were asked to participate in a Sankofa trivia challenge. The weekly challenge was a review of the retrieved history shared at the previous Sunday’s meditation reflection. The names of the individuals/or families and the original vision and mission for the parish was the focus of the challenge. This was to encourage the participation of parishioners in the oral narrative collections for the parish

³² Golemon, *Finding*, 92

ministry research project. It also provided access of the history to everyone. The biographical narrative was shared about individuals who sought long been forgotten. The Sankofa trivia challenge was intended as a trigger for people to think about their narrative stories. The weekly meditation “Sankofa, moments,” were a technique that was consistent with a methodology of leadership theory and storytelling in which a leader will “Share knowledge: stories about what a group has learned this week, what project it is discovering . . . told regularly in order to help various teams or departments in the organization share knowledge...”³³

The third segment of the Sankofa component began with the actual roundtable meal and oral narrative collection. This took place on Sunday February 23, 2014 and March 2, 2014. Twenty five women consented to participate in my parish project. Their oral narratives were collected at roundtable dinner conversations facilitated by me and the Lay Advisory Council. Each week the roundtable meal event began with a component of the archival history or legacy of Black Catholic witness.

Environment Development for the Roundtable Events

The integrity officer verified admission to the intake and distribution area by checking the names on the response RSVP list. These were the twenty five individuals who chose to participate in the project. Upon the completion of the intake and distribution process all forms, signed consents and demographic data and the Pre-test questionnaire was placed in the intake packets. The integrity officer assisted me with the collection of each packet and secured them in the collection box. Once the intake packet with signed consent was collected the participants were escorted and seated at the designated table for

³³ Larry A. Goleman, *Finding*, 16.

their roundtable meal and oral narrative collection. They were introduced to the facilitators and the scribes that assisted me with the collection process. Each table had a designated facilitator and scribe for that group for the entirety of the project.

The CTK dining hall area was used for the Sankofa roundtable meal and oral narrative retrieval. Five roundtables were situated in a circular fashion. The tables were formally dressed with tablecloths and place-settings. Each table accommodated seating for the five individual participants, a facilitator and a scribe, and me as the primary researcher. Each facilitator had a voice recorder to record the narrative of each participant. Each scribe had a large yellow pad to note the narrative stories that were shared.

Roundtable Events

Roundtable Event One

I connected the archival data information that I retrieved with my own oral narrative. The introduction of the Roundtable Event began with my own story. I correlated it to the retrieved history found in the church archives and records. I engaged the history of the ancestors, the women who served and built the church and how it informed my service and ministry at Christ the King and within the broader Catholic circles. An African folklore about the value of calling the names of the ancestors was told. The moral of the story was that this was done so that they were not forgotten.

I shared how knowing my own narrative history and sharing it some thirty years ago influenced my return to full and active participation in the Catholic Church. I presented my narrative to show how it influenced my role in ministry and my faith witness. I shared how the fruits of my faith narrative were made evident by the continued sharing of the narrative as a ministry tool.

My narrative story was connected to the role of my ancestors in the formation of Christ the King Church and this background was the foundation of my social justice ministry on inculturation and evangelization. The legacy of the ancestors who were the cornerstones of Christ the King was presented to address the role of laity leadership, women and culture in the mission of the Church.

Leading with my own experiences captured the interest of the participants. The participants then became motivated to share their own individual and family narratives that connected with the ancestors of the parish. The stories told what they had personally experienced and what was heard or passed down through family narratives about the people and events of the early days of Christ the King. As one person told their story at the round table dinner, this triggered memories and a desire in others in the group to share their story. The connectedness of many of the families of the church over several generations came to light. I incorporated the development of family genograms as a roundtable activity.

Roundtable Event One connected the ancestors who established Christ the King to the shared narratives of the second generation descendants. This second generation (our parish elders) were the children of the ancestors. The ancestors were referred to as the “cornerstones” of the parish and their descendants were referred to as the “living stones”. I shared the recovered narratives of various people listed in the archives and asked the participants to acknowledge the role of these individuals in their life or their family’s experience. The retrieved history of these ancestors and elders (cornerstones and the living stones of Christ the King,) the great cloud of witnesses, was used to generate the

oral stories among the participants. They were stories of faith and how the faith of the ancestors and elders sustained them through many trials and tribulations.

Then, retrieved historical records and documents about the construction of the church were shared. One particular participant made the connection that her grandfather and his brothers were part of an industrial work team of bricklayers during the start of the Great Depression and that they had cleared the land and dug the foundation for the construction of what would become Christ the King. It was the coordination of the historical events of the time with the history of the parish that allowed this parishioner to broaden her family narrative.

Another narrative shared by an 88 year old church elder was instrumental in my updating my own narrative. When I called the names of my ancestors, this elder responded with a revelation that my ancestors were her spiritual godparents and sponsors. It was only when I linked myself to the ancestral names of my great-grand mother and my great aunts who were founding members, that she was able to provide me with particulars about the leadership role of my great-grandparents in Christ the King. This discovery that my ancestor was a major figure during this time was consistent with some of the retrieved information I found in the archives. It also enlivened my narrative as to the agency of the Black Catholic community emerging as leaders at the very advent of their faith community.

It was this “call and response” that allowed the participants to hear and learn from my various presentations and storytelling. They in return felt free to respond with a sharing

of their own gifts and narratives, “to contribute their insights and views from their own experiences.”³⁴

These activities continued to influence the emerging narrative of the individual participants, their particular families and the corporate narrative of the CTK. The revelation of these generational connections amongst ancestors also presented an opportunity for healing among some factions in the community. Individuals who had longstanding conflicts began to look at each other with new eyes, as they retrieved the knowledge that in past times their ancestors had been friends and even benefactors to each other. The Sankofa Roundtable Events, Aggiornamento and Jubilee segments were formulated to present retrieved history, share oral stories, and tell the journey of the Christ the King experience, and also to “knit together human beings in the relational networks that sustain us all.”³⁵

Roundtable Event Two

On this occasion, I shared the stories that told what lived under the surface of the historical retrieval. The hushed stories of information about the exclusion that precipitated the formation of the parish. I shared my own witness of being Black and Catholic and female in a world that did not often value my ethnicity, faith praxis or gender. Presenting my experiences as being “other” in hostile environments was the trigger to the memories with which many still struggled, memories of being a faith community formed in response to the racism and prejudices of others that were still a

³⁴ Larry A. Goleman, *Living Our Story Narrative: Leadership and Congregational Culture* (Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2010), 115.

³⁵ Ibid.

sore in the mind, body, and spirit of Christ the King and in the lived experiences of its members. The participants were provided an opportunity to share their own oral narrative and experiences of faith struggles of being both Black and Catholic.

It was the first time that individual and corporate experiences of exclusion, assaults and insults were shared in a communal setting across generations. One participant, for example, shared how her great grandchildren did not understand why the parish was considered a Black Catholic parish instead of a Catholic parish. It was their perspective that if we were Catholic that we should stop using Black Catholic if we were to be universal. Yet on the day of the Jubilee event when the context of the tradition, culture, history and personal experiences were shared these great-grandchildren and many others in the assembly understood the self-identification was not one of exclusion but one of embrace and safety.

I used a Scriptural warrant “Come to the him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God” (1 Peter 2:4 NAB) as an initiative to discuss the historical reality of needing a safe haven to worship and to exist as Black Catholic people in the Church of the 20th Century. The archival history of the parish was shared in the context of the social location and history of the Black Catholic witness in general and its impact on the motivation for the formation of the safe haven known as the Church of Christ the King.

Roundtable Event Two was also the retrieval of the Sankofa history of those conversations and dialogues and events that strain the relationship of Black Catholic Laity within the general Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Newark. It focused on the difficulties of evangelizing in a Church that limits the full and active participation of

people because of bias and bigotry. The scotoma, blind spots or scarring in the spiritual eyes that disavow the experiences of another person's social location and context, were discussed. I called this sharing of the history of Christ the King and the impediment of racism that they experienced, "Theology of the Body Black"³⁶

I began the session by singing a verse from *Lift Every Voice and Sing, the National Black Anthem*, "...Stony the road we trod..."³⁷ I used it to introduce the theme of the sometimes troubled existence of being both Black and Catholic in world that sees it as a stumbling block. The issues of Black Catholic women were discussed from the lived reality of being Black and Catholic in a world that thinks the two are dichotomous.

As the Griot speaking in the voice of the ancestors, I shared their struggles. I shared my lived difficulties historically and personally as a Black Catholic woman who serves in lay ministry. This opened the door for the deeper oral sharing of the hurts, disillusion and anger that has precipitated some to leave the Catholic Church. It was this segment that set the foundation for the Aggiornamento—the scrutiny and reconciliation that opened the door for healing of past and current injuries and movement to be a new vision for the Church of the future.

The warrant of Scripture "This is the stone that will make people stumble, the rock that will make them fall" (1 Peter 2:8 [Good News Bible]) was used as a fundamental challenge in this session. I facilitated the use of the oral narratives to serve as lament. It provided a space of openness for the cry of the voice of a suffering people. It was the

³⁶ Giles Conwill, Black Catholic Symposium at the SMA, Saturday, November 10, 2012 see footnote no. 11 in Chapter 3.

³⁷ James Weldon Johnson, *The National Black Anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing"*, Jacksonville, Florida, February 12, 1990.

safe haven to challenge the Church to be authentic in its witness as a fully inculturated evangelizing mission.

The retrieved history was life-giving. It provided the action plan of how the ancestors challenged the isolation and exclusion. The participants were able to draw on the actions of the past to envision themselves working toward changing some of the troubling circumstances within their present community at Christ the King. Paraphrasing the words of the late Sister Thea Bowman, the women of Christ the King were emerging fully equipped and competent to proclaim the inculturated evangelizing message of the Church. “What does it mean to be black (*sic*) and Catholic? It means that I come to my church fully functioning. I bring myself, my black (*sic*) self...I bring my whole history, tradition, experience, culture. I bring my African-American song, dance, gesture, movement; preaching, teaching, healing; responsibility.”³⁸ We were in the language of the Black Catholic community “authentically Black and truly Catholic witnesses of uncommon faithfulness.”

The women were brought to a remembrance that it is in the faith witnessing to the lived experiences of the people, the sense of the faithful that one effectively evangelizes. This is the teaching of the Church exposed in all of its documents and pastorals on evangelization. It paraphrases the common knowledge of what it means to be an evangelizing people. It is the core message of updating the vision, *Aggiornamento*.

³⁸ Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA, “To Be Black and Catholic,” *Origins*, July 6, 1989. Vol. 19: No. 8. 114-118.

Aggiornamento Phase

March 5, 2014 Ash Wednesday: Reflection and Renewal

I, along with the Lay Advisory Council and the participants, made a sign and symbol gesture of forgiveness and reconciliation. We acknowledged and forgave the hurt, injury and harm that were brought out in the narrative collection. We forgave the issues that served as an impediment to our full and active participation in the evangelization mission. During the Lenten season and the month of March, the parish prayed for spiritual growth. It was a time of updating a renewal of our vision as evangelizers not just to ourselves but to the greater Catholic and African American community.

Each Sunday of Lent, particularly on the third, fourth and fifth Sundays, classified as “The Scrutinies”, parish contemplatives gathered for prayer, praying for the success of the parish project to enhance evangelization through our gifts, talents and time. The Friday observance of the Stations of the Cross included a reflection on the act of forgiveness, healing and reconciliation.

I reviewed and mined each of the oral narrative stories. I reviewed each tape recording and read through the written accounts. I compared the oral collection and the written documentation with my research retrieval from parish records, and Archdiocesan archival information and writings. I reviewed the oral narratives in the context of the historical events of the time and looked for and made correlations of the facts and circumstances that placed the oral narratives of the participants into the broader context of the history, tradition and cultural events of their social location.

Having listened through the voice recordings, read the written notes and recalled my own engagement with the participants around their testimonies, I catalogued the

narratives in a thread that linked the events into a broader narrative to be shared during the Jubilee Event.

Jubilee Action Plan

The action plan for the participants was the proclaiming of their oral stories of faith witness in a community Jubilee celebration. I facilitated the individual and group participation. I coordinated their talents and treasures through the genre of Black Religious Expression. It consisted of the oral narrative through spoken word, extemporaneous recitation, song, dance, drama and artistic demonstration. The Jubilee Event was the embodied spirit of the ancestors' voices and stories merged with the oral narrative collection of the participants. It provided the opportunity for the participants to tell their story, in a creative fashion of Black Religious Expression. Jubilee was crafted in a genre specific to the spirituality of who the participants were as a Black and Catholic entity. It portrayed the archival historical facts, the retrieved history, oral narratives and the meditative reflections that were integral to the Sankofa and Aggiornamento.

The Jubilee Event was a collaborative effort. It was an invitation for the participants to share their gift to the community. It was also designed so that the individual narrative was merged into a corporate narrative of the church so that each could see themselves as a piece of the arc of a circle. Although I facilitated the recalling of histories and memories, it was their story to tell and share. Jubilee was designed to incarnate the word of the oral narrative in a creative manner that sings the Jubilee message of an inculturated witness through the Black Catholic experience. At the close of the Jubilee Event, the community, participants and those who were observers were faced with a challenge. The call was placed before them, to be authentic in their mission as a universal Church and to

begin to be church together with other Catholic women, sharing what they have seen and heard and celebrated as one in the body of Christ.

Preparing for Jubilee

March 30, 2014: Rejoice! It Is Jubilee Time

The Fourth Sunday in Lent also known as Laetare Sunday means “Rejoice.” It is a day of celebration on which the austerity of Lent is briefly lessened. It is also known as Rose Sunday or Refreshment Sunday. It is a day to provide us encouragement as we progress toward the end of the Penitential Season of Lent. Following the passage from Isaiah 66:10-11 “Rejoice, O Jerusalem”... “Rejoice with joy, you that have been in sorrow.” The theme of joy and celebration is the spiritual focus of the Liturgy. It is on this Sunday that the Jubilee Event of the project was celebrated at two o’clock in the afternoon. Jubilee is a joyful recounting of the history, and embracing the updated vision and singing the joyful praise of full and active participation. (Appendice 1 is the program of the Jubilee Event).

The Jubilee Event

The setting for the Jubilee program was Christ the King Church. I, along with the participants who contributed the oral narrative collections and the Lay Advisory Council, presented the Jubilee to the community of Christ the King and its invited guest. The narrative history of Christ the King was connected to the neighboring churches from the Catholic community and the Protestant houses of worship as well. Representatives from these various faith communities were present. There were approximately eighty observers in attendance for the Jubilee event.

The sanctuary was the stage for the Jubilee Event. The pulpit which is used for the Proclamation of the Gospel was used for the various oratories. Those stories that spoke to the particularities of the isolation and exclusion, and the hurt and pain were delivered from the platform beneath the Crucifix. The liturgical dances were performed down the center of the Nave, into the raised area of the sanctuary and before the tabernacle and the altar. The songs and hymns and various chants were sung as solos or as a choir of the collective voices of all engaged in the Jubilee Event from under the dome of the sanctuary.

I was able to correlate the findings from the shared oral narratives of the women in several different aspects. The overall history, culture and social experiences coupled with the faith witness all emerged as factors in the history of the formation of the Church of Christ the King. The individual and generational oral narratives of the participants in some instances unique and in other instances part of a collective whole were dynamic in the development of the Jubilee Event.

Those in attendance were greeted at the doors of the Church. They were welcomed and thanked for their response to the invitation. They were provided with a program that outlined the parish research project and the order of service. The lights of the Nave were dimly lit with the illumination from the front of the Sanctuary and the sunlight through the stained-glass windows providing an environment for contemplation and peace. The safe haven was provided for the sharing of the story and an environment of receptiveness of the story.

The council of elders accompanied by the other participants, and the Lay Advisory Council lined up in the vestibule of the Church. I was positioned in the choir loft at the

rear of the Church. As the primary researcher for the parish ministry project, I formulated the order of service so that it reflected the integrity of the Prospectus even in the imagery, signs, and symbols and the order of service. I began the program by canting a variation of the Scripture of Hosea 4:6, 'My people perish for a lack of knowledge' and Proverb 29:18 'A people without a vision perish but a people who keeps the law is happy and blessed.'

The group processed into the assembly with the playing of the African ceremonial drums while the liturgical dancers led with the incense that sanctified the space and those gathered together for the Jubilee. The group entered chanting "Sankofa, Aggiornamento, Jubilee" The movement from the back of the Church with the young women dancing in front of the elders, represented the Sankofa event, that which was recovered from the past moving forward into the present. The canted verses of Hosea and Proverbs provided the biblical context for the event.

The Jubilee segment developed out of the composite of the collected narratives. It emerged out of the collective history and experiences of the ancestors and the legacy of their faith journey. I coordinated these shared stories to form the "We've Come This Far By Faith"³⁹ segment of the Jubilee program. This theme was derived from a favorite southern gospel song written by Albert Goodson. It is the introduction and background of the social context and location of the trials and travails of the ancestors. It is a compilation of the oral stories merged with the history of the African Diaspora and their journey up from the segregated South during the time of the Great Migration of the 1920's. Oratory is delivered to tell the history of the faith journey of the ancestors of

³⁹ Lindsay Terry, *Stories Behind 50 Southern Gospel Favorites Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 2002), 51.

Christ the King. The song lyrics express how their faith sustained them. It draws on the Scripture of 1 Peter 1: 6-9 (NAB).

In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials so the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

“People Get Ready There is a Change Coming” merges the introduction of the Great Migration with the lived experience of a group of participants who are from a multigenerational family and participating together in the project. The program title for this portion was derived and adapted from a rhythm and blues song “soul music” popular during the Civil Rights Movement and protests of the 1960’s. The 1965 song hit was gospel influenced and written by Curtis Mayfield. The words are iconic and redemptive. “People get ready, there’s a train comin’ you don’t need no baggage, you just get on board, all you need is faith to hear the diesels hummin’ you don’t need no ticket you just thank the Lord.” The metaphor of the train is important for it was by train that many of the ancestors traveled during the Great Migration to the North. The song was a social justice and spiritual exhortation on the need for change both spiritually and socially as is evidenced in the words “...faith is the key, open the doors and board them...have pity on those whose chances grow thinner...”

It is in this segment that the narrative collection unfolds. The matriarch Margie, is a descendant of a woman, Ida Smith who migrated from Washington D. C. The oral history shared by Margie was a narrative that is linked with that of two other women in the church history of Christ the King, Dr. Lena Edwards and Mary Queenan Ward. Lena Edwards and Mary Queenan Ward are documented ancestors, who are integral to the history of the parish. Margie’s narrative provided insight to a vital link between her

familial ancestor and the history that contributed to the establishment of Christ the King Church. It is this oral narrative that I used to relate the signs of changing times and the prophetic events that her narrative revealed. I used the voice of Margie's two daughters (Jennifer and Donna) who gave a poetic rendition of their mother's narrative and the biographical data that was recovered during the Sankofa research. The Lay Advisory Council served as narrators that linked the historical context to the Jubilee segments portrayed in the various the scenes.

Dramatic readings of a letter that I the found in the archives of the Archdiocese reveals the exclusion and deliberate attempts made by white parishioners and even clergy in Jersey City to prevent Black Catholics from being included in certain parishes. This experience was a part of the narrative experiences passed down across the generations. The recovered archived letter dated 1931 from a parishioner to the Bishop confirmed this environment of hostility that fostered the development of the faith community of Christ the King Church.

I used the 22 year old great-granddaughter of a four generational participant to do the dramatic reading of this letter. The various matriarchs— "elders" in the ministry research project— had made note of very specific experiences they had with the parish of St. Patrick's in the era of the 1920's and 1930's. This designated Irish parish was noted by the elders to be notorious in their treatment of excluding Black Catholics. Erica, a young adult, staged a portrayal of the letter's author, Ms. Tompson from St. Patrick's Church. The content of the letter was acted out in the character of this white Catholic woman who was greatly distressed about the presence of "colored (*sic*) Catholics in the neighborhood. I coordinated this dramatic acting and reading to be followed by the Sorrow Song of the

African Diaspora, “Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child, A Long Way from Home.” This expressed the feelings of the ancestors and elders, the deep lament, and isolation that was communicated throughout the narrative collections. Their sense of isolation in the Church caused by other Catholics often made them feel as if they were orphans in their own faith. (This feeling continues even today and is one area that is in need of healing identified as a narrative of concern). The song was sung in a dramatic soulful moaning, demonstrative of what has traditionally been classified as Negro (sic) Spirituals.

Multigenerational family histories and the interrelatedness of the families at Christ the King was uncovered in the archival history. A spiritual reading of 2 Timothy 1: 3-14 was proclaimed by Shalitha the mother of Erica. They connected their faith witness with the gift of faith passed down from generation to generation. It was the gift passed onto them through their matriarch Bernice. Their four generational family, the matriarch Bernice her two daughters Korine and Pat, granddaughter Shalitha and great-granddaughter Erica were present and active in the research project.

The matriarch Bernice for the first time shared publicly her faith journey to Catholicism from her Pentecostal roots. She had never shared her narrative with anyone outside of her family. It was an opportunity that found its place in the narrative sharing. Bernice well into her eighties had been Catholic over sixty years. Encouraged by the recovery of history through the Sankofa phase, Bernice felt empowered to share her history.

The theological insights of Miroslav Volf and Bernard Lonergan informed the development of the Jubilee section for “I Am on the Battlefield for My Lord”. It signified

the struggles with identity, isolation and exclusion. The narrative stories of those who were made to feel like “the other” became the armor and mantle. It was not just a spiritual battle of maintaining and safeguarding one’s faith witness as Catholic. The spirit of Jubilee is reflected in the third verse taken from the text of the song by Sylvana Bell and E. V. Banks, “...Now when I met my Savior, I met Him with a smile, He healed my wounded spirit, and owned me as His child, Around the throne of grace, He appoints my soul a place...)⁴⁰

It is in this “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around” moment that narrative stories of the women acting with agency are linked together and expressed in the passionate exhortation sermonette on Creating the Safe Haven. The communal group of women in the Jubilee sing with one voice the social justice song that is the title of this segment.

The recovered names of the ancestors who built Christ the King are chanted in a call and response. There is a simultaneous libation, litany of the ancestors and candle lighting ceremony. This created an opportunity for the sacred space to be filled with the presence and energy of the spirit of the ancestors. “Hush Hush Somebody’s Calling My Name” is the naming and claiming of our ancestors and linking their story with the continued narrative of the church. The calling of the recovered names brought to life the “great cloud of witnesses.”

We can no longer remain silent to the memories of the legacy. As noted in the Scripture of Hebrew 12: 12-13 (NAB), we must act; “...strengthen your drooping hands and weak knees. Make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be dislocated but healed.” When they know they act is also an element of the principles of

⁴⁰ “I Am On the Battlefield for My Lord”, *Lead Me Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal* (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1987), 281.

Appreciative Inquiry and is one of Vivian Burr's four essentials of social constructionism "knowledge and social action go together"⁴¹

"Hush Hush Somebody's Calling Our Name" is the musical medley and the mime portrayal that is used as the chorus to the oral narratives that tell about the town hall community gathering of the elders in 1930. The eyewitness account is presented by Rosalie who at 93 years old recalled the events and presented her oral narrative gift to provide the voice of wisdom, knowledge and understanding about the signs of the time and Sense of the Faithful that generated this kingdom building mission of the early twentieth century. A presentation of the copies of the newspapers accountings of this historic town-hall meeting was incorporated into the liturgical dance performed by Rosalie's granddaughter Quonda. The scrolls were made of the newspaper articles and they were presented as gifts to the younger women in the assembly as a passing on of the legacy that Mother Rosalie had shared from the past to inform the present.

"Take Me to Christ the King." The journey that had begun through a people's isolation and exclusion became gift to the community of Jersey City, the African American Community and the Catholic Church. Rosalie's granddaughter Quonda, a young woman in her early twenty's danced to a popular Gospel Song "Take Me to the King" and Kyra, a young catechist, sang the popular rendition. "Take me to the king I don't have much to bring, my heart is torn in pieces it's my offering." The liturgical dance was the prayerful expression of the young women who participated in the parish ministry project. It was their affirmation that they were willing to lift their "drooping hands and weak knees", strengthened by recovery of the history of their ancestors and

⁴¹ Branson, 37.

elders. They were committed to "...making straight paths..." for their feet in the ministry of evangelization by updating their vision. The Aggiornamento updated vision for them was a renewed awareness, that their story as modern women in the Church could not be separated from the faith of the ancients, their ancestors.

The development of the program and order of service for the Jubilee event was informed by the themes, ideas and concepts that evolved out of each of the narratives of the participants. Out of the depths of their shared stories rose the creative piece of this Jubilee event.

It was out of the depths of the hurt, anguish and even the ashes of despair that some walked away from their Catholic faith. It was also out of the depths of what seemed a daunting task that the small group amassed money, purchased land, broke ground, laid a cornerstone and erected a sanctuary. Like a phoenix they rose up in numbers and dedicated a church CTK where all were welcomed. "Out of the Depths" is the nuts and bolts accounting of what went into the physical construction of the Church edifice as well as the spiritual accountability that was assumed by the shepherd of the Newark Archdiocese for the Black Catholic community.

The great-granddaughter Charnette of the Livingstone family provided the narrative of her family and their role in catechesis and evangelization. Charnette gave an accounting of the events of the laying of the church cornerstone. It was prophetically and metaphorically noted in the nomenclature of their family name "Livingstone" that they were true living stones spoken of in 1 Peter 2: 4-6 "...and like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house... Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a cornerstone, chosen and precious."

The Jubilee component *Out of the Depths* is based on Psalm 130 it reflects a peoples' cry for mercy. I merged the reading of the documents of incorporation homily from Church dedication into this segment signifies the embrace of inclusion evidenced in the sermon preached by the Bishop of Newark before the multitude of thousands. Lois, participated in the narrative collection as one who is a convert working toward full initiation. Lois participated from a place of unknowing. She did not think that she had a narrative of relevance since she had been a member only in the past 15 years. She did not believe her family of origin to have any relationship with the history of Christ the King. I paired her narrative in this segment, "Lord Have Mercy All Are Welcomed."

During the mining of the Church sacramental records, I surprisingly found a certification from a husband and a wife who had presented their young children to the Christ the King for baptism and initiation into the Catholic faith. The baptismal godparents were the Millers. The Millers for many generations were pillars of the faith community of Christ the King. During the Sankofa phase of the project, I shared this revelation to the community and particularly with Lois. The two children who had been presented to the Church for baptism were the son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Black. They were the parents of Lois and the children were older siblings. She never knew that her older brother and sister were baptized into the Catholic faith at Christ the King Church. This revelation was paramount in Lois updating her personal vision and narrative, from one on the periphery to one included in the narrative story. It was a source of healing for her own experiences of feeling as "other". It is this movement through Appreciative Inquiry and welcome that is shared in the "Come to the Table" segment of the Jubilee Event.

“I’ve Got a Testimony” are the narratives of the ancestors who evangelized the multitudes e.g. Nettie Jackson. It is in this segment that the oral narratives of those sitting in the assembly were invited to share in the testimony of faith. Unscripted and unrehearsed the oral narratives flowed from those who shared their narrative to inform the continued unfolding of the Jubilee. Present in the assembly were vowed religious, Catholic nuns who had come from a neighboring parish. It was in this moment that a healing of past perceptions, hurts and feelings of isolation and exclusion were bridged between these two communities. The sisters had come to support the parish research project by being present, hearing the history, and gaining an updated insight to the context of the parish’s particular mission and ministry. It was a moment of repentance, petition, and forgiveness. It was in the sharing of the story, being present to hear the experience, and reflecting on the journey, that the perspective “as other” diminished and the vision “as we” emerged.

“I Can Only Imagine” is the segment of the Jubilee event that portrays the updated vision of Church that is authentically one, holy, and universal, and apostolic. I formulated this segment based on the oral narrative of three different women, who are journeying through the loss of their mothers. They shared the faith stories of their departed love ones and the value of these experiences in sustaining them through the grief. The connection is made that what has sustained them is the deep faith of the community of Christ the King. These women heard the stories of the ancestors. The narratives gave them a new understanding of their mothers’ connectedness to Christ the King. This discussion around loss, death, grief and the life of those who went before us, became not just a recovery of history but connected the group to the reality that this

research project was about renewal so that we as a community could have life and have it more abundantly.

“I Can Only Imagine” celebrates the recovered history of the ancestors and what they imagined for themselves and their dreams that live on in the telling of their legacy. The oral narrative of the parish has been reclaimed by the participants. The renewed vision of the Church as an evangelizing community is restored.

Did they in their wildest imagination know their actions would lead to this moment eighty-five years later? “Mary Ward Did You Know?” is a recalling of the history and the names of the ancestors in song. The lyrics are my artistic creation. The lyrics are based in the recovered history, the oral narratives and the legacy. The lyrics were song to the tune of the music written by Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene for the Christmas song “Mary Did You Know.” Jubilee closed with a recessional of all participants descending out of the Sanctuary, chanting the chorus of “*Mary Ward Did You Know?*”

At the conclusion of the Jubilee Event everyone gathered in the Church dining hall, the site of the roundtable oral narrative collections. Refreshments were offered and people had an opportunity to share their feedback on the project.

The methodology to assess the Sankofa, Aggiornamento, and Jubilee was the women affirming to bring their gifts of Blackness to the whole church by: 1) their participation in the Jubilee segment, and 2) affirming that they were interested, to be present as full and active members in the broader Church of Newark’s evangelization mission.

The Jubilee convened with the opportunity for witness, full and active participation as the women from Christ the King stepped out in faith and registered to participate in the

Evangelization Ministry of the Archdiocesan Annual Women's Commission Conference.

"Be Not Afraid Rejoice in God's Mercy" which was held on Saturday, April 26, 2014.

CHAPTER SIX

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This is the summary and feedback on the ministry research project. It consists of the data collected from the Lay Advisory Council, the women participants, and my own self-evaluation. It also includes feedback received from the participants' pre-assessment questionnaire and the participants follow up feedback and oral responses after the Jubilee Event and the Archdiocesan Women's Day Conference. These responses were provided to me and various members of the Lay Advisory Council and they were noted for inclusion in the project evaluation summary.

Lay Advisory Team Response

The following data reflects the general consensus of the members of the Advisory [Council, with some specific references. The feedback was affirmative and supportive. The following assessment of one of the Advisory Team members is substantive in its comprehensive assessment. Ann states the following in her overall evaluation of the project and of the impact it is making on the Candidate, the Committee, and the Congregation.

[The project] is timely and providential considering the transition the parish is going thru. Without any prior knowledge by candidate of the change in the pastoral leadership, she presents to the parish thru this project the first step this parish must take to ensure our future, our very existence; very similar to what St. John XXIII proposed with Vatican II from which the word *aggiornamento* first emerged. Not

knowing the scope or the potential benefit of the project, many in the congregation, including myself, doubted it would impact the parish in a positive way. One member commented to me that “we should be more concerned with who would be our new pastor than participate in something to help the candidate earn her Doctorate.” I was invited to be a member of the Advisory Committee and read the prospectus and immediately realized the scope of the project was more than I originally thought. Conversations with the Candidate helped me to understand this was more than a “history project.” This project would engage the participants in particular and the parish as a whole to move beyond the walls of the parish and become more active in the Archdiocese of Newark and the New Evangelization of the Church...

Ann further comments on the overall impact the project had in addressing some of the underlying assumptions and the deeper unspoken issues that were brought to the surface and changed because of the project.

After the collection one of the participants came up to me and made the comment that she had joined another primarily white parish so her children could attend the school. However further conversation made me suspect there was something more, perhaps a discomfort, embarrassment about being a member of an African American parish. A few weeks later after the Jubilee phase she spoke with pride about her Christ the King heritage, how she wanted to share with the Church the gift of Christ the King. She told me her family’s participation in the project encouraged one of her daughters to start attending the Church again. Sankofa, Aggiornamento, and Jubilee...was a resounding success at Christ the King Church. This was evident when you looked at the faces of the participants at the Jubilee, their strength and pride shining for all to see. For me, success is seeing the possibility of a new vision of Christ the King emerge. This project finally opened the eyes of many that for Christ the King to have a future we must engage with the universal Church, perhaps in ways uncomfortable or foreign to us. It means as Paul VI states in his encyclical, *ECCLESIAM SUAM*, “that the two should meet together, and get to know and love one another.”

Alma describes the value of my particular leadership style.

The candidate through her collaborative leadership style enabled the congregation to ‘buy into’ her project; this feeling of ownership afforded ‘All’ of us to be authentic participants in the process. Being authentic participants in the, the learning/learnings are reflective and impactful. They are lifelong connections that will be with us forever.

Alma notes in her evaluation that the project generated a “noticeable feeling of spiritual camaraderie that seeps through the actions of the parishioners.”

Lydia, another Lay Advisory Council member provided the insights and feedback on the project offered by observers who were not members of the Advisory Council. “The

feedback was and still is extremely positive in that we are seeing the young adults showing more interest in the general operations of the church, having some of the elders of the church express that they still have a voice and that what they offer is extremely vital.” The ministry project was established on the premise that the voice of the ancestors and elders, were the wisdom component that would inform the present and future change needed for the community. The response of the young adults with an interest that was not forthcoming prior to the project and the appreciation expressed by the elders that their voice and lived experiences mattered, substantiated the idea that the wisdom of my ancestors and elders was the vital key in generating the success of this project. Rosemary the chairperson of the Council highlighted the positive feedback expressed in a CTK church wide communication about the Jubilee Event and the parish ministry project. “One member of the church expressed through the church email list how she sensed a different, positive, motivating feeling among church members and was overjoyed at the Jubilee and other church Lenten services. In addition a member of Bethesda Baptist Church and a Director at St. Peter’s University both told me personally that they had heard about the success of the Jubilee and both wished that they had been present.”

Rosemary also makes note to the Action Phase of the project and the results of such.

We all learned more about the founders of Christ the King and their efforts to evangelize the masses and build the church. And we learned about the opposition they faced and yet prevailed... We were brought closer together as the glue, the women of the church. Through this process we joyfully welcomed our new church members from Queen of Angels whose parish closed and who were rejected by the parish they were to join... we collectively joined our sisters in the Archdiocese of Newark at the Women’s Conference and showed our solidarity with them in a day of learning, prayer and reflection. Attendance at this event was a healing of conflict as Black Catholics are not often seen as “real” Catholics, but on this day we attended 15 strong and proudly displayed our church of origin on tee shirts.

This response by the Advisory Council member supplies the achievement of the goal. The women having recovered their history, engaging an updated vision would allow for healing, forgiveness and renewal. They would speak their truth in joyful celebration of their “uncommon faithfulness’ and move toward evangelizing and sharing their gifts not just within their own boundaries. They are willing to carry their witness to the broader Church. Rosemary expresses the power that comes with this greater sense of pride, joy in “who we are and whose we are.” Margaret a new convert to the faith who participated as an advisor communicated her assessment of the impact of the project in the following manner. “The impact on the parish and me was great. It was especially important to me being a new Catholic hearing all the narratives from the women in our church talking about their history, music, dance which gave me a sense of pride just to be part of this project.” Margaret went on to publicize the project and the Jubilee Event. She created the invitations and distributed them to all within the parish and in the neighboring community churches. It was as if Margaret was the woman at the well telling the whole community come and see all I have learned about my new faith. The sense of joy was the ongoing expression not only by Margaret but also the guests that attended the Jubilee.

The leadership component of the project was unilaterally assessed by the Lay Advisory Council as collaborative, providing an opportunity for “buy in” even by those who were initially not in support of the project. They were won over by the effective communication about the project and how it could help facilitate change, growth and renewal as well as healing for the parish. “Receiving affirmation from the church community that the women have a role that the laity has a role and that parishioners have a history in the church through sharing their stories”, was the overall assessment by Lydia

from the Lay Advisory Council. This was the evidence of the power of narrative stories, the power of retrieving and sharing one's history. It was as well an affirmation of the role of women and the laity in the leadership of the local church. The reference by various Lay Advisory Council members to the collegiality of the Deacon in supporting the work and the communication and the Sunday reflections presented by me was foundational. It is the Deacon who gives the call for the final commissioning at the Mass, and before the weekly "sending forth" the Deacon would invite me to present the reflection or the state of the ministry project and its progress. The Lay Advisory Council members' acknowledgment of this in their evaluation under "my having taken initiative to educate all particularly Church leaders", spoke volumes as to the acknowledgment of the leadership role and the voice of lay ministry leadership of a woman being linked in to the ministry activity of the Deacon.

The overall Lay Advisory Council responses were those of affirmation. The one area noted as for further awareness and development was by an Advisory Team member. Ann's concern was as follows, "missed opportunity to explore undiscovered/unknown gifts of the Committee. The Spirit often endows individuals with charisms for the benefit of the community. I do not think there was sufficient exploration of such." Ann's concern was my not engaging or unearthing the hidden talents or gifts of those on the advisory team. Although I understand her response and greatly look forward to the ongoing mining of their core gifts and talents, the project was not about the narrative stories of the Lay Advisory Team for they were not a part of the research but facilitators to further the process. The particular members of the Lay Advisory Team were chosen for those talents that were evident gifts that they brought to the table and how those gifts could

facilitate the project (the description of the selection process of the Lay Advisory Council supports this). This was also reinforced by the chairperson of the Lay Advisory Council and the subsequent Lay Advisors, “only participants and not Lay Advisory Council members could participate in the telling of their story in the narrative collections.” The terms of the prospectus were followed and adhered. This particular advisor did have another assessment input, “a little too hands on”, which I am certain has some validity. Particularly around the task that could have been delegated such as the purchase of the food for the roundtable events. Under ordinary circumstances someone from the Lay Advisory Council would have handled those chores yet various degrees of illness for some of the advisory team and inclement weather foreshadowed the best laid plans. It is an assessment that I do take under consideration as it goes to the core component of the Practicing Healing Mind Body Spirit of Pastors and Congregations. It is the core element of self-care of pastors. So it is with great awareness that I will continue to be mindful of this very necessary critique toward greater delegation where it can be done legitimately for the wellbeing of myself and those who I serve.

Participants’ Feedback

Twenty five participants participated in the project. A pre-test questionnaire was distributed to ascertain the specific knowledge of the participants about the history of the parish, the ancestors, the background and dates around the development of the parish. It also contained questions about the particulars of their own family or ancestors’ role in the establishment of the church. It also asked questions about the participants’ knowledge of the purpose and mission of the church’s formation. It also asked questions as to the participants’ involvement in Archdiocesan programs and if they would be

interested in participating at the Archdiocesan level. The questionnaire was loosely modeled after the Do You Know? scale¹ developed by Marshall Duke in his study to assess the impact of the knowledge of family history on the self-esteem and well-being for the Family Narrative Project.² (Appendix 2 contains the Pre- Test Questionnaire.)

A post project assessment was also obtained through feedback from the participants. Having learned the power of listening to the participants tell their story, the Lay Advisory Council opted to have the post assessment done through the listening in of the oral reflections and responses of the individual participants at the reception after the Jubilee Event and again after the women participated at the Archdiocesan Women's Day Conference. The reception after the Jubilee Event was set in the same fashion as the narrative collection process. As the guests, participants and parishioners gathered for refreshments after the Jubilee Event. A member from the Lay Advisory Team sat among the groups and listened to unsolicited conversations from the participants, as well as the other parishioners and guests. Any and all responses that were shared in the days and weeks after the project was concluded were noted. It was an assessment of the project in each of its three components and particularly on the Jubilee Event. It also was inclusive of the feedback of the women who participated in the Archdiocesan Women's Conference Day of Renewal. The post assessment "listening in" provided responses that were spontaneous and joyful. The following is the report on those results from the participants, pre and post the implementation of the project.

¹ Marshall Duke, Amber Lazarus & Robyn Fivush, "Knowledge of Family as a Clinically Useful Index of Psychological Well-being and Prognosis: A Brief Report," *Psychotherapy Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 45, no. 2, (June 2008), 268-272.

² Lazarus, 272.

Pre-Assessment Questionnaire Summary

The initial question asked “how would you describe your “History Awareness” about the Church of Christ the King, Jersey City, New Jersey? The responses were as follows. Out of the twenty-five participants: two participants stated knowledgeable, eight participants stated they were fairly knowledgeable, five participants responded minimally knowledgeable and ten participants responded no knowledge. When asked to name the women who established and founded the parish, six of the twenty-five participants listed Mary Ward (This was interesting and showed that the women had added to their knowledge of the parish.

During the recruitment process for participants, most parishioners were only able to name Mary Ward or did not know at all.) It was apparent that the weekly Sunday reflections that shared the retrieved history of the church and family names was instructional. Twelve out of the twenty-five participants named three or more names of women who were instrumental in founding and establishing the parish. Upwards of about thirty ancestral names were listed by the participants in the project. Most of these names were consistent with the retrieved data, I had recovered from the parish sacramental archives and other historical records from the Archdiocesan archives stored at Seton Hall. This calling and naming broadened the narrative of the parish history. It also provided an opportunity for updating the vision of who founded and established the parish. The recovery of the history facilitated the updated vision. The participants saw themselves linked to the history of the building of the church through the contributions of their own mothers, grandmothers and family ancestors. It as well provided them a connectedness to the history of the church.

The question as to the purpose for the foundation of the Church of Christ the King was answered as follows: Seven out of the twenty-five participants responded “do not know” and eighteen of the twenty-five participants responded in some manner as to the need for CTK because of the following issues, “not being welcomed in other Catholic churches”, “Blacks were not allowed to worship in white Catholic churches”, “African Americans parishioners being rejected by other Catholic churches”, “St. Pat’s didn’t want us there.” Others noted the affirmative need in their response such as “to allow the African American culture to be expressive in the Church and faith practices and celebration, “safe place for spiritual worship for African Americans, “to build a church for African American families.”

It was interesting to note that although the participants spoke “around the issue” not one spoke to the specificity of racism. They spoke to the actions and behavior but they did not identify it outright in the pre-questionnaire. This was valuable information for it revealed that there existed a continued hush as to the background. Even when addressed it was in whispered or hushed tones. The actual Roundtable Event in the narrative collections provided the opportunity for this to be addressed vocally.

The question that asked what was the most significant action that led to the founding of the parish, did not receive an accurate response. The “action, agency and voice” of Mary Ward and the women was never addressed. Although the participants responded in various ways as to the reason why the parish was founded, not one of the twenty-five women gave the facts and circumstances about the census of the 300 Black Catholic names presented to the Archbishop at the request of Mary Ward for the establishment of a Church for the needs of Black Catholics in the Newark Diocese/Archdiocese. This was

relevant for it pointed to the invisibility and or lack of awareness of the value of the women's action. Although this information had been provided at the weekly Sunday liturgy reflections, it seems that it did not stand out as the seminal event for the development of the parish. If not but for the action, agency and voice of the women, there may not have been the establishment of the Church of Christ the King. This lack of a response validated the relevance of the women retrieving the history that spoke to the action, agency and voice of the ancestors who built CTK. The question that asked if the participant would be interested in participating in Archdiocesan events received a majority response of "NO" they do not welcome us and not they do not care about us was the general consensus.

Participants' Post Project Response

The Jubilee event and the joyful involvement of all twenty-five participants, in itself was the response. The ability of the participants to tell their story of the recovered history, share their reflections that embraced the sorrow, lament and praise and thanksgiving of the legacy was the powerful evidence of the Appreciative Inquiry premise that "when they know they will act."

It was during the gathering after the Jubilee event that the participants as well as the observers to the event expressed that the participation in the ministry research project produced the following impact. It made them more knowledgeable about the history of their beloved Christ the King. It provided them with an insight to the actions that were taken by the women ancestors to address the situation and circumstances that inhibited their full and active participation in the 1920's.

Others stated that the research project provided them with a sense of pride. In the words of one woman “what people intended for harm by their racist behavior, the Lord made a way and turned it into a positive, the development of Christ the King Church.” While others noted that the project provided an opportunity to reflect on the hurt and the pain that they did not realize was still troubling for them. It also provided an opportunity to move forward. One of the women responded that knowing the strength and the resilience of the ancestors, was now motivating her to get involved at the archdiocesan events. “If for no other reason but to be present so that they cannot keep acting as if we are invisible.”

Most of the participants also shared that this project gave them an opportunity to see how the women of Christ the King really could work together and maybe this was what was needed to bring the different ministry factions together with one purpose. This was monumental for it allowed for healing. The gathering of other churches across faith traditions and from different ethnicities at the Jubilee Event, according to the participants made them realize that the community of CTK was a place for unity, healing and joy. “If this could be done for this day it can be repeated and help others to heal.”

The most profound response came from the church elder Mrs. Beatrice G. She was the participant who until this ministry project had not revealed to anyone her original Pentecostal roots prior to her conversion to Catholicism. She gave me the following instruction and admonishment lest I forget.

This was a powerful program. The getting the women to remember, getting us to open up and tell our story. Letting go of our shame of being different. But more importantly you, ‘You Valerie’ have a gift and a gift for preaching that is clear. Do not let anyone tell you that you cannot and do not let anyone stop you, because of your being a woman or not a priest. You have a gift for teaching and getting folk to

understand but more importantly you have a gift for healing. Don't let nobody turn you around.

Mrs. Beatrice was responding to the whole project but she acknowledged that the exhortation that I delivered during the Jubilee was as powerful and anointed of a sermon that she had ever heard. She wanted me to be aware just in case I was not, that the Holy Spirit had anointed me as a woman, "A Black Catholic Woman" to do what I was doing even if there were those who just did not understand.

The monumental response was the fifteen women who registered to participate in the Archdiocesan Women's' Conference, Day of Renewal sponsored by the Evangelization Ministry. On the pre project questionnaire the women said "No" to participating at Archdiocesan sponsored events. They women from Christ the King had experienced an Intellectual Conversion around this issue. They had updated their vision and as well were moving toward renewal forgiveness reconciliation and embrace. The overall response of the participants was that the parish ministry project allowed for them to see their own worth and value in the ministry of the church at the local level and in the Church as a whole. They made note of their ability to effect change.

The women acknowledged that from the time the women began to participate in the project, change began at the parish. The historical information that revealed the multitudes of people who supported the vision of Christ the King 85 years ago was profound according to one participant.

The registration forms for the Women's Evangelization Day of Renewal were distributed at the hospitality gathering. All of the women signed on to participate either in person or by coordinating the public relations and registration of the women in the parish to attend as a group. The women stepped up as captains for registration, and to serve as hospitality

ministers at the event. . Fifteen of the women who participated in the project attended the Archdiocesan event. It was the first time that the women of Christ the King in a large group participated at this event. They presented themselves as gift in Body Mind and Spirit. The women in solidarity adorned tees-shirts embossed on the front with a color portrait and insignia, the Church on the Hill-Christ the King Jersey City, N. J. On the back the logo, Kingdom building in the Church of the 21st Century: Evangelizing with a Spirit of Joy, Authentically Black and Truly Catholic, One Faith, One Church, One Lord of All.

It was an objective witness of one who was not Catholic and not familiar with the Catholic witness. It provided an Appreciative Inquiry type of response. The following quote was most profound in that it reflected the interior spirit of the ministry project, to proclaim to all, the witness that we are called to share in Christ Jesus without boundaries. Rev. Willie and his wife and co-pastor Sharon are of the Pentecostal tradition. His letter gives a detailed response from one who participated in the Jubilee Event as an observer. "...This celebration was reflective of the Creator God who has no boundaries and demonstrates an endless love for dying humanity..." The letter provided the affirmation that the women had a profound gift that needed to be shared for it was redemptive and healing and joyfully unifying. (Appendix 3 letter from Rev. Willie and Co-Pastor Moody)

Self-Evaluation

I believe the success of the project was my attentiveness to listening to the prophetic voice that was whispering in my ear "Do Not Be Afraid To Tell Your Story." I was extremely critical that the process be consistent with the Black Catholic Women's experience. I credit myself with adhering to the techniques of being able to "Negotiate

to Get the Yes You Want.”³ I was able to engage the Christ the King community to “buy in” to the project.

I critique myself as having been consistent with following through with the prospectus on all levels. I was very hands on in all aspects and as well provided opportunities for the Lay Advisory Council to emerge in their own right as empowered women ministering to the community. They were full and active participants in the roles that they were designated to oversee. I was able to step back and allow them engage their task. I allowed for the Appreciative Inquiry technique to be the guide in those instances when an Advisor may have not been timely in the process. By affirming what she had already accomplished and thanking her in advance for her completion of the necessary project task. I was flexible and willing to listen to the Advisory Council suggestions.

I was receptive to changing those things that THE situation and circumstance necessitated be changed. An example of this was the suggestion by the Chair that instead of the four consecutive Sundays of oral narrative collection that we reduce it to two consecutive Sundays. The advisory team had assessed that with the unexpected changes with the parish and pattern of inclement weather that the timeframe for four Sundays was virtually impossible. They were correct the weather and continued illness on my part and the flux of the parish re the pastor’s leaving impacted the parish calendar. The changes were made in accordance to the terms within the authority of the Lay Advisory Council.

³ Roger Fisher and William Ury, Bruce Patton ed. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In 3rd ed*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2011)

It was also my ability to trust the competency of the Lay Advisory Council to follow through with their designated tasks that allowed me to attend to my self-care during a time when I had taken quite ill.

Communication and my collaborative leadership style with the Advisory Council was a great asset. It allowed for there to be an invested interest in the project as “ours.” My lived experience and example to the participants was the greatest asset. My conviction about the need for us to be authentic evangelizers through the gifts given to us was the motivation. I modeled what I was asking in the ministry project.

Even in the presence of adversity the women participants and the advisors saw me act with collaboration and inclusion. They also saw me reflect a spirit open to forgiveness. I realize that if this had not been my pastoral stance, the project would not have been a success. Various situations that arose during the time of the implementation were just an opportunity to be who we say we are in Christ. The biggest outcome of this project is the willingness for the women to begin to get involve at the Archdiocesan level.

The biggest asset was having a command of the history, the research and a desire to present the inclusive contributions of all the families and women who created the parish and the continued need for all to embrace their collective contributions, whether they were new members or multigenerational contributors. The success of the project was threefold, 1) My willingness to share week after week my own story. It was a narrative filled with the suffering and laments and the praises and the joy of being A Black Catholic woman and laity, 2) The receptiveness of others to enter that vulnerable space of taking off the mask and telling it like it is to be “authentically Black and truly Catholic, 3)

The interpretive need of the church that an updated vision was needed and necessary and that they needed to be that change in action.

Conclusion

The positive responses from the Advisory Council, the participants and even observers and those who heard about the project have been life giving. My own journey through this process has inspired my hope and continued joy about what is on the horizon. The intellectual conversion that has begun within the women who are able to envision a working relationship at the Archdiocesan level is monumental.

Their movement from “No” to “Yes” in participating in the evangelization mission of the broader Archdiocesan event is a step toward reconciliation and healing the “cultural divide.” The ability to shift the mythic narrative of the parish to one that was inclusive of a communal narrative allows for all to buy into the vision of what was and is now and can be for the community of Christ the King. I am still in awe of how calling the names of the ancestors allowed them to be embodied spirits during this project particularly during the Jubilee Event. Theologian Rudolph Otto’s concept of The Idea of the Holy, was evident during the Jubilee, when a natural earthly event became a mystical divine experience. The Jubilee participants became the embodiment of the cloud of witnesses of the Catholic and African traditions.

One very vital piece of information that was recovered through the narrative collection was the relationship of three ancestors to St. Augustine Church in Washington, D. C. Margie, one of the participants in the narrative collections gave information during the genogram collection that linked her matrilineal ancestry to an ancestor and founder of St. Augustine Church. The rose window in St. Augustine’s is embossed with the name of

Margie's ancestor, Jane Smallwood. The information provided in Margie's narrative caused me to make a connection between the three women, Mary Ward, Lena Edwards and Margie's mother and her grandmother Ida Smith (the sister to Jane Smallwood.)

These families all migrated to Jersey City independent of each other. Yet the roots of their Catholic witness and legacy from St. Augustine's came with each of them. They knew their legacy and their ancestors' ability to establish a faith community and then later a church for free people of color and the enslaved Africans. They brought that history with them. They knew their history and they acted. This link to the church referred to as the Mother Church of Black Catholics, is a newly discovered body of history and knowledge for the community of Christ the King as well as for the Catholic community. It deserves future discourse. The connection may have continued to be overlooked if not for the narrative collections "Sankofa" at Christ the King. We went back and fetched that which was lost and we discovered another piece of our roots.

Imagine that!

Mary Ward Did You Know?

That your census would one day build a kingdom
 Mary Ward did you know
 The Bishop would proclaim that all are welcome
 Did you know that your voice would evangelize the multitude?
 For all you works, we owe, we owe our gratitude
 Mary Ward did you know
 That you actions led the laying of Brick and Mortar
 Did you know?
 That your count of three hundred Negro names
 Would uncover, uncover the Church's shame
 Mary Ward did you know?
 Mary Ward did you know
 This Church on the Hill
 Would be standing here still?
 To share the Word, Preach the Truth to people of all Nations
 Furthering your mission of Evangelization

Mary Ward did you know
Mary Ward we now we know
How a people rejected
Laid their own cornerstone
Not by might
But through His light
Mary Ward now we know
Parents, their children they bring still
To the Church to the Church on the Hill
The Sacramental Bells Ring
Calling all to the Church of Christ the King.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

“Black Catholics have decided to take down their harps from the willows where they have hung for so long and to make foreign land their own.”¹

- Diana L. Hayes

The ongoing impact of the project is still unfolding. Four of the women who participated in the project have been elected to the pastoral leadership council. The new role of these women and the new direction of this pastoral leadership council has inspired life into the community. This is valuable particularly because it was the community voice, action and agency that submitted the names for the pastoral council. The community realizing that their voice as laity and as women had power and could effect change put it into action. Their first activity of business was to put new wine and new wineskins on the church’s pastoral leadership advisory council for the new pastor.

The ministry project was a great opportunity. Narratives that had long been silenced or never told were recovered and given a platform to be shared. The history of the parish dusted off and presented in all of its illustrious attributes, provided the Church of Christ the King with the knowledge and the truth about the legacy of their home parish. It also

¹ Diana L. Hayes, “History of Black Catholic Revivalism: The Emergence of a New Form of Worship,” 1982, *Evangelization in the Black Community: Resources and Bibliography* (Washington, D.C.: Office Black Catholics Archdiocese of Washington, 1984), 27.

provided a precedent of the leadership role of Black Catholic women of the laity. It provided the prototype of the evangelizing spirit that was rooted in the ancestors and embodied even in the women of today and germinating in the children and youth of Christ the King.

The Aggiornamento of the project provided a lens to see the indomitable spirit of the Black Catholic community that even in the face of adversity and difficulty they were open to change, open to forgiveness of self and others, and open to inclusion and willing to embrace. It was also an opportunity for intellectual conversion, to change naysayers into affirmative participants. It was an opportunity for the local church to do some soul searching over whether they were going to continue on the path of “unsonning and undaughtering” itself from Mother-Church because she had not been a good enough mother to them.

It was an opportunity to face the challenge of, Whom Shall I Send? If not us then who? Who was going to bring the gifts of a forgiving and reconciled spirit and joyful embrace? Who would teach and evangelize the Church on being authentically and truly Catholic by being inculturated in mind, body and spirit. Yes there is truly and authentically a place for the leadership and evangelizing spirit of the Black Catholic women of the laity. Sankofa, Aggiornamento, and Jubilee!

APPENDIX A
PRE-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Sunday, February 23, 2014

Pre-assessment Questionnaire for Parish Doctor of Ministry Project

Christ the King Catholic Church

SANKOFA, AGGIORNAMENTO AND JUBILEE

RECALLING YESTERDAY, ENVISIONING TODAY AND IMAGINING
TOMORROW

PART I:

**1: How would you describe your History Awareness, “Sankofa”
about the Church of Christ the King, Jersey City, New Jersey?**

Please underline your response.

- A: Knowledgeable
- B: Fairly Knowledgeable
- C: Minimally Knowledgeable
- D: No Knowledge

**2: DO YOU KNOW THE FOLLOWING HISTORICAL DATES? IF SO PLEASE
WRITE THEM DOWN.**

- Date the Church was established.....
- Date of the First Mass as a parish community.....
- Date of the groundbreaking ceremony.....
- Date of the laying of the cornerstone.....
- Date of the First Mass in the newly constructed Church.....
- Date Church building was dedicated.....

**3: Do you know any of the names of the ancestors/elders/families/women, who
established and founded the parish of the Church of Christ the King?
YES ____ . NO ____ . If yes list the names you recall or remember on the lines below.**

a.....

- b.....
- c.....
- d.....

PART II

4: What was the role of the women in the founding and establishment and growth of the parish and its ministries? UNDERLINE YOUR RESPONSE.

- A: Very Important**
- B: Important**
- C: Somewhat Important**
- D: Minimally Important**
- E: Not Important**

5: Can you name or list the most significant action that led to the founding of the parish/ Church of Christ the King?

**6: Do you know the reason for the founding of the Church of Christ the King?
Yes ____ . or No ____ . If yes what was the reason?**

7: Is the reason for the founding of the Christ the King still relevant?

8: Prior to the “Sankofa” Oral Narrative Parish Ministry Project, did you think of the value of the “Voice of the Women in the Mission of Evangelization” at the parish level? Yes _____ or No _____ Please check your response.

**Did you think of the value of the voice of the women at the archdiocesan level?
Yes _____ or No _____ Please check your response.**

9: Prior to Sankofa Oral Narrative Parish Ministry Project, did you know of your family/elders/or ancestors contribution or participation in the history of Christ the King? Yes _____ . or No _____ .

10: Have you shared this history of your church with others? Yes _____ or No _____

11: Have you identified and shared the role of your family/elders/ancestors in the evangelization mission of your Church of Christ the King? Yes ___ or No ___

PART III

12: Would you be willing to invite others to hear and celebrate the history of your Church of Christ the King and the women who built the faith community?

13: Have you ever participated in the Archdiocesan level ministry programs, spirituality retreats, or leadership programs for women? Yes ___ or No ___

If No, is there a circumstance that has prevented you from participating in the Archdiocesan events?

If so please share the circumstances?

14: Would you consider sharing voice and input in future Archdiocesan events that focus on the voice and needs of women? Yes ___ or No ___

Would you participate in any Archdiocesan level event to further the Evangelization Mission? Yes ___ or No ___.

15: If you had to list the name(s) of the women who made a difference in your parish church history who would you list? Why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

.....
16: EVANGELIZATION MISSION AND MINISTRY

A: Can you recall what led you to the Church of Christ the King?

B: How long have you been a parishioner?

C: What has kept you at the church?

D: Have you ever left this faith community and if so why?

E: What was the motivation of your return to Christ the King?

F: What is the updating or new vision or change that you most want at the

Parish Level:

Archdiocesan Level:

National Level:

Do you have a narrative, a story or an oral history to share about yourself, a family member, an elder/ancestor or anything at all about the women of Christ the King?

Print Name _____

Signature _____


Please place questionnaire into your project information and consent packet.

APPENDIX B

JUBILEE PROGRAM

Mary: Mary did you know?

That your census would one build a kingdom
Mary did you know
The Bishop would proclaim that all are welcome
Did you know
That your voice would evangelize the multitude
For all you work, We owe, We owe our gratitude
***Mary Did you know
That your census would lead others to the water
Mary did you know
That your actions led the laying of Brick and Mortar
Did you know
That your count of three hundred Negro names
Would uncover, uncover the Church's shame
Mary did you know?
***Mary did you know
This Church on the Hill
Would be standing here still
To share the Word, Preach the Truth to people of all Nations
Furthering your mission of Evangelization
Mary did you know
***Mary now we know
How a people rejected
Laid their own cornerstone
Not by might
But through his Light
Mary now we know
***Parents their children they bring still
To the Church to the Church on the Hill
The Sacramental Bells Ring
Calling all to the Church, of Christ the King



SANKOFA-AGGIORNAMENTO-JUBILEE
Sunday, March 30, 2014

CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING
A Joyful Celebration
of
Narrative History
Vision
Faith
Culture
The Women of Christ of the King

*Telling their Ancestors Story and Sharing
their Journey*
*Black Catholic Women Who Established a
Church*

APPENDIX C

OBSERVER'S LETTER

Reflections: Sankofa Aggiornamento Jubilee Parish Ministry Project

On March 30, 2014, my wife and I, Pastor Sharon, had the pleasure attending the Jubilee Celebration at the Christ the King Church in Jersey City New Jersey. This celebration of the parish matriarch's who were the founding pillars of the Christ the King Church made a huge impact on us, as Rev Valerie Lewis-Mosley, the facilitator, and her team of congregants painted a wonderful picture of the historic moments that included the church's inception and led up to the church's construction of its' new building. We were awestruck of the legacy of these matriarch's who allowed God to use them at a time in the Catholic Church's history to build a church for black parishioner's, because they were not made welcomed in the Caucasian parishes and wanted a church home for themselves.

Rev. Valerie and her team provided an informative schematic that traced the history of those families, particularly black women, who were inspired by God to erect this beautiful sanctuary that still stands today. This beautiful edifice was the 1st of its kind in Jersey City and was attended by thousands, many of whom were supportive Caucasians, as well as community members, media and Christians from other denominations.

The Jubilee Celebration was festive and included familiar spiritual hymns, liturgical dance, and reflections by identified family generations whose fore-mothers served as pillars in Christ the King's erection. The celebration took on a Black History flavor, as it paralleled a time in history when Blacks wanted civil liberties afforded them as God's creation.

Rev. Valerie orchestrated a well thought out schematic that was inclusive, informative, inviting, empowering, challenging and celebratory. I commend Rev. Valerie on her ability to embrace this ministry project as she stood tall in the background, but firmly facilitating a smooth event that wonderfully embraced us as we travelled together on the journey. Pastor Sharon posited, "Wow, I didn't even know that Catholic's praised God like this." We were so elated as we shared in the challenges, stages, processes, disappointments, and endorsements of this now beautiful sanctuary that visibly sits on a hill in urban Jersey City, New Jersey.

We felt a sense of Black pride as well as Christian pride, as we reflected on the history of the Black churches in general in the United States. Pastor Sharon and I, parallel, this journey with ours, Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW) and

Churches of General International Incorporated (COGIC), as they struggled for identity and relevance when it separated from the Assemblies of God (AG) to find a spiritual home for its' Black congregants.

Finally, we commend Rev. Valerie for her ability to tell a church's history in a celebratory manner with interwoven narratives that empowered Black matriarch's without insulting the integrity of Caucasian Catholics who were present and embracing/supportive of the celebration and the need for the event. We left the celebration very much inspired and informed. It was an awesome demonstration of God's love for humanity and Christ the King's place in history as these Black matriarch's were remembered and celebrated. I particularly enjoyed Rev. Valerie's genius for inclusiveness, as she employed the oldest family representatives to the newest; the older generation and the new; the Black's contribution and the Caucasian's. This celebration was reflective of the Creator God who has no boundaries and demonstrates an endless love for dying humanity.

Thank you Rev. Valerie Lewis-Mosley!!!

Reflections by Pastor Willie Moody, MPH, MTS, CPRP and Pastor Sharon E. Lee-Moody

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barrett, Mary. 2013 *The Good Enough Mother: Donald Winnicott's Theory*. Course Lecture, Conflict, Anger, and Forgiveness: Working Through Loss and Difference, Drew Theological, Madison, New Jersey, April 17.
- Bowman, Thea. "To Be Black and Catholic." *Origins* 19, no. 8 (6 July 1989): 114-118.
- Branson, Mark Lau. *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.
- Braxton, Edward, K. "Evangelization: Crossing the Cultural Divide." *Origins* 27, no. 16 (2 October 1997): 272-279.
- Brown, Joseph A. *To Stand on the Rock: Meditations on Black Catholic Identity*. New York: Orbis Books, 1998.
- _____. "This Little Light of Mine: The Possibility of Prophecy in the Black Catholic" In *Thea Bowman Handing on Her Legacy*, edited by Christian Koontz, 71-91. Kansas City, Mo: Sheed & Ward, 1991.
- Carey, Patrick, W. "Preface" In *Black and Catholic: The Challenge and Gifts of Black Folk*, edited by Jamie T. Phelps, 7-9. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church for the United States of America. New York: Doubleday, 1994.
- Committee on African American Catholics of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Keep Your Hand on the Plow: The African American Presence in the Catholic Church*. Washington, DC: Office of Research United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1996.
- _____. *Love They Neighbor As Thyself: U.S. Catholic Bishops Speak Against Racism*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 2001.
- Conwill, Giles. "Black Catechesis." In *Taking Down Our Harp: Black Catholics in the United States*, edited by Diana L. Hayes and Cyprian Davis, 199-231. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998.
- _____. 2012. History and Spirituality of Black Catholics: Theology of the Body Black. Lecture, Black Catholic Symposium at Society of African Missions SMA, Tenafly, New Jersey. November 10.
- Copeland, M. Shawn. *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010.
- _____. "Foundations for Catholic Theology in an African American Context." In *Black and Catholic: The Challenge and Gift of Black Folk*, edited by Jamie T. Phelps, 107-158. Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1997.
- _____. "Tradition and Traditions of African American Catholicism." *Theological*

Studies 61, no. 4 (December 2000): 632-655.

_____, ed. *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009.

Davis, Cyprian. *The History of Black Catholics in the United States*. New York: Crossroads, 1992.

Denizen, Norman K. *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods A Sourcebook, 2nd ed.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.

Department of Education National Advisory Committee for Catechesis with Hispanics. *Principles for Inculturation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1994.

Duke, Marshall, Amber Lazarus, and Robyn Fivush. "Knowledge of Family as a Clinically Useful Index of Psychological Well-being and Prognosis: A Brief Report." *Psychotherapy Theory, Research, Practice Training* 45, no. 2 (2 June 2008): 268-272.

Fisher Roger, and William Ury, and Bruce Patton., ed. *Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In 3rd ed.* New York: Penguin Books, 2011.

Golemon, Larry A. *Finding Our Story: Narrative Leadership and Congregational Change*. Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2010.

_____. *Living Our Story: Narrative Leadership and Congregational Culture*. Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2010.

_____. *Teaching Our Story: Narrative Leadership and Pastoral Formation*. Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2010.

Gregory, Wilton D. "Uncommon Faithfulness: The Witness of African American Catholics." In *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, edited by M. Shawn Copeland, 169-180. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009.

Hayes, Diana L. "Faith of Our Mothers: Catholic Womanist God-Talk," In *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, edited by M. Shawn Copeland, 129-146. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009.

_____. *Forged in the Fiery Furnace*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2012.

_____. 2010. "Here I Am Send Me: Called to be Faithful Prophets." Lecture, annual meeting of Call to Action, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. November.

_____. 2010. "Standing in My Mother's Shoes: My Call to Ministry." Lecture annual meeting of Academy of Homiletics, Atlanta, Georgia. November 19.

_____. *Standing in the Shoes My Mother Made*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.

_____. "Strangers and Sojourners No More." *Origins*, 20, no. 30 (3 January 1991): 477, 479-487.

Hester, Richard L. and Kelli Walker-Jones. *Know Your Story and Lead with It: The Power of Narrative Clergy Leadership*. Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2009.

- Howze, Joseph L, Harold R. Perry, Eugene A. Marino, Joseph A. Francis, James P. Lyke, Emerson J. Moore, Moses B. Anderson, Wilton D. Gregory, J. Terry Steib, John H. Ricard. *'What We Have Seen and Heard': A Pastoral Letter on Evangelization From the Black Bishops of the United States*. Cincinnati, Ohio: St. Anthony Messenger Messenger Press, 1984.
- Johnson, James Weldon. "The National Black Anthem: Lift Every Voice." Jacksonville, Florida, February 12, 1900.
- John Paul II. "Address to African American Catholics." New Orleans, Louisiana Libreria-Editrice Vaticana, 1987.
- _____. *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2006.
- _____. *Redemptoris Missio*, [Mission of the Redeemer Encyclical Letter] 1990, n. 3. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, April, 1, 1999.
- _____. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, [The Social Concerns of the Church Encyclical Letter] 1988, no. 36. In *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret, Centenary Edition*, edited by Peter J. Henriot, Edward P. DeBerri, and Michael J. Schultheis, 80-89. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1992.
- Lewis-Mosley, Valerie D. "Kingdom Building in the Church of the 21st Century: Is There A Place for Black Catholic Lay Women in the Evangelization Mission of the Church?" Master's Thesis, Seton Hall University, 2011.
- Lonergan, Bernard J. F. *Method in Theology*. New York: Seabury Press, 1979. ,
- Massingale, Bryan N. *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2010.
- McEnroy, Carmel, *Guest in Their Own House: The Women of Vatican II*. New York: Crossroads, 2010.
- Moltmann, Jurgen, *Theology of Joy*. London: SCM Press LTD, 1973.
- National Conference of Catholic Bishop. *Brothers and Sisters To Us: US Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Racism in Our Day*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1979.
- _____. *Here I Am, Send Me: A Conference Response to the Evangelization of African Americans and the National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1989.
- Noel, James A. *Black Religion and the Imagination of Matter in the Atlantic World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi: On Evangelization in the Modern World*, 1975. Vatican Collection, Volume 2, *Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents, 1st ed.* General Editor, Austin Flannery, O.P., Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982.
- _____. "To the Heart of Africa." Address to Bishops of the African Continent at the

- Closing Session of a Symposium held in Kampala, Uganda. *The Pope Speaks: The Church Quarterly*, 14, no. 2 (1969).
- Phan, Peter C. and Diana L. Hayes, ed. *Many Faces One Church: Cultural Diversity and The American Catholic Experience*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.
- Phelps, Jamie T., ed. *Black and Catholic: The Challenge and Gift of Black Folks*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997.
- _____. "Not Just a Black or White Issue." *U. S. Catholic* 67, no. 8, (August 2002): 50.
- Reilly, Eugene J. *The Apostolate to The Negro*. Kearney, NJ.: New Jersey's Boystown Press, 1962.
- Sackey, Brigid M. *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006.
- Sanders, Katrina M. "Black Catholic Clergy and the Struggle for Civil Rights: Winds of Change." In *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, edited by M. Shawn Copeland, 78-93. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009.
- Savage, Carl and William Presnell, *Narrative Research in Ministry*. Louisville, Kentucky: Wayne E. Oates Institute, 2008.
- Second Vatican Council Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Guadium et Spes* [Church in the Modern World], no. 5. December 7, 1965 edited by Austin Flannery. Boston: St. Paul Editions, Daughter of St. Paul rev., 1988.
- _____. *Lumen Gentium* [Light for the Nations], (LG), no. 17. November 21, 1964.
- Secretariat for Black Catholics National Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Many Rains Ago: A Historical and Theological Reflection on the Role of the Episcopate in the Evangelization of African American Catholics*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1990.
- Terry, Lindsay, *Stories Behind 50 Southern Gospel Favorites Vol. 1*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 2002.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers 7th Edition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.
- Weddell, Sherry A. *Forming Intentional Disciples*. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2012.